

# STRANGER

than **FACT** 25¢



JOE  
STATON 1963

STRANGER THAN FACT

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Cover.....Joe Staton (Modeled by Suzanne Maynard)

Junkyard.....Jim Harkness.....3

The Wisdom of the First..C. L. Morris.....9

The Return.....C. L. Morris.....10

Manifest of the Institute of General Eclectics  
 M...H...Gardner.....13

The Fifth Flaw.....Wilton G. Beggs.....15

Science Fiction and Criticism  
 Robert Coulson.....22

War of the Words.....the readers.....25

Editorial Continuation...Jim Harkness.....34

Inside Back Cover.....Robert E. Gilbert

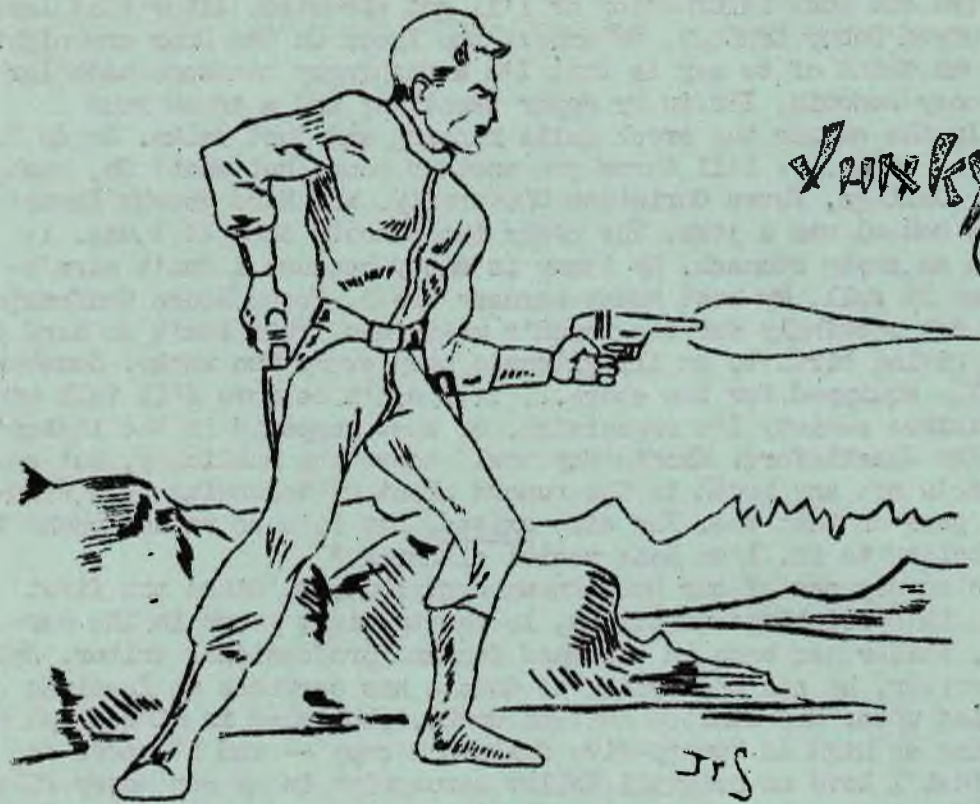
Back Cover.....Staton, Hyland and Gilbert

Art Credits: Joe Staton - 3, 18, 31; Robert E. Gilbert - 5, 12, 25  
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You are receiving this issue of Stranger Than Fact because you are

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JUNKYARD

(Lodge in '64  
}

ATOM for TAFF)

It is a lamentable truth that the amateur magazine is at best an ephemeral thing. Their years are numbered, their reproduction spotty, and their circulation low. A few years after they suspend publication, they are forgotten, and with them depart the memories of those who have worked over them to try to give the reader an enjoyable product.

This is unavoidable, but it doesn't make it any easier to swallow. Probably no one other than an editor knows just how much work is put into the shortest of articles that is accepted --and a lot of the rejects aren't thirty minute projects, either. So what do these people who devote their time thusly receive in return? A letter of thanks and the dubious thrill of seeing their name in (sometimes smeared) mimeograph ink, that's what.

Of course, there are other, less tangible things, such as the benefit of criticism of the readers, the experience in writing that is gained, and this sort of thing; but is this really enough? I think we owe the writers and artists who've appeared here a little more than this, and I'm going to devote this section of "Junkyard" to a series of capsule autobiographies (and when they were too modest, my own humble biographical efforts) of the contributors of the past year.

The only order of appearance to this list is the way they they come up.

Robert E. Gilbert: "Must you expose my private life to the public gaze? Can't I just remain a Man of Mystery? I've sold science fiction stories. Once I sold a detective story. I've sold illustrated articles on art and model railroading. Various individuals have bought drawings and paintings from me...When I was a small boy, I made a Duck Rogers scrapbook filled with pictures cut from the comic pages. Santa Claus brought me a Duck Rogers Rocket Pistol.

"Some autobiography, eh? There was a longer one in Yandro once, and Alan Dodd published one long ago, but I forget what issues they were in. I think there was something in Infinity too. Yes, and in Model Railroader. Not much privacy."

Joe Staton writes that he isn't particularly modest (seconded!) but he can't think of anything to say. I'm to mention that he is a friend of Damon Knight, whoever that is. I do know that Joe is not only a talented artist but a skillful writer, who won the division of fiction in the annual SFFA Egoboo Poll last year. He

won second place in a fiction contest sponsored by the Memphis Commercial Appeal, a contest open throughout the south.

Wilton G. Beggs: "Need a run-down on contributors, eh? What the heck am I supposed to tell? Can't give out much information or I'll get arrested. After that last obscene suggestion we wired Bobby Kennedy, we expect the Knock On the Door any night now, anyhow. :: All I can think of to say is that I'm a dashing handsome bachelor with the morals of a boozy Bedouin; I'm in my upper twenties; and a creek runs through my back yard. In the summer the creek quits running and just walks. So do I. Especially after Saturday night. :: I'll throw you another bone, but what? Oh, yeah, education: Tyler Junior College, Texas Christian University, and Hard Knocks Institute. I think that last school was a joke. The other two schools thought I was. :: Yes, Jim, I do write on an empty stomach. My tummy is empty because I don't earn enough by writing to keep it full. My best beans-earners are A. Morny Mouse Confession stories, which I grind out sobbingly for the women's magazines. This isn't so hard to do, but it does entail giving birth to an illegitimate baby every two weeks. Somehow, I don't seem anatomically equipped for the chore... :: I don't believe I'll tell you about the Stamp Out Fanzines society I'm organizing, or what happened in the ladies' wash room with Maudie May Shackelford. Maudie May would adore the publicity, but some things are sacred. There's not any truth to the rumors about my belonging to a wife-swapping club, so I'll pass on that too. The club exists, but it'd be rather pushy to marry someone just to belong to it. I do hate social climbing."

David H. Keller is surely one of our best known contributors: Since the first days of science fiction in specialized magazines, lo thirty eight years in the corridors of the past, Dr. Keller has been an esteemed fan and professional writer. Not only a fantasy and sf writer, he has been quick to donate his services to fanzines and clubs whenever called upon. His limited edition works, published in mimeograph by various fan groups, bring as high as twenty-five dollars a copy -- and it makes me very happy to reflect that I have an original Keller manuscript in my own messy files.

Charles L. (Chuck) Morris has been the mainstay of the staff ever since the first issue. His history in fandom goes back much further than this, however. Since 1949 he has written fiction, articles, poetry, and letters of comment to the top fanzines of the time. Starting with Robert Silverberg's Spaceship, Chuck has since been published in Dan Adkins' Sata, Robert Coulson's Yandro, Larry Sokol's Zodiac, and just about any really good magazine you'd care to name before the beginning of the sixties. Chuck writes three columns for his local newspaper, the Gaffney Herald (I think that's the name of it -- it's been a while since I've seen the clippings). Two of these deal with poetry (all original) and one is a column of political humor. Besides these regular interests, he also contributes a great number of political articles to the local and other newspapers, and writes sarcastic letters to their editors whenever he comes upon whatever he considers fuggheadedness.

Lee Channing, A.K. Davids, Jack Percit, and Sidney O. Turner are residents of the Twilight Zone.

Martin Gardner needs no introduction to most anyone. He is editor of the mathematical games (he says they're games!) department of Scientific American, author of countless and extremely popular factual books, short story writer extraordinaire (his "The No-Sided Professor" is a classic of light topological fiction). (Here I must run a most unsolicited testimonial. Martin's latest book is a new edition of Lewis Carroll's classic Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. No children's book this, however, for Martin has done an amount of annotation that exceeds the text. His explanation and comments on the various facets of Carroll's life, the incredibly diversified types of annotations make some of the most delightful reading I've come upon in many a moon. The perfect layout of the book, an 8 1/2" x 11" format in which the original text and Sir John Tenniell's illustrations are completely reprinted, is odds-on the most aesthetically pleasing I've seen -- which is what I said not too long ago about Clifton Fadiman's The Mathematical Magpie. The only disadvantage is the \$10.00 price tag -- and if you can get it through the Library of Science like I did, don't pass it up.)

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"What do you want to call your movie, Ringo?" "I'm for calling it Ben Hair." 4p

Dr. J.B. Rhine is the director of the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University, in North Carolina. His many books (such as Parapsychology: Frontier Science of the Mind)

and articles (like "Do Dreams Come True?" in March 1955 Reader's Digest) have made him the best known researcher in the field, while the work itself has made him the world's foremost authority on the paranormal sciences. (Lord, that's a startling thought: the world's foremost authority on anything in a fanzine...) It is through his efforts that parapsychology is becoming "respectable."

Bob Adolfsen is a letterhack of the old variety, a guy who gets his kicks by writing long, detailed evaluatory letters to professional magazines. It's a dying breed, unfortunately -- in the old days they were thick as flies, but the prozines themselves don't seem to care any longer. But Bob goes on reading and writing about what he reads, and maybe, some brave, bright day in the distant future, the old banner and slogan ("That story stank to high heaven, and I'll tell you why...") will again be carried to the lists by a more substantial army.

Arnold Katz is a high school senior in New Hyde Park, New York. He edits a ditto-graphed magazines for newer fans and contributes to others of the same type. He is chairman of the Welcommittee of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, a group he boosts actively.

Jim Hyland is another high school student. An artist of the modern sf school, he also writes fiction for fanzines. He is a member of his school football team, also. Those wishing to see more of Jim's work are referred to the fanzines of the Southern Fan Press Alliance, where he has recently been turning out topnotch work for Warlock and Invader.

Duck Coulson to the contrary, Leland Sapero is one of the most interesting writers in fandom. He edits (along with Jon White and Ron Smith) the rejuvenated Hugo-winning Inside, now called the Riverside Quarterly. Of course, there's nothing quarterly about it, what with two issues in something like a year and a half, but the magazine will easily be the best fanzine on the scene if it can get on a regular schedule. Lee recently conducted a symposium on H.P. Lovecraft, with a panel composed of himself, Sam Russel, Arthur Jean Cox, Robert Bloch, and Fritz Leiber, which is available from the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society at \$2.00 for each offset copy. I guess it's worth it if you're a Lovecraft fan. I'm not, but I got my copy free, so how can I gripe? But buy it if you dig that sort of writer; the profits go to the clubhouse fund -- and any group of grown men who have to hold club meetings in a kids' playground needs a clubhouse.

And last, for no especial reason but my odd memory and the way I write things down, is Bill Ameon, who has also been with us since the first issue. Bill, a high schooler, has offered some of the smoothest-written and most confusing stories I've published. That is, I don't find them confusing, and Bill doesn't, but we're unique. Bill also is interested in art, and draws whenever he gets the chance. Like our wierd first cover. And that's who we met during the first year.





"Oh, not so good this year.  
How're things with you, Cele?"

vague reason.) While we were placing the tape, one of the coaches came upon us and demanded to know what we were doing. I won't explain how we convinced him to go away, but it was an odd feeling to be trapped by a teacher at a supposedly doubtful undertaking, especially since some of the people present had vented their feelings in questionable manner when confronted with minor difficulties and injuries (like slipping halfway off the roof and dangling in midair, all the while screaming obscene expletives). However, we did get the sign up, but the principle requested that it be removed shortly after he saw it the next morning. After informing him that no blankety-blank cossack was going to pull rank on us, we went out and tore it down. At present we haven't decided what to do with it -- the election is still being fought hard -- but a tentative plan is to hang it from the top of the bridge over the Yazoo river, which runs through the heart of metropolitan Greenwood (that is, between the filling station and the grocery store). This may be vetoed, though, as no one wishes to climb amongst the bridge's superstructure in the dark.

Another thing taking up much time is the fact that we're building a new house. (Did you notice the address change in the colophon? Did I remember to put it in?) Whenever my mother isn't dragging me over to check on the progress, my father is. My arm is getting stretched from being jerked from wherever I am by a flying figure dashing headlong for the new residence. This is especially disconcerting when one is at certain delicate tasks, such as driving a car, Talking To Girls, and tying one's shoelaces. But beyond this, I don't really approve of extravagant enterprises like house constructions, mainly because I'm neither mentally or emotionally equipped to deal with the sums of money involved.

I have to admit, though, that the house is a fairly decent one if you dig that kind of thing. It's a story-and-a-half job, on a rather large lot with all types of lousy trees around. (I describe them thusly because I violently resent anything so untidy and unfeeling that it will regularly drop inconceivable amounts of leaves and dead branches all over creation for me to rake up. Also the doggone things get in the

way when I try to mow the thick tangle of undergrowth laughingly referred to as the ~~lawn~~, causing me to propel the mower in annoyingly erratic and unsymmetrical paths. I tried to bribe the contractor to accidentally ram a couple of the horrid, gaunt, overgrown mequites with a bulldozer, but he apparently is one of those disgustingly honest sorts who charges over five bucks for graft.

Nonetheless, if it weren't for the financial and menial disadvantages of the thing, I might be able to get used to the concept. I have been assigned a nice, large room upstairs, and we coerced the builder (who is to date three months behind schedule) to set a small room off the bedroom proper for my reproduction work. There are high supply shelves all the way around, and at the back there is a stand for the press itself. At first the shade it was painted seemed rather nauseating, but now I'm beginning to like it. (But I must surely have the only pea-green printing office in fandom.) The rest of the house is revoltingly normal and healthy and conducive to clean living and thoughts; I plan to stay in my room whenever I'm around the place.

By Ignatz, it's hard to write editorials and listen to the radio at the same time. Which remark, I suppose, will prompt several of the Gilbert and Whatzizname fans to question why I should want to listen to the radio in the ~~first~~ place, what with the Beatles and all. (You knew I'd get around to that sooner or later, didn't you?) But you see, I'm doing some very Freudian work on the psychology of fads, inspired by an issue of The National Insider, forwarded by Chuck Morris (thanks, pal). According to the Insider, the Beatlemania psychosis now sweeping the country is veddy significant and indicative of all sorts of things. "Through their adulation of the hairy Beatles, the Beatle people are expressing their approval of the masculine traits that boys admire in themselves and girls admire in their boyfriends...romantic notions are nourished by such numbers as 'Love Me Do!...' A minister tells how he wants them to talk to young people about drinking, gambling, etc. (Since the Beatles are often shown in the process of getting crokcted, that might be a sort of bum idea.)

Maybe these sociologists know whereof they speak, maybe not. There's some very sound psychology in the promotion of the group, certainly. But transcending all that, I think the Beatles' popularity is something they deserve. They're confounded good showmen, have a dry sense of humor that can't help but make you chuckle, and no matter what your opinion of their music, none can deny that they have a rocking beat, coupled with topnotch mastery of their instruments. These boys made a go of it by rising from lowly backgrounds, and any gravy that comes in, they deserve.

In other words, I like the kooks.

Since last Stranger Than Fact slid into the holding tray, I have again visited the only trufan in the area, Rick Norwood. Knowing Rick is an odd sort of experience: much like managing a funny farm, I would imagine.

I wrote to Rick a week or so before we were due to go to Memphis to tell him to expect me and to hang around the dormitory. At the end of the week we drove up, arriving late Friday night. After a rather unfunny attempt by myself and some non-fan friends to phone the hall at about one a.m., I turned in, resigning myself to waiting until Saturday to make contact. I overslept, and finally called Rick at about nine in the morning. He gave me the location of Stewart Hall, and I said he could expect me about ten-thirty, having some other things to do. As it turned out, the things had already been done, so I ended up climbing the stairs to the dorm at nine-thirty. Rick was still in bed, but when I pounded violently upon the door, his roommate, who was immersed to the shoulders in a wash basin and apparently trying to crawl into the faucet, screamed wetly to come in.

It took a pitched battle of some minutes to get Norwood to release the blanket and come out from under the pillow, but after some earnest persuasion (I told him I was taking his newest Playboy) he finally arose and stood there in some absurd underwear, muttering black oaths about water tortures and voodoo dolls.

Here everything erupted into confusion, as one of the fun-loving residents of Stewart dashed down the hall past the open door, shouting at the top of his lungs,

"Woman in the dormitory!" Norwood dove under the bed, his roommate, streaming water in great rivulets, bounded into a closet, only to be buried under an avalanche of junk he had apparently stored there, and I was left wondering if I should leap for a window or merely close the door. When no member of the opposite sex appeared, they both emerged from their respective refuges and yelled obscenities at the room into which their fellow had disappeared. The whole incident impressed me as being very Princetonian, like what you read in sixty-cent documentary books.

Finally we got organized and drove to a small restaurant so Rick could eat breakfast. Having eaten some time ago, I found it rather nauseating; the smell of warm food when I have a full stomach always depresses me. Rick mixed french toast with black coffee -- I gathered he'd had a wild time in the library the night before, but didn't say so out loud, as Norwood had the knife. During this time Rick explained that he would have to write up a physics lab report before he would be free; this would not take long, however, as he had cut lab and his partner had not come through with the notes. Marveling at his calmness in such a situation, I followed him out and we drove back to Southwestern. There Rick wrote a page and a half of meaningless but impressive bull and drew an equally irrelevant diagram, remarking to me, "There goes my A in physics." The situation was saved, however, by the fact that the lab assistant, a senior to whom Rick was supposed to turn over the report, was in a mellow mood and when Rick explained the problem said something like, "Well, keep it untill you get the notes, but for blanks' sake don't let old man Somethingorother find out!"

Overjoyed, ( that is to say, moderately relieved -- I never saw anyone with such composure) Rick led the way to his car, and we journeyed to the city's bookstores. In one of these the Beatles' records were being piped over the building, and remarked I that the Beatles were pretty good. Rick looked incredulous and said, "You mean that's them? Why did you have to tell me?"

After lunch Rick drove us out to meet John Dull, a famish not-person who actually exists. We looked through his old copies of Galaxy with Wally Wood covers, then drove to Shoney's for no particular reason except to oggle at the carhops. If you've eaten there, you'll remember that you drive up and park beside an intercom transceiver connected with the building. When you are ready to order, you press a button and a squaky waitress says "Whatcha want, buddy?" We pressed the button five times and harrassed whoever answered into a sort of hysterical silence, then drove off to Southwestern, where we attempted to put out a one-shot but couldn't seem to find inspiration.

Hoping to rediscover our collective Muse, Rick, John, and I piled into his car and careened back toward Shoney's and the base necessity of nourishment. On the way Norwood sang filk songs (I seem to remember one from The Fellowship of the Ring, but I may be confusing this episode with another). I contributed one I cribbed from Ed Meskeys, and Rick nearly ran off the road, mainly because he was trying to cover his ears with both hands while I was singing. Other than a trivial happening in which we ran over a curb while parking, we made it into the building without mishap.

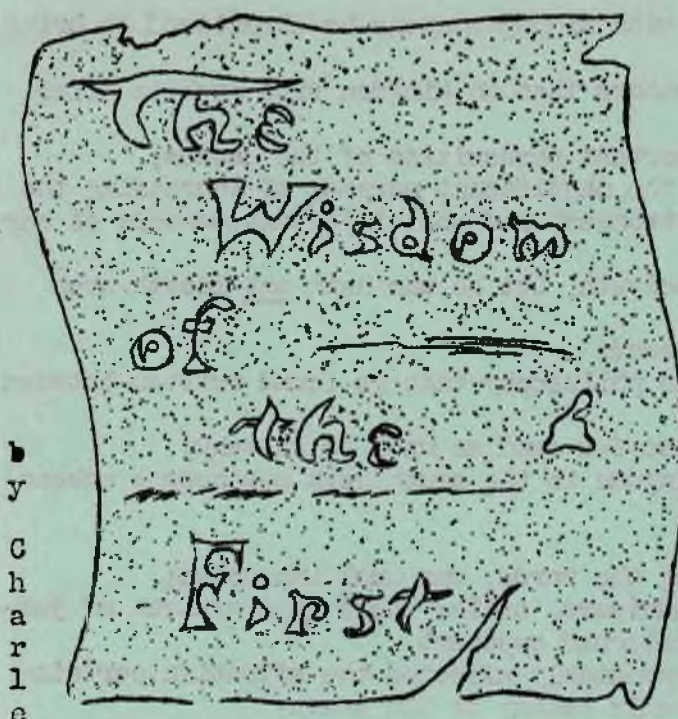
At the conclusion of the dinner, I decided I should be getting home, and directed Rick to the place where I was staying. Bidding them a fond and etc. farewell, I stood back and watched the battered chevy clunk off into the distance, noticing with characteristic cynicism that gas was sloshing moistly from the tank at every jounce, due to the absence of a cap on the outlet. At the time, this struck me as a fitting emblem for organized fandom -- but since the NBF has already given us that, I will not expostulate.

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s L. Morris



1 And it came to pass in those days that a worker of wonders came into being and traversed the land,  
 2 And his greatest and most impressive ability was the placing of his feet into his mouth,  
 3 Although one of these same feet was covered over with a wondrous thing called by name a plaster-of-paris cast.  
 4 And the people, being of little mind, saith among themselves: Here truly is a leader of men;  
 5 But they saith naught of him as a leader of women.  
 6 And one of the things that he spake was: I am your only hope, and I come with humble belief that thou needest my great strength and wisdom;  
 7 But first thou must cast out the unbelievers who will not do my bidding.  
 8 For truly it is said that if the mountain will not come to Mohammed, then Mohammed shall go to the mountain.  
 9 And straightaway dissenters arose, and

the voice of the hurdle was heard in the land,  
 10 And this hurdle was the same which all men must jumpeth ere they attain that mountain of which he spake;  
 11 And the voice sayeth: How doth thou proposeth to deposeth he who even now sitteth on the mountain's peak?  
 12 He answereth by saying: Truly I asserteth, that he who now percheth atop the mountain is of little worth and is indeed a highwayman;  
 13 For doth he not receiveth alms from charlatans, thereby denying this to others who are more deserving?  
 14 And lo! one of his own kind ariseth and speaketh: Nay. I too perspire to aspire to the mountain's peak. Why dost thou not debateth me?  
 15 And the first was sore afraid, and trembling, saith: We are of the same ilk, and must not war among ourselves lest he whom we proposeth to deposeth shall in the end stand victorious upon our bruised and bloody remains.  
 16 And forsooth another arose and crieth: He doth not fight well who fighteth alone;  
 17 And the people were affrighted to see that the new voice belongeth not to a man but to a woman,  
 18 Who creaketh with the burden of three-score and six summers;  
 19 And she saith: I have but small hope, but verily I say unto ye, that the people should have a variety of choice,  
 20 Therefore I become as one who runneth.  
 21 And the first two, hearing her words, thinketh privately to themselves: Runneth? At her age she is lucky if she walketh.  
 22 But aloud they saith: Welcome.  
 23 And the first who had aspired to leadership resumed his wise counsels,  
 24 And saith: I proposeth that the poor should not be given alms except they worketh.  
 25 But the second two crieth in unison: How canst they worketh when there is no work?  
 26 And he replieth by saying: Let them inherit, as did I.  
 27 And he also saith: For the poor hath only votes to giveth, but the rich giveth wealth;  
 28 But the other two listened not, and saith: What good accrueth if a man gaineth the world but loseth the vote?  
 29 And the first smileth but answereth not.  
 30 Instead he saith: To the south of us there is a small kingdom which opposeth us;

31 Therefore I propose that great warriors with mighty weapons be dispatched to bring the rebel sheep back into the fold;  
32 For it is written in the books of our fathers that no kingdom with much to offer in profit shall be allowed to stray,  
33 Nor to squander such profit on the unimportant necessities of the masses,  
34 When that same profit could be used for the magnificent purpose of increasing the number of villas and ranches owned by the strongest and most important members of our great and glorious society;  
35 And it is also said that he who hath receiveth, but he who hath not loseth even that which he hath,  
36 Nor is it meet that such wisdom be dismissed;  
37 For to do so is not commensurate with the philosophy that is found written between the lines of the history of our way;  
38 And this philosophy readeth: Never hath so few owned so much to so many;  
39 It canst not be denied that the small kingdom to the south hath now become unbearable,  
40 For they cutteth off our water.  
41 And he who sat atop the mountain, hearing the words, was much impressed;  
42 He scratcheth his head and calling his advisors, saith: There is a modicum of justification for the suggestions of my much-esteemed opponent,  
43 For what we have done to date has not appreciably affected the situation pertaining to the re-acquisition of our former economic colony to the south;  
44 In short, we must of necessity employ force as a means of bringing her back into the family that she may produce profits for our mighty minority as she once did before she was infected with the rebel illness;  
45 And so saying, he forthwith dispatched warriors with great weapons to re-educate the small kingdom to the south;  
46 And lo! they did lay about with great enthusiasm and purpose,  
47 And the small kingdom was conquered, and her rulers deposed;  
48 And at once a new ruler was installed, who returned the kingdom to its former rulers gladly,  
49 Saying: Here are thy sheep and thy profits as it was in the beginning.  
50 And the great and mighty minority rejoiced, crying: Our plantations and corporate ownings are returned to us; tomorrow the stock market jumpeth;  
51 Glorious indeed are the fruits of the bomb, for now the axiom that our fathers worshipped will once again be realized;  
52 The axiom which saith: The rich grow richer and the poor poorer.  
53 And while they revelled and sang psalms of joy, a thunder began in the sky,  
54 And the earth trembled, felling cities and mountains, even that mountain to whose peak so many had aspired;  
55 And he who sat atop that mountain calleth out in anger: The first who desired to occupy my perch hath brought this upon us; he shall be punished for his transgressions.  
56 But the first could not be found, having closeted himself in a deep cavern far to the west.  
57 And a terrible wind arose, scattering man before it as chaff;  
58 And the fire which followed withered flesh and charred the land as a leaf is charred in a forge;  
59 For it is written, that fire purifies and the wind sweepeth clean all that remains.  
60 And as it is also written, there came a time when all men were ~~created~~ created equally,  
61 Until at last there was silence in the earth, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, even as it was in the beginning;  
62 ....And peace reigneth now forever.

part 2

## THE RETURN

1 But lo! there cometh a day when the wind dieth and the sun riseth in tranquility;

2 And the First, having escaped the devastation, ventureth forth from his retreat and gazed appalled upon that which was left of Earth's glory;

3 And he saith aloud to himself: I am all that is good in the Earth, and all that is worthy of survival, for is it not said that the weak shall inherit and they who liveth by the Ford shall perish thereby?

4 And knowing not how he had mixed his metaphors, he began to walk in an easterly direction, proud in the knowledge that his fondest dreams had been made into fact and that he was absolute monarch of all he surveyed;

5 For it was evident that there were now no votes to defeat him and no man to oppose his beliefs;

6 And he sang ballads as he walked, and the ballads were entitled "Cool Goldwater" and "There's Goldwater in Them There Hills" and "All Is Not Goldwater That Glitters" and "Everything's RIGHT With the World";

7 Until, in the third month of his journey, he came at last to the former area of his greater influence, in the southeastern region of the nation;

8 And in the ruins of a once-populous city he bespied that which he had thought never to see again;

9 For gathered around a fire of logs sitteth three men who looketh in fright as the First advanced;

10 And one standeth up and saith: Art thou cometh to punish us for our trespasses?

11 But the First raiseth his hand and replieth: Nay. I cometh to receive the homage that is rightfully mine.

12 And the three recognized their master, and riseth to attention as subjects arise in the presence of a King;

13 And the First was amazed that their skins were as black as soot, and shone like oil;

14 And he saith: I was not aware that I conversed with peasants not worthy to breathe the same air I breatheth. How cometh thou here?

15 And one speaketh in a quavering voice, saying: We are not as we seem, for indeed is the finger of fate a fickle force, forever fretful and frantic in its facetious and facile fomenting of fury and fanatic farce among foolish folk of fatuous and fragile flesh.

16 And the First, growing suddenly dizzy, crieth: Hold it, Dad! I don't recognize the black skin, but the speech is known. Telleth me, art thou by chance a student of the Mighty Thurmond, who talketh as no man before him, and yet saith naught?

17 And the black one answereth by saying: Nay. But I am known by that name, and underneath I am white, even as thee.

18 At which the First falleth down flat upon the ground, and lieth there acquiver until the three black men picketh him up and setteth him on his feet;

19 And he looketh at them and saith: Thou art black as the pit, and yet I knoweth thee as three who despiseth the darkness of flesh, and were once actively opposed to equality under duress;

20 And he pointeth to one and saith: Thy name is Wallace, once monarch of that great area called Alabama;

21 And he indicated the other, saying: Thy name is Barnett, who presided over the territory of the Big River;

22 And here he was interrupted by a great flood of words, which were delivered by the one called Thurmond;

23 And theses same words were: Thou art right, for we have been baffled by being blackened from belly to backside by the big bomb blast brought on by the baboons whose babble and barefaced baloney barbequed billions because of their benighted and barbarous bent for ballot-baiting and banal bemoaning of the beautiful bipartisan benefits of biblically-based bigotry.

24 And suddenly, to the great relief of the listeners, there was a mighty roll of thunder which ended the speech, and rain began to fall in torrents;

25 And lo! as it raineth, a pact was agreed upon by the four who were brothers under the skin and as alike as peas in a pot;

26 And the pact setteth forth that the three black men would henceforth and forever be as servants to the First, ~~was~~ as white as the snow because of his stay in the

cavern to the west;

27 For it is written that a little child shall lead, and that the natural condition of sheep inclines them to follow;

28 And the truth of the superiority of one kind over another kind lies in adages having as their basis such wisdom as is expressed in cliches often used in daily conversation;

29 These same cliches being: As black as sin, Whiter than the wings of a dove, Black-hearted, and Light dispels the darkness;

30 And the joyful four lived long as servants and served, content in their togetherness;

31 And the one called Thurmond many times each day recited the battle cry of a now-evaporated organization which had once inspired so many to that great institution of unthink;

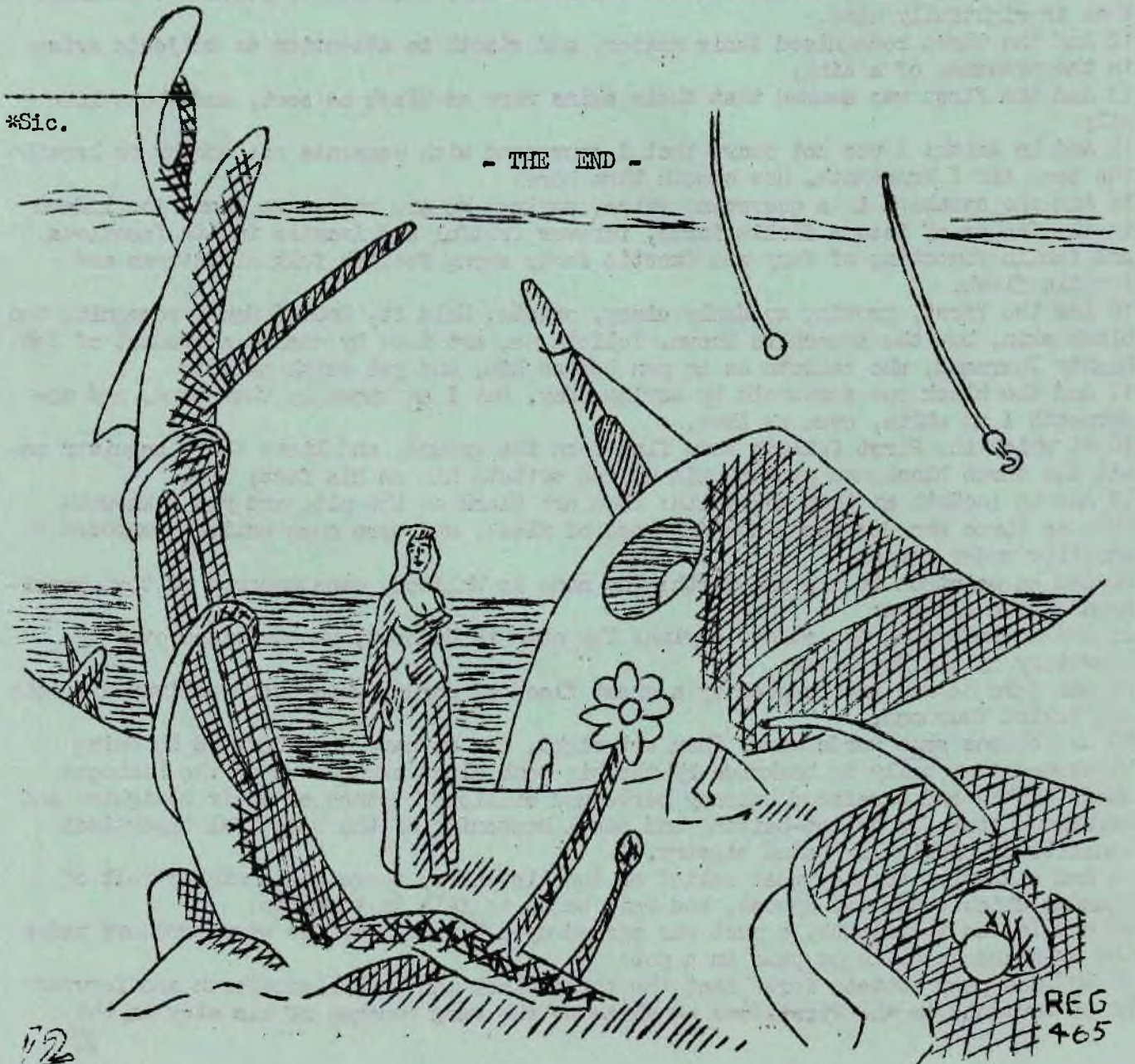
32 And the name of this organization had been the Southern Baptist Convention, and the words of the unforgettable hymn were these:

Paeans of praise as preachers parlay  
Pulpit promotions for people who pay,  
Promising parishoners perpetual play,  
Plus Pollyanna pablum permitting us to prey.\*

33 Amen.

\*Sic.

- THE END -





## Manifesto of the Institute of

### General Eclectics

by Martin Gardner

1. Membership in the Institute shall be restricted to anal erotics who have strong compulsions to collect, preserve, and classify philosophical ideas.
2. The Basic Axiom of the Institute shall be that all philosophical systems are in fundamental agreement, apparent differences arising from variable verbal formulations and/or variable emphases. Beneath superficial differences in color, shape, texture, odor, the systems are manifestations of one unified, simple, basic stuff.
3. Members shall be required to purchase and read Science and Sanitation, by the late Count Aulayore Beeyemski, founder of General Eclectics, to acquire a thorough understanding of the Count's countless reasons for opposing the contemporary positivist attempt to purge philosophy of "obsolete" metaphysical systems.
4. The symbol of the Institute, which shall appear on all letterheads, publications, etc., shall be the Orphic Egg -- primordial form of the cosmos and the unity toward which all creation strives. As a common object, easy to grasp, smooth, colorless, perfect in symmetry yet not uninteresting in shape like a sphere, the egg symbolizes the accessibility, unity, clarity, simplicity, and symmetry of eclectic philosophical thought.
5. Because different philosophic systems are merely different verbal formations of the same Orphic Egg, all metaphysical debate shall be considered as pointless as the war in Gulliver's Travels, fought over the question of how to break an egg.
6. The Basic Axiom shall be symbolized by a pedagogic device called The Structural Similarium, consisting of a series of plastic, egg-shaped beads of differing sizes and colors, strung on cord. The device shall also play indispensable roles in several of the Institute's secret sex rituals.
7. Male members shall be required to shave their heads daily, the egg-shaped appearance of their skulls serving as a reminder of the basic unity of all egg-headed speculation.
8. Members of the Institute are forbidden to belong to any religious organization. Each Sunday they shall attend services of a different sect until all accessible sects have been exhausted, at which points the visits shall be repeated and this practice shall be continued throughout the life of the member.
9. Members of the Institute are forbidden to hold partisan political views. During election campaigns members shall wear buttons of all political parties and on election day cast an eclectic vote for all candidates. In time of war, members shall remain neutral. If eligible for draft, they shall register as conscientious objectors.
10. Members of the Institute are forbidden to make "value judgements" concerning any moral or aesthetic matter. All cultures shall be regarded as equally good, all artistic works as equally beautiful. All possible variations of cocktails shall be served at social functions of the Institute. A clearing house shall be established through which members may periodically exchange such possessions as neckties, hats, silverware, jewelry, books, recordings, paintings, children, spouses, etc.
11. Chief project of the Institute shall be the publication of dictionaries by which

assertations in one philosophical language shall be translated into assertions of another: i.e., Plato-Aristotle, Kant-James, Russell-Dewey, Freud-Barth, Carnap-Sartre, etc. Funds shall be set aside for research on the development of electronic machines by which philosophical systems may be elaborated, new systems devised, and translations from system to system effected rapidly and accurately.

12. Funds shall also be set aside for the publication in approximately one thousand volumes of a Summa Summa Dialectica which will combine Aristotle's passion for analysis and classification with Plato's passion for mixture and synthesis, as outlined in Count Beeyemski's earlier work, Prolegomena to a Future Summa Summa. The Summa Summa Eclectica will explore dialectically all possible expressions of all possible systems of all possible metaphysical ideas.

13. The Institute shall publish a Museum of Identica in which striking identities of philosophic-literary expressions shall be dramatized for public enlightenment. Examples: George Herbert Mead's discussion of his concept of "taking the role of the other" and the popular song, "You're Nobody if Nobody Loves You"; D.H. Lawrence's novel Women in Love and the song, "I only Want a Buddy, not a Sweetheart"; the collected works of Santayana and Dr. Seuss' book, Mulberry Street.

14. The Institute shall maintain a monthly periodical titled But, the title derived from the terminal lines of Humpty Dumpty's song in Chapter 6 of Through the Looking Glass:

And when I found the door was shut,  
I tried to turn the handle, but --

Members of the Institute shall cultivate the habit of ending sentences with "but" to suggest that all expressions have an obverse, rear side, as true, beautiful, and good as the front.

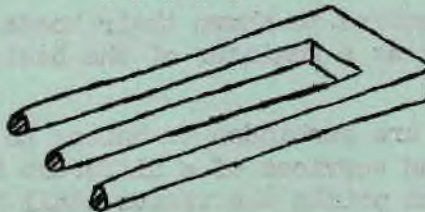
15. Additional funds shall be allocated for more intensive investigation into the cathartic effects of General Eclectic training on neurotics and psychotics whose rigid dogmatism and inability to cope with alternate attitudes are major causes of their mental constipation.

16. The Institute's Secretary shall be a woman named Barabara, after the traditional name for the syllogism: All A is B, all B is C, therefore all A is C.

17. When members of the Institute are accused of being anal erotics, their response shall be, "Oh yeah? Anal erotic, my but!"

-- Martin Gardner

\* \* \* \* \*



The above model, a rather poor tracing from an illustration of Martin Gardner's review of Experiments in Topology (by Stephen Barr, who writes some good stuff when he wants to), is a Two Slot, Mark 4, Blivit -- origin unknown. It has been causing a bit of quiet hysteria in a couple of popular magazines recently, and a larger diagram, contributed anonymously, appeared in the June issue of Analog. Campbell offered ten dollars or a two years' subscription (wonder who would get to make the choice?) to the person who sent it in, if only he would identify himself. The diagram was labeled: "Hole Location Gage :: One Req'd :: Mat'l: Tool Steel :: HDN & GND 027-6122." Now, it's obvious that the figure is one of those odd connectivities turned up by topologists in their mathematical meanderings, but -- tool steel? Hole Location Gage? And the letters and numbers? Goshwow, gang, a real topological mystery-thriller right here in good old 1964! Anybody know what gives? -- jdh

\* Information found in the review originally appeared in the bulletin of The Library of Science.

# The Jew



by Wilton G. Beggs



From the moment I met her at the Desert Sands Hotel, I knew the Earthwoman had four major flaws. One: her amorous attachment to young men from Sirius. Two: her old-fashioned terrestrial superstitions. Three: the vanity about her voice. And four: she loved a Fomalhaut mastosaur.

I was not sure how to kill the Earthwoman, however, until I discovered her fifth flaw. Though I prided myself on being a sophisticated scion of great Sirius XI, and also a rather blasé murderer, I could hardly believe the Earthwoman's words. We had been married about a month before she told me.

"Forgive my deception, dear Zorp," she whimpered one evening, cuddling up in my lap with a woebegone expression on her greasy face. "Those pills I bought during our honeymoon...you thought they were to curb my appetite? I was afraid you wouldn't marry a dying girl. The Martian doctor at the casino warned me, though lord knows he was but the last of many who've said the same thing this past year. It's my heart. My poor heart has had its final rejuvenation. Too much excitement from this point on and I'll..."

There was no need to finish the sentence. The decadent Earthers are notorious for physical weaknesses; few of them can be rejuvenated beyond their one-hundredth birthdays. Congratulating myself on this stroke of luck, I comforted my new wife as she wished, although this was not a pleasant task. The fat old devil weighed twice as much as I, and had the embrace of a Tau Ceti scorpion. But a youth must make sacrifices when he is blessed with the good looks of Sirius, so I pretended not to mind her rib-cracking caresses. Actually, her unsuspected illness made my life seem wonderful again.

When I had met her beside the Desert Sands swimming pool, I hadn't anticipated all the trouble I was going to have with the Earthwoman. After all, she wouldn't be the first bride I'd liquidated. I was in the inheritance business then, you see, and New Las Vegas is the best place in the galaxy to meet rich old divorcees and widows. It's ludicrous how marriage minded elderly ladies can be. Sometimes I felt almost bad about the ways most Sirian giggilos gull women in those fancy resorts.

I couldn't be cruel like that; I don't have an unkind bone in my clean-limbed body. The only thing I did each time, during the annual Sirian wife-hunt, was to find myself a moneyed old fool with a convenient flaw. As soon as I had married her, following the usual accelerated courtship, I turned that flaw against her. Then there'd be a funeral. None of my wives suffered, please note. A humane accident--which they practically arranged themselves-- and I became a wealthier man.

Thank the United Worlds for standardized inheritance laws! The UW rulings on community property have made Sirius XI prosperous again. Believe me, the Galactic Bureau of Investigation isn't nearly so accomplished as J. Edgar Philpott thinks. His boys never bothered me at all, but then it is a big galaxy, and the jails are awfully crowded with Sirians these days.

So, I had no difficulty in that department. My first bride was an Epsilon Eridania who loved mountain climbing, so a rope broke on our honeymoon in the Alps of Procyon X. My second wife (Epsilon Indi) took afternoon naps beside an atomic sleep-

a-wrinkle-off machine, and was inexplicably crowned! My third...but Sirian shoptalk leads nowhere. Simply stated, each crone I married in New Las Vegas died soon after the nuptials, and the death proved impossible to nail on her tearful young husband.

Maybe I was just lucky until my sixth marriage. I had done so well with the flaw theory that I thought it foolproof. This time, holding to the ancient fossil-fuel fortune the Earthwoman would leave me, I intended to quit the inheritance profession for good. An old Mars friend, Pablo O'Flaherty Goldberg, had offered me a partnership in the Desert Sands, and the proposition was too generous to reject. Besides this, Mama kept visagraphing that I should settle down with a few of the Alpha Centauri blondes in the New Las Vegas chorus lines. I knew if the scandal leaked back to her that I'd been living in sheer monogamy, Mama would have a fit. What respectable Sirian mother wants a crummy monogamist in her family?

The only trouble was, this Earthwoman proved astonishingly aggressive. Everyone in the United Worlds is aware how primitive the exotic Sol III provinces of Tibet, Borneo, and Texas are, but I had been married to the woman a full week before I realized the seriousness of my problem. It became obvious to me that the man who kills an Earth savage must be careful not to get his neck broken in the process. Any Sirian anxious to make his mother proud can understand my uneasiness. My last job was threatening the virtue of a theory that had paid marvelous dividends in the past.

And in addition to the need to kill the Earthwoman for both moral and economic reasons, she was--I'll be brutally honest--a revolting wife. I didn't even like her.

Now, don't assume I'm a snob toward these uncouth old bats from barbaric regions. Some of my cousins are snobbish, but I'm not. My fifth wife was a fuzzy female from Altair VIII. She had hairy ears, ate space onions in bed, and smoked the foulest brand of Altairian cigars imaginable. Yet I remained fond of the smelly ape up to the moment I fixed her cabinet, on the day I joined her New Las Vegas matter-transmitting society. Those matter-transmitting nuts will go anywhere for an outing, you know. She and I got to the appointed rendezvous on Betelgeuse XXXII in time for the society's biweekly picnic, but Stinky arrived in very small pieces.

Gad, what a mess. We buried her with honors in twenty empty mayonnaise jars. But enough about Stinky:

"Hands off my sweet hubby," my next wife--the Earthwoman--told the "girls" attending our wedding at Pablo Goldberg's lovely little three-minute-marriage chapel. "I'll put a space-gypsy hex on any of you witches who lays a finger on Zorp. Go get your own Sirians. I fired my Capellan voice teacher yesterday just because she oggled him in the lobby. That's nothing to what I'll do to one of you."

In my innocence I laughed at her fierceness. Never having visited Earth, and already badly in debt from running through Stinky's estate in record fashion, I had leaped at the chance to marry another fortune. Thus I violated my primary marriage rule: I didn't view the quarry in her native planetary habitat. Blinded by visions of those Alpha Centauri blondes Mama kept visagraphing me about, I had stepped from a matter-transmitting cabinet in a squallid Earth town called El Paso, and my wife and I were lifting toward her cattle ranch eighty miles away before I had an inkling of my future hardships.

I suppose you'll put me down as the type of Sirian who regards any planet besides his own as a wilderness--but I do think Earth a foul place. I don't care if it was the home of my ancestors; once you see Earth, you know why they left. It is terribly underpopulated today, for people have been emigrating for many generations in order to get into the mainstream of the galaxy. The hayseeds who remain on Earth might as well live in its twentieth century. You show me any planet where the wind is allowed to blow as it wishes, and I'll show you a backwater globe a thousand years behind the progressive parts of the United Worlds.

I've never liked these wide-open planets in any form, so I had a phobia from the beginning about the Texas countryside. Many times while lift-born about our colonies on Sirius X or XII, I'd gazed down distastefully at some dreary rural landscape, but always while on the way from one bright city to another. My sixth wife hadn't told me her ranch was located in one of the dreariest spots in the universe. The very idea of Sol-blistered habitations in that barren vastness appalled me.



Close up, I found things no more reassuring. I cursed silently in ten obscene Spican languages all the way from the liftdock into a horrid village named, of all things, Paradise. The town was unbelievable to my Sirian eyes. It seemed built on a sandstorm, glued together by cattle droppings, and surrounded to the horizons by big-eared beasts that took my breath away. The Earthwoman assured me that jackrabbits are harmless, but I had seldom beheld more vicious-looking beasts.

"I need a drink," I muttered, counting three Baptist churches and no liquor store.

The citizens along Main Street were slightly more incredible than the rabbits. I hadn't seen so many bowlegs since I was a child and Mama took me to a centaur rodeo on Achernar V. From the way the yokels grinned as the Earthwoman and I sped down Main Street in her ground car, I decided Paradise must consider my rich wife as big an eccentric as I did.

"Philistines," she dismissed them grandly, roaring us off in a cloud of dust. "They have no appreciation of Capellan music. Nor do they have faith in the magic powers of space gypsies. And the kind of pets they keep, dear Zorp! Horses, dogs, that sort of foolishness. Now, a mastosaur has character. What could be more thrilling than a half-elephant lizard? I bought my Hector directly from a Fomalhaut rajah. Hector's the only mastosaur on Earth. I reared him from a calf, but he hates my guts. I adore that kind of independence, don't you?"

She stopped the car shortly in front of her gigantic ranch house, fifteen lonely miles beyond the Paradise city limit. It didn't bother me that she tried to run down a priceless Denebian peacock loafing in the driveway; however, I blanched at the wild crew of space gypsies who dashed up to shake my hand when the car ejected us. The Romany tribes originated on Earth, of course, but it merely indicates the planet's low position when one realizes they only sail their caravans to the most backward of worlds. And when my wife gave a yell of primeval love to the snorting Fomalhaut monster in a steel-fenced lot beside the house, I began to wonder what cave-woman bedlam I had entered.

My confidence in the flaw theory wilted further during the next month. The Earthwoman would have overwhelmed any Sirian. Dinners of dead cow flesh, followed by atrocious Cappellan arias on the floating veranda, were not conducive to the hatching of homicidal plots. I discovered also that there would be gypsy seances and nuclear-Ouija-board sessions every other noon. Early evenings were enlivened by the bellowing of the mastosaur, who detested my wife's veranda singing with vehement intensity. For many of the initial weeks at the ranch, I walked about fighting Earth shock. Besides, the damn gravity was all wrong.

It was with joy and relief, then, that I listened to my wife's confession concerning her ailing heart. The threads of murder fell neatly into place at last. I was startled at how uncomplicated the dispatch of this woman would be. No longer did I worry that she might disprove the flaw theory, for J. Edgar Philpott and the GBI should not suspect a thing.

I smiled for days on Sol III horned toad, centipede, and armadillo alike. "Flaw One," I would whisper eagerly. "Love plus excitement will equal a quick finish for her. I am unbeatable in the area. Ha! We Sirians wrote the book on that."

Regrettably, there are disasters in each young gigglo's life that should not be recorded. Two weeks later, my boyish face peered pale and emaciated from my depilatory mirror. But the Earthwoman had swallowed her pills and was blooming as though her heart were an organ composed of iron.

"I've failed," I told the mirror one morning as it shaved me. "I can't bear this horror further. So I'll use Flaw Two. Earth cardiacs and their superstitions don't mix, either. My spouse will certainly die of excitement if her late husband returns from the grave."

So mentally shaken by the two exhaustive weeks that my insta-psychiatry pills were small comfort, I spent another month learning the mannerisms and physiognomy of my predecessor. A Sirian himself, he had not been a third so beautiful as I, although extraordinarily handsome by galactic standards, naturally. At the conclusion of the month, dressed in the dead man's clothing from the attic, I felt my wife's funeral



was guaranteed.

I had applied makeup and had put on the same clothes three evenings earlier, and had tested the effectiveness of my disguise on the Earthwoman's Regulan cook, Rass Wruk. Seeing me, old Wruk tumbled down the attic escalator to the tune of a fractured antenna and a magnificent carol of Regulan profanity. Afterwards, I did not doubt that I was the twin of the deceased man's portrait over the dining-hall mantel.

My wife's superstitious fears had been aroused to fever heat by Wruk's account of the spectre that had attacked him in the attic. I approached her darkened bed boldly. I kept the moonlight at my back. I was giving a preliminary groan, preparing for the cry to freeze her heart forever, when the exasperating female leaped from the

bed. She grabbed for a laser pistol hidden under her pillow. Making a strategic retreat, I ran screaming for the door.

"Get!" My wife shot frenziedly, heat and light boiling around my poor unblemished head. "I have a new husband. I don't need the ghost of another!"

Rattled, I forgot I could hide in the attic; I dashed down the front escalator into the yard. Hearing the Earthwoman clumping onto the floating veranda, I gave way to absolute panic. I bolted for the darkness of the mastosaur's pen, where the evil beast promptly revealed a lamentable lack of hospitality. Barely escaping back over the fence, I fell, broken and bloody, into a cactus patch while abrupt peals of laughter pierced my senses.

"Honey!" My wife quaked with mirth on the veranda, and gypsies whooped merrily in their nightgowns. "I really thought you were a ghost. What a practical joker you are! You're as naughty as Hector. No wonder I love you both."

Weeping with hysteria, I spent days of pain in a kildare machine. I began to think longingly of my fourth wife, a timid little gourmet from Alpha Crucis whose demise had been accomplished by so simple a thing as a dish of stewed Vegan toadstools.

As the kildare knitted my bones together, I became confident again. The Earthwoman was gasping for breath, fingering the left side of her chest, and gulping pills throughout the time she nursed me by fiddling with the torture dials of the kildare. I was positive her obstinate heart had taken as many blows as it could sustain.

Flaw Three was now employed. My wife's obsession with Capellan music was a mark of her eccentricity. As any infant on Sirius XI knows, no worthwhile sound ever came from Capella. Its shrieky, wailing operas have been passe at least thirty generations. Earth is so far behind everywhere else, however, that my wife had misspent her girlhood in dreams of being a diva at the Capella XX La Scala-Metropolitan. Rass Wruk told me she had driven a number of voice teachers mad with her lack of talent. The yearning for musical recognition had not left her, but she had wisely refrained from singing in public for many years.

To end this unwonted modesty on her part, I began praising my wife's singing as my strength returned. The compliments were more flowery each day. Every evening after she had regaled me with her howls, I urged her to suppress her musical talents no

longer. She believed me implicitly within a few weeks. Encouragement was all she required to perpetrate the most extravagant of follies.

"I have her," I said to a centipede on the ceiling one night, as I listened to the singing and the mastosaur's bellowing below. "Flaw Three. The excitement produced by a shattering of incredible vanity. No diseased heart can withstand such humiliation."

My wife's enthusiasm and increasing consumption of heart pills invigorated me. Leaving the kildare, I was fascinated by my own guile as she announced recklessly that she had severed connections with her Mars doctors. For the purpose of launching a musical tour of twenty nearby planets, she hired the Paradise spacemen hall and invited the citizenry to a preliminary recital. A whole generation had not been exposed to her voice. She expected the local Philistines to give her a wonderful send-off.

I gloated as the weeks dragged by and she consulted her fortune tellers in preparation for the exhibition. By eight o'clock on the designated evening, the hall was packed to the expansible walls with hundreds of bowlegs. The Earthwoman had not only imported more gypsies and had them sew Antaresan charms into her underwear, but she had also bribed the fates further by matter-transmitting a robot orchestra in from Capella XX. By the time the curtain dissolved, she was beside herself with anticipation, puffing laboriously, and swallowing pills by the dozens. In a moment of weakness, I almost pitied her. I made a wager with myself concerning the exact minute when her overtaxed heart would stop as the assembly rose en masse and plunged toward the exits.

I was mentally embracing a flock of Alpha Centauri brides by the conclusion of the initial arria. My wife's voice displayed fewer velvety tones than a chorus of Procyonian jackasses. The effect was most gratifying: Paradise could not credit the sound to a human throat. Within seconds after her Capellan shrieks commenced, the hall was a sea of bewilderment. Young and old crouched shaken in their seats. Dread of the unknown flooded the cheeks of the children. I heard several sweet-faced old Earth ladies mutter obscenities that night to shame a Spican sailor. I prepared to visaphone the nearest funeral parlor.

At the climax of the recital, Paradise stampeded. The yokels professed to love the un-Sirian sounds! They romped, they roared, they threw hats into the air. Men who had shivered with loathing bore my guffawing wife about on their shoulders.

"I don't understand!" I screamed with fortitude, beating my head against the floor. "Quit walking on me!" I instructed the unruly crowd.

Partial understanding came when I fought to my feet and made inquiries of some dour-faced individuals on the side lines. The economy of Earth is, apparently, in the stone age. Paradise was not a prosperous community, and my wife owned "bank." Although I cannot define "bank" (patently an archaism obsolete on other planets) several persons told me draught and "mortgage" (?) were rife, and "bank" was therefore important. Since many people needed "loan" (again I can't explain) and since... But you are probably as perplexed by now as I was.

From that night of cruel bewilderment, I was a man possessed. My pride, my faith in the flaw theory were in danger. I could feel monogamy and Earth taking their toll. An educated lover frustrated amid a hostile environment, I was courting an emotional trauma beyond the scope of even my treasured insta-psychiatry capsules.

"I'll get her yet," I vowed, lifting out to the ranch and staring blankly at Mars in the twinkling sky. "I'll get her or renounce New Las Vegas forever."

When my wife came home from the all-night celebration following the recital, I could not control myself.

"Looki at you!" I yelled scorchingly, as she staggered into the house with a pair of her gypsies. "Twenty-four hours without sleep and enough Pollurdian whiskey, after the Baptists left the hall, to float a water ship. And your heart still keeps beating."

The awful woman burped with intoxicated good humor. "Don't worry about that," she said, pinning a coy leer upon me. "I'm an excellent actress where Sirians are concerned, dear Zorp. I've grabbed my heart and lied about my diet pills ever since I saw the honeymoon was over. How could anyone blame me? You've been sooooo sympathetic and loving."

The Earthwoman and her vile gypsies laughed uproarously. I experienced a desire to faint. This I did with enviable grace, my innate dignity causing me to do no more than moan in a refined manner for my capsules.

Thereafter, my spirits were at the nadir. This sixth wife had made an idiot of me, handing me the sort of defeat I had never before known. I was so dazed that I could not attempt another solution of the problem. I began to have nightmares in which I was doomed to wander Earth forever in search of a matter-transmitting cabinet that would take me home to Mama.

My wife was jocularly itself. Her second recital would be in an antiquated farming town on Alpha Centauri IV, where she was reputed to own more of that mysterious "mortgage" than Earth has rabbits. Few would jeer at the performance, I was assured by Rass Wruck, though she should bomb them with the operatic tones of a hydrogen blast. The Earthwoman threw away her diet pills, fattened markedly, and breathed with the lung power of her mastosaur.

Several days prior to the date set for the Alpha Centauri debacle, my wife conferred with her favorite gypsy and took to retiring early, then rising at midnight. She would waddle out to the prairie. There under a lone tree, clutching the gypsy's expensive Antaresan charms, she practiced her repertoire in a belief that the magical midnight air improved the quality of her vocal cords. Alpha Centauri IV, the gypsy predicted, was in for a greater treat than Paradise.

Only a man of culture who has been awakened at night by a Capellan aria can understand my disgust. I was not alone in this feeling. As soon as the noise reached him, the mastosaur went berserk. Hector, I believe, had the soul of a Sirian. It became clear to me that his one desire was to put an end to the ugly sounds. During each performance, I was drenched in perspiration while the scaly-hided beast switched his massive tail, thumped the ground with his trunk, and bellowed and crashed against the gate.

If I had not been in the confused state resulting from my depression, I would have grasped my last opportunity sooner than I did. I had the emotional strength for only one more endeavor. The seventh night of the cottonwood recitals arrived before I placed all my hoes upon Flaw Four.

Creeping out to the pen after my wife and her employees were in bed, I loosened the hinges on the gate until a firm blow from her beloved pet could bring it down. There was no question in my mind about his conduct if he broke free. I could not bring myself to leave the scene when the gate was properly weakened.

"She has ruined my health by keeping me on this hellish planet," I said to the paving animal. "I want a ringside seat when you smash her."

Shuddering, I went out to the lone tree on the prairie. I climbed up to a limb, a good thirty feet from the ground. There I sat, awaiting my victim's arrival.

Leaning backwards against the tree trunk towards midnight, I must have lapsed into a weary slumber, for sometime later I was awakened without warning by a familiar voice. By the light of the Earth moon, I stared down at a sight that turned my superb body to stone.

My wife stood far below me, her scowl fixed upon the branch where I sat. In her hamlike fist she held her laser.

"So, dear Zorp," she called without preamble, smirking like a fiend, "you've tired of me already? All my other Sirian husbands made the same error. I'll have to take another trip to New Las Vegas, I suppose. I had hoped it wouldn't be necessary so soon."

Ice streamed through my veins as she pushed the gun upward. I was giddy. A man of breeding had to be sickened by this hag's fifth and secret flaw. She murdered her lovers! I had never heard of anything so revolting. I wondered disdainfully how the messy woman managed to conceal her crimes from J. Edgar Philpott's GBI.

"A song," I pleaded, glancing swiftly toward the distant mastosaur pen. "Sooth me before you shoot, my darling."

The monstrous bluebeardess laughed loudly. "I'm a light sleeper, Zorp. The gypsies fixed the gate; it will do you no good if I sing. I've been onto you for ages, love. If you weren't so cute, you'd have been dead a month ago."

Here I think my mind snapped, and my Sirian pride took command of my godlike

frame. "Devil!" I remember screaming. "You can't win! Flaw Five makes you a bungling murderess. Murder, not your heart, is the right defect. That is my key. Flaw Five has brought you here!"

Thus did my pride goad me to action. What else was I to do when my honor as a professional lover was jeopardized by a savage from a third-rate planet? The hag was directly below me, many feet down.

I dived, headfirst. I saw the laser belching light as I fell. My wife's aim was not so good as mine, however, and my Sirian skull proved thicker than hers. In that area, at least, I was stronger than the witch.

It seems to me, as I ponder the question with my fractured head inside this damn kildare, that the flaw theory remains a sound one. I admit dear Mama has disowned me for being a monogamist once too often; so the Earthwoman could be said to have won on that score, if a person wishes to be small about larger issues. Nevertheless any generous thinker will agree that the crazy Earth aboriginines are exceptions to the usual galactic rules. J. Edgar Philpott and I have had many heated arguments over the matter during the days I have been lying here in this star buggy he calls a prison ship.

In any case, whether my last wife ruined my theory for successful murder or not, the outcome did add an interplanetary note to that provincial hell, Paradise. Rass Wruk visaphoned me yesterday that her funeral drew more cold-eyed, ancient New La s Vegas brides, and their sweating young husbands, than the old village has ever seen. But I refuse to speculate about the effect this may have on Sirius XI prosperity in the years to come. At present, I have troubles of my own.

--Wilton G. Beggs

Why Don't People Get A Shove On And Send Comments On Time Dept.: Even though this letter came in too late for the letter section, I'm printing it, because it represents the only "con" side to the parapsychology article.

Leland Sapiro, c/o Dept. of Math, USC, Los Angeles 7, California.

Dr. Rhine's article was a disappointment. I had been predisposed to believe in the existence of psi phenomena, but Rhine's "metaphysical" remarks on the inadequacy of "completely physical interpretation" are obvious nonsense, and lead me to suspect that maybe the rest of his claims is nonsense also.

"Mind," first of all, is not a "thing," but a mode of behavior: one might say that mind has the same relationship to a brain that "horsepower" does to an engine. And just as horsepower can be explained in terms of the machine's physical components, so "mind" can be reduced to the physical behavior of the brain.

To speak of the "non-physical character" of psi or anything else is, literally, to speak nonsense. (Radiation, for example, is "physical" in the sense that it produces a physically detectable effect on our measuring instruments and is correlated in a perfectly definite way to what we call "matter.")

Thus when I say that very little "thought" went into Dr. Rhine's article, I do not mean that there exists a privileged "mental" or non-physical realm of "thought" -- but simply that there was very little physical activity of a specific kind going on inside Dr. Rhine's brain.

Is that clear?

((Errrr...howzat again? Seriously, there are a few misconceptions in your letter. Like for one, psi has not been proven to be physical -- let's drop the quotes -- in nature. Horsepower can be explained in terms of mechanical components and actions, but no one has yet done this for ESP. Where does it originate? What enzyme-neuron chain is involved? Why don't the same conditions iducing an exhibition of the phenomenon in one case work in another -- and why don't they work twice in the same case? Furthermore, psi has not been registered on any testing device such as an EEG to the best of my knowledge. Sorry -- I'm willing to accept any statement that psi may be physical in nature, but until such a statement shows theory and experiments to back it, I can't accept it as proof.))

## SCIENCE FICTION AND CRITICISM

by Robert Coulson

When New Maps of Hell first appeared, the howls of outrage resounded throughout fandom. Who was this stuck-up Englishman anyway, to be writing a criticism of science fiction and even asserting that he was a long-time reader of the field? He was no stf fan; one look at his book was enough to tell that he didn't know anything about science fiction and cared less.

Unfortunately, one look at this book was all that too many fans took. A second one might have shown that Kingsley Amis knew quite a lot about science fiction. His tastes were not those of the average fan, but he was no Patrick Moore, and his book, unlike Moore's Science and Fiction, was not an uninformed attempt to put down science fiction as trash. In fact, in some respects Amis is the typical fan. One of the problems encountered in any attempt to define science fiction is the fact that every fan wants the definition rigged so that it includes the stories he likes and excludes those which he doesn't like. (There was even an article by some fan attempting to "prove" that The Lord of the Rings was science fiction; the author claimed that any story which had a consistent background was science fiction, while those with inconsistent backgrounds were fantasy. This is the most blatant attempt to consider science fiction as equivalent to good writing and fantasy as equivalent to bad writing -- since an inconsistent background is the earmark of a bad story in any field -- but there have been others.) Kingsley Amis likes sociological fiction and dislikes space-opera, so he blythely claims that space-opera isn't "real" science fiction any more than fantasy is, but a sort of distant relative -- a black sheep of the family. This is not particularly good reasoning, but it's excessively fannish reasoning. Indeed, most of the faulty analyses of the book are the result of over-familiarity with the field, rather than with lack of knowledge. All through the book he deliberately picks the poorest examples of space-opera that he can find to support his thesis (and anyone who has been around stf for any length of time can find all sorts of poor examples of space-opera).

For that matter, a majority of Amis' opinions are quite sound. His comment about "addicts" as opposed to casual readers is lovely and should receive wider attention. Use of the term would solve the problem of the reader of science fiction who considers himself a "fan" while the "true fan" scorns him. Let "fan" describe the person who reads stf regularly and the forgets it; you and I and the rest of fanzine publishers, collectors, convention attendees, and the like are addicts. (It'll never become popular, but it's still the logical solution.)

A majority of fan critics objected to Amis' description of Fred Pohl as "the most consistently able writer science fiction, in the modern sense, has produced." Admittedly, this is pretty strong language, and wrong at that. But remember the author's prejudice in favor of sociological and satirical fiction; rephrase the statement to read that Pohl is the most consistently able writer of social satire in science fiction, and it's not too far off the mark. Of course, a lot of it isn't very good social satire, but it's certainly superior to the efforts along that line of Stanton Coblenz or Ayn Rand. (And while I personally feel that Robert A. Heinlein is the greatest science fiction author of all time, I will admit that some of his recent forays into sociological fiction haven't been entirely successful.) Also, this was written in 1960; writers such as Brian Aldiss and Kurt Vonnegut were just getting started in the field.

And there is one thing which Amis did that no other mainstream writer of contemporary stature has done, and which no stf writer could do; he attacked the smug, ignorant critics of the field and did it in a manner which might influence someone. All the stf reviewers, from P. Schuyler Miller and Damon Knight on down, have bitched about the stupidity of mainstream reviewers of science fiction, but when they did it,

nobody was listening but the fans, and we already knew about it. When a writer of Amis' importance says that, "Hostile critics from outside the field will make public utterances upon it revealing a degree of ignorance that would never be tolerated if the subject were Indonesian pottery..." he's doing a little bit to offset those criticisms. Not much, maybe, but more than any stf writer could do. I'm not particularly interested in reading the sort of science fiction that Amis likes, but I'm willing to grant him his prejudices and trust that he'll grant me mine. And the fact that he is not as good an stf critic as Damon Knight is somewhat offset by the fact that he'll be listened to by outsiders, and Knight won't be.

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The book of science fiction criticism, of course, is Damon Knight's In Search of Wonder. There's a big difference here; Amis was writing for the generally uninformed multitudes, while Knight is writing for fans (and while New Maps of Hell was published by Ballantine, In Search of Wonder was published by the Chicago fan publishers, Advent. As ye sow, so shall ye reap, or some such cliché.). This is probably a good thing, since Knight's comments are far more scathing than anything Knight says; an innocent reader coming across In Search of Wonder unexpectedly might be frightened away from stf for life. "He was totally innocent of grammar. This is not an exaggeration; Hall could not tell a noun from an adjective, or a verb from either." "The book is full of good ideas, every other one of which is immediately dropped and kicked out of sight." Quite often Knight's reviews are much more entertaining than the book being reviewed; this is especially evident when he trains his guns on Jerry Sohl or some other inept practitioner of the stf art.

In addition to the Knight book, Advent has put out a somewhat lesser-known compendium on science-fiction: The Science Fiction Novel. This contains four lectures on science fiction, originally given at the University of Chicago by Robert Heinlein, C. M. Kornbluth, Alfred Bester, and Robert Bloch, plus an introduction by Basil Daverport. These essays deal with the science fiction field as a whole, rather than criticisms of specific stories. Heinlein feels that science fiction is valuable in getting people to change -- remember the reaction to our first space probes, that God didn't intend for people to go to the moon and what was good enough for grandpa should be good enough for you? The man who isn't accustomed to changes is automatically suspicious of them and objects violently to having his world shaken up. Kornbluth asserts that science fiction has failed as a vehicle for social satire; if Kingsley Amis read this book, it may explain why he assigned a disproportionate share of the glory for the Pohl-Kornbluth collaborations to Pohl. Bester says that science fiction doesn't deal enough with genuine human emotion, preferring pulp stereotypes. And Bloch agrees with Amis when he states that while there are faults in the social criticism of science fiction, the field is at least presenting some valid criticism, which mainstream writing has not done since the beginning of World War II. (He's right, too; there have been scores of best-selling books of social criticism, but they have all been non-fiction. The Insolent Chariots, The Exurbanites, The Status Seekers, The American Way of Death, The Organization Man -- all factual. At present, fictional criticism of society is almost entirely embodied in science fiction; it isn't doing very well even there, but at least it's present.)

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Science Fiction Handbook, by L. Sprague de Camp, is not really a criticism of science fiction; it's a handbook for would-be writers. (Amis makes a crack about the field needing some competent new writers so poor de Camp won't have to go on telling people how to write.) I probably should not include it here, but the editor has lots of space to fill. Sprague includes biographical material on stf writers and a history of stf as well as information on how to get your masterpieces into print; I found the book quite interesting even though by the time I read it I had given up my ambition to become a free-lance writer. (I had found out that making a living at writing is work, just like any other job, and that killed the glamor of it.) There is some criticism included, however. Recently Ace reprinted Atlantida, by Pierre Benoit, with

a cover blurb calling it "The classic novel of finding lost Atlantis." De Camp calls the novel "popular but mediocre" and says it "is an obvious imitation of Rider Haggard, especially of his She and The Yellow God." He plumps for Mitchell's Three Go Back as the best "recent" (the book appeared in 1932) novel of Atlantis; if you look hard you might find a copy of this in its incarnation as a Galaxy Novel in the Fifties.

I suppose I should mention Pilgrims Through Space and Time, by J. O. Bailey, one of the earliest and undoubtedly the poorest books about science fiction. (Patrick Moore's Science and Fiction might be worse, possibly.) This is supposed to trace "trends and patterns in Utopian fiction," but it does so in such a confusing manner as to render it pretty useless for study. It's a rather rare book, as stf criticisms go, and it deserves every bit of its obscurity. Bailey does seem to be fairly objective in his study, though showing some partiality for the older and more pompous novels. His arrangement, however, is to take a certain stf era, divide it up into different themes, and study each theme separately, then go on to another era and its themes. There is no discussion of the eras as a whole, and the only way to trace the evolution of any particular theme is by painstakingly searching through the notes on each era for the desired information. It would be hard to conceive a poorer arrangement; there isn't even an index to help you track down the theme you want.

There have been a few other works of science fiction criticism; I don't want to mention them because I haven't read them. There will undoubtedly be more in the future -- in fact, Advent is working on the publication of the stf criticisms of "William Athelling, Jr." (better known in some circles as James Hlish), who enlivened some of the better fanzines of yesteryear with his acid tongue. The best may be yet to come (though I somehow doubt that it will come from Athelling). There are rumors of another Knight book as well, but there have been rumors of that ever since the first appeared, and none of them have come to anything. For a small and not terribly important literary field, however, science fiction has done pretty well in the way of literary criticism.

-- Robert Coulson





## War of the Words

A letter column, one might say...for letters,you see...and here's one...

Roger Zelazny ((Unless specifically told to do so, we do not print the addresses of professional writers.))

Thanks for the sampcop yr mag. Like for comments--well now, I rearranged the morning smoke inside my lungs with a sharp intake of breath, mused upon the Junkyard caution, recalled a bet I had just won, and sighed like a Harlan Ellison character bent upon going to hell in his own way. The bet was with a charming young lady of my acquaintance who wanted to see me give up the filthy habit. She suggested I could not abstain for a whole week (from cigarettes); I reckoned that I could; and the wager was set at two ducats to Doc Strangelove. So, what with my phenomenal will and all, and the chance at a free flick, I set out to kick the dragon for a sennight. Tho't it'd be easy, but bloody brutal, that's what it was: after a week of regular meals and wholesome and excessive in-between snacking and lots of exercise and plenty of sleep, and good, clean, non-smoker thoughts, I got up one morning and noticed fracture lines running across my psyche; my Muse came tripping into the room and in her misty, throaty, unforgettably poignant voice, insisted: "You've grown accustomed to your smoke. It almost makes your day begin. Your drags, your rings, your French-inhalings--they're second nature to you now--like breathing out and breathing in..." And I bowed my head humbly, admitted it was all true, and followed her to the tobacco store. I'm weak.

But I won the bet.

And speaking of Doc Strangelove (which I didn't have to pay to go see), based moderately on the book, Red Alert, directed with an electric needle precision by Messer Kubrick, and drawing the first favorable review in the memory of God or man from my former seminar prof, dramcrit R. Brustein, it sort of sings the eyeballs and tickles the tummy and rabbit punches you at the same time--like the Man says, it's a dramatized sick joke, and cathartic in the Classical Comedy sense of the word. It's a comedy about the end of the world, and it's "in"--there's no question about that--but watch and see how often it gets referred to as SF. Even though Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., or Philip K. Dick could have sleep-written the story, people who've never heard of V. or D. are seeing it and liking it, and it's getting good reviews from the Better Critics--therefore, it cannot be SF. Oh well, my coffee was cold this morning... But go see it, if you haven't. That camera winks like Puck's eye, and George C. Scott gives it his best performance to date, and Sterling Hayden lets himself be photographed, starkly, effectively, as usual.

"Hey there! No fighting in the War Room!"



((How about: "If you don't get the President on the phone, do you know what will happen?" "No. What?" "You're gonna have to answer to the Coca Cola people, that's what!" :: I saw the picture just recently, and thought it terrifyingly hilarious. It reminded me in tone of Joseph Heller's three million-seller, Catch-22. The climax, of course, was the scene in the War Room in which Strangelove proposed that mine shafts be used for survivors, and the Russian ambassador had to set off the Doomsday Machine. The bitterly humorous ending, in which the atomic explosions were set off, to the tune "We'll Meet Again (Don't Know Where, Don't Know When)," was the most logically appropriate I've ever seen in a motion picture.))

So, I liked C.L. Morris' tale, "Dreamer." It began in darkness, ended in the sky, had a decent

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gimmick in between, and expressed most of its thoughts clearly. I think it would have come on a little stronger and a little faster without the second and third paragraphs--but that's just a Zelazny quibble, and should be treated as all such non-sequituri. May the author flourish, may he fill many pages. Noble Article by Dr. Rhine. I don't know what else to say, really. I'm anxious to read a followup in about ten years to see how many more Zenner cards have been flipped over. Back one time long ago and far away, when I was a Psych Research Assistant (an undergrad who sticks needles in white rats and runs them through mazes, for money), I heard Dr. Gardner Murphey lecture on ESP and went right out and read lots and lots of Dr. Rhine's stuff and was impressed. But the more I hear of Great Strides and Great Grants and Projects in ESP research, the more alike such reports seem to sound (unless I've been reading the same one over and over), and while I am quite happy to acknowledge that the figures involved are probably quite unimpeachable, to me they represent a "so-what?" fact. I do respect the area, but I feel that the ESP breakthrough will come when they finally know enough about the nature of the nervous impulse itself and have done a lot more refined work in brain localization--and it will come from a neuropsychiatric lab. As I said, I do respect the current efforts --and I admire Dr. Rhine for having entered stormy academic waters in so frail a bark as psych-testing.

((I have a matter here that should be cleared up now, so it is now that I will do it, and I want to announce that this has absolutely no connection with Roger's letter; it does concern the article spoken of in the last paragraph, and since this is the first mention of the article, this is where this little discussion will be. In response to one copy of the fourth issue, I received a letter charging that I had probably copied both the Rhine piece and the poem by Martin Gardner from some previously published works--because neither of these men had ever written for fan-zines before. This is not so, and I can show proof that both these articles were original and intended for STF. I admit freely that neither of them has ever written for amateur journals before--how about that? As a matter of routine, I query a great number of people regarding material for this magazine; that is my job, as editor. I was as flabbergasted as anyone else when both Gardner and Rhine agreed, and my gratitude has been expressed both publically and privately. I therefore was not pleased by this charge; so if any other reader has entertained doubts as to my rights in publishing these articles, let me know and the accompanying correspondence will be shown to him. I'm sorry this has been so verbose.))

Wilton G. Deggs

Think I'd died or something? I should have subscribed earlier, but better now than next century, I guess. Received my STF no. 4 last week, and many thanks for sending it. I thought no. 4 very good, boy--really better than 3 because 4 is so much neater. An excellent job, and my congrats.

I enjoyed 4, from Morris's spooky "Dreamer" to the cusses and kudos of "War of the Words." Was interested, of course, in the hisses and cheers for "The House in the Zoo."

I haven't sent anything off to a prozine in several months, but I want to start buckling down soon and give it a good try. The only short story I have out that'll be published in the next month or so is a little gem I sold last year to Jack and Jill, and that's not exactly science-fiction. ((I hope, Wilton, that you will buckle down--if we had more stories like your "Mating Season" and "Adjustmont" we might have fewer cries of "Back to the thirties for better sf."))

Just one thing, however: hope you'll shun politics in STF. A science fiction publication just doesn't seem to me to be the place for that stuff. Politically, I'm over on the right, but I'm not aching to fight any left-leaning sf reader, so long as he doesn't try to fight me. Heck, there are plenty of other outlets for our political steam. If people want to do something about politics, they should vote intelligently, not run off at the pen in sf magazines. ((Personally, I'm an independent moderate--which, as I explained to Rick Norwood recently, means I support integration (my Rebel friends will Get Me Good for that), fight socialism, and defend

the Beatles to the death. I'm afraid this issue has been a bit political--Chuck Morris is so liberal he'd make Rockefeller look like an anarchist. Your statement about being a conservative will probably disillusion the heck out of him--up to now he has worshipped your style as a gift of the prophet Ignatius.))

I liked your editorial, by the way, about cigarettes. Maybe 'cause I don't smoke, and can feel superior to the folks who do. But how the hell do you manage to get down that can of beer? Beer has the nastiest taste in the universe. I'd as soon drink mule p<sup>6</sup>. Well, almost as soon. ((Restrain yourself, sir, there are Postal Regulations. My, but you pros are a candid lot. Seriously, I'm one of the few people in the world whodrinks beer for its taste, rather than to get drunk. On the other hand, most liquors folks rave over as being delicious taste like peregoric to me. Gest l' vie, or somesuch.))

Lee Channing, Knockerwood Dr., GumLog, Georgia-0001 $\frac{1}{2}$

Basically, I agree with what you said in "Junkyard" about cigarette smoking--but man, the tobacco racket is the economic lifeblood of most of Virginia, North Carolina, and parts of S. Carolina and Georgia. I'm a non-smokoffkoffker (some people, y'see, will smoke anything, even non), but I ain't gonna say nothing against the habit. How would R.J. Reynolds and other tobacco czars pay millions in alimony to ex-wives if it weren't for the suck-uh-people who use their products? Better not let N.C. Gov. Terry Stanford hear you campaigning against The Habit--he and a few other southern politicians just might form a Society For The Suppression Of STF. (( I'm one up on them, because I've just founded The Society For The Suppression Of Southern Politicos.)) You wouldn't want to be branded "anti-capitalism," wouldja? ((That depends on what you mean by capitalism. I don't dig monopolies, but I'm definitely for free interprise.)) That could draw the attention of right-wing pressure groups like the John Birch Society, the Goldwater Camp, the American Nazi Party, the American Medical Association ((The AMA, Lee?)) the Star-Spangled (book) Banners, National Review, the Ku Klucks (sic) Klan, and maybe even J. Strom Thurmond. It'd virtually ruin your chances of ever running for president of our Great Republic. Wouldn't that be a hell of a note? ((I won't settle for anything less than King, myself.))

The illos thish were swell, with REGilbert best--though Joe Staton always does a good job. The bakivver pic would have looked better on the front; gal's got purty logs, tho the wind is playing hell with her coyfay. I've seen a lot of REG's work, all excellent, and wonder why he isn't a pro--FPohl's mags have used plenty of illos less professional than his. ((Robert's work is much better than it usually shows up in mimeo; he uses a beautiful, heavy inking style that can't be stenciled as well as, say, Joe Staton's delicate, thin lines and strokes. Robert does sell, to mags such as Today's Art and railroad modeling magazines, though I understand that this is mostly articles he has written and illustrated himself.))

Dr. Rhine knows whereof he speaks, so all I can say is that I enjoyed his article. The fact that he, busy as he must be, consented to contribute gratis (how else?) to a fmz places him in the category of Good Guy--increasing my already-considerable respect for him. The same goes for Martin Gardner. I guess there are some pretty decent folks around after all, especially in the intellectual ranks.

After reading "Dreamer" by C.L. Morris, I've come to the confusion that he must be a socialist or something--maybe an atheist. In his first effort for STF, "Breaking Point" in # 1, his protagonist was a rum-soaked bum--and we all know such human flot-sam is as scarce as frog fur in America; his use of such a "hero" was an obvious slap at our national morality (the cleanest in the world). Things like that harm our image in the eyes of our foreign neighbors...Then in "Epilogue to Armageddon," STF # 2, he advanced the possibility of a nuclear war which would wipe out our American way of life--obviously ridiculous. Everybody knows that if war should come, we would survive even if the rest of the world's population disappeared. Don't we have fall-out shelters, subway tunnels, and most important, great statesmen to prevent war in the first place? You can't destroy a country as fond of freedom and peace-loving as the USA. Now, in "Dreamer," Morris does it again--wipes out the American Way Of Life with nuclear war. Does he suffer from some kind of war-psychosis? Frankly, I think he is not only anti-capitalism but has the gall to criticize the most perfect country in the

world to boot. He ought to be investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee; he could be a card-carrying Communist.

Except for Morris's babble, and his efforts to discredit our image, STF # 4 was a fine issue. Hope to see more in the same vein, tho I trust you'll run just as little of Morris as possible.

PS: I don't want to be too harsh on Morris, but I can't stand people who are critical toward the nation which has produced more great Americans than any other country on earth. Even Russia could never produce a great athlete like Cassius Clay, or a great patriot like Robert Welch, or a great intellectual like Charles van Doren. See? God is on our side; didn't we put his name on our money to prove it?

((Chuck says he'd rather be read than dead.))

Robert Coulson, Route 3, Wabash, Indiana-46992

Getting an article from Rhine is certainly good for your prestige. I didn't find much of interest in the article, chiefly because there was very little in it that I hadn't read before, one place or another. That's one problem with articles on science --it provokes comparisons with the professional publications, just as running fiction does. One reason that articles on science fiction are so highly thought of in fanzines is that they are the one type of writing that cannot be obtained in any quantity in any other place. A fan who reads for entertainment can find better fiction, and better scientific articles, in the professional magazines (as well as better political arguments) but he can't find anything, good or bad, about science fiction itself, unless he is uncommonly persistent. Anyway, Rhine's article wasn't bad, even in comparison with professional material. (( Since Dr. Rhine is the author of several books and articles, don't you think that last statement is a bit invalidated?))

Gardner's poem doesn't come off as well. Professional writer or not, I can write better poems than that, and I'm not much of a poet. ((I dunno, Buck. I've seen your poetry...))

Morris was good, again.

Your practice of sending samples to people who show up in promag letter columns should be commended. There are a lot of stf readers who would be quite interested in fandom if they knew about it (as I've been discovering to my horror since that blasted article of Carr's in F&SF. I'm all in favor of recruiting new fans as long as someone else does it.) ((And as I've been discovering ever since a year-old letter of mine mentioning that I'm a fanzine editor got printed in some stupid prozine I don't even read anymore. It hurts me to return those quarters and half-dollars for lack of copies...but the circulation is too big now.))

Richard Mann, 131 Belt Road, APO 845, New York, New York-00604

J.B. Rhine's article was interesting. It seemed to me that he was trying all the time to defend himself from his critics and justify his position and studies at Duke. ((Not at all. The article was a history of parapsychology. A great deal of opposition has been thrown to parapsychology, so much of the article was a chronicle of this and how it has been refuted.)) I think that most fans already think that there must be something to what we label ESP and psi, and that Rhine's defense was not necessary. He could have been more interesting to a fanzine-reading audience if he had gone into the nature of his experiments or told something about his work. ((Be it noted that as far as I know, Dr. Rhine is not a fan; his article was done for a general audience, without any consideration for this microcosm or any other. If you want to read in detail about esp work, sub to The Journal of Parapsychology, c/o Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. But please don't ask Dr. Rhine for another article; I think that one such favor from someone such as he is all we're entitled to.)) However, I am still in awe as to how you ever got someone as busy and professional as Rhine to write such a long article for you.

Your letter col is good, but I wish it were longer, and you didn't stick so much to the letters of the BNF's. Of course, BNF letters are usually the best, but you should give us poor neofans a voice or two here and there. ((But by that token, Galaxy should buy stories that are sub par because they give new writers a voice. I don't follow you, Rich.))

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland-21740

Stranger Than Fact arrived at exactly the right time, during a temporary vacation from fan history writing. ((You're really going through with it, huh?)) Thus, it gets an immediate letter of comment, a fate that it might have escaped two weeks earlier or later. And after typing your address up there, I wonder if people in your state ((It's not my state.)) can get rid of that old rhythmic M i s, s i s, s i p p i chant that runs through my mind every time I write out the word? I can pronounce it without hearing that rhythm and thinking of the song, but typing it invokes them automatically. (( I just spell it M-i-s-s-period.))

I've been a total abstainer from smoking my entire life, so your advice was wasted on me. (Except for the fact that I had been playing around with the idea of trying to force myself to start smoking. It occurred to me that this activity and a series of articles based on it might make a literary reputation and a fortune for me. Everybody who is anybody is either writing articles about how he stopped or why everyone else should stop. The entire American public might seize gratefully on a series headed in the opposite direction. But I'd better not risk it, because everyone might feel a letdown if on the ninth day of my ten-day start-smoking project I got so violently sick that I admitted defeat and slipped back into my old non-smoking habits.) The thing I can't understand about smokers is their patience with the awful nuisance of the habit. The eternal hunt for matches, interruptions at 30-second intervals to find something to knock ashes into, the need to get up at the most interesting part of a movie or



play to yield to the urge for a cigarette, and so on would seem to me to be sufficient reason to give up smoking, even if there weren't the health considerations. Moreover, I don't think that many persons really enjoy a cigarette in the sense that a few smokers really enjoy a pipe. The cigarette smokers almost uniformly seem more tense and unhappy when they have lit up than they did when they decided they couldn't go another five minutes without a puff.

Dr. Rhine's article was interesting. I've been a staunch supporter of extra-sensory perception ever since I carried out a brief series of experiments with another fan that not only were successful but were so hard on the emotions that I hastily abandoned all further participation: I was convinced that there was something to it and I was also certain that my mind or emotions couldn't withstand the novel exercise that these powers were getting. I've not closely followed the Rhine experiments, but I've always received the impression that he hasn't been inventive enough in attempts to deduce methods of improving the degree of esp. I should think that hundreds of measures could be tried and that one of them might have unexpected results. Would thought-transmission be improved by shielding of cosmic rays? By fasting or artificially induced fever, or by violent physical exercise on the part of the participants --singly or both? How about testing unrelated but look-alike people to determine if this improves transmission? There are all sorts of other possibilities, and it's conceivable that trial and error might turn up something significant, clues about why it's possible to

score well at certain times on the card tests and to pick up an occasional thought of someone else, while most of the times you're no better than the next guy with this phenomenon. (( Probably some of these conditions would stimulate the use of psi abilities once or twice. However, spectacular occurrences result only in a stressed environment; therefore, the mind would soon become conditioned to any artificial stimulus of this nature and reject it as phoney. So, since any acceptable experiment must be duplicable, it's more practical, if not as glorious, to stick to trying to train any such abilities.))

I know of one instance in which Finlay copied a Saturday Evening Post illustration, a drawing rather than a photograph, for a Weird Tales of Argosy illustration back around 1938. Maybe he's working from photographs now that it's so hard to find fiction magazines that have drawn illustrations. I don't know of any instance in which he has borrowed an entire picture, using instead sections of this or that, and when you think of it, this is hardly any different from the writers' practice. Every western story that contains a cowboy who was framed and served time for a crime he didn't commit is committing plagiarism up to the point where the cowboy goes into action on his return to freedom, in idea if not in words. ((Copy, schopy. We're talking about tracing. I can't see anything wrong with copying a drawing--look how many copies of great portraits and all are done and sold by art students--as long as the brush/pen/pencil strokes which go into the copy are guided by nothing other than the artists hand.))

Dreamer was a better than average fanzine story. It probably hit extremely hard at those who suffer from claustrophobia or have nightmares about burial alive. This is one of the few types of fears that I have never had to worry about. Maybe the fact that I learned quite early how completely the embalming process removes any danger of premature burial helped to avoid this worry. ((Yes. If you're not dead when you get to the embalmer's, you will be when you leave.)) I don't know if the author is trying to hint by his ending that you or I may be aboard a spaceship at this moment, passing the time away by dreaming of fanatic and South American crises and the possibility that the Washington Senators will get Off the Floor in Sixty-Four. But I got that impression and it made the story a little more distinctive. ((The Senators, Harry? You are a dreamer. Or are you reading The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant and letting it go to your head?))

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((I have cut the first part of this, due to space considerations.))

Seriously, though, I did find Rhine's article (how on earth did you get an article by The J.B. Rhine for a fanzine???) most interesting; glad you thought of sending me a copy. The mention of a forthcoming book by Soal with 'sensational' and 'startling' reports to make really makes my mouth water; will have to watch the reviews like a hawk so I can dash down to the library and slap an inter-library loan request on it the moment it gets published. Might even (shudder) buy it.

The second obstacle to the acceptance of psi by psychologists mentioned by Rhine, their actually religious devotion to the philosophy of mechanism, makes an interesting topic for discussion. Since it's also the reason most laymen find psi unacceptable, whether they admit it to themselves or not, the subject is relevant whenever psi is under consideration.

It seems to require not only an unusually competent and well-trained mind but one with an abnormal bent in that direction to hold the basic hypotheses on which its view of the nature of the world is built in a purely tentative matter, being aware that whenever the matter comes to mind that its hypotheses are merely one set among an infinite number that can as adequately account for observed data and are selected out merely because on the basis of the current store of data they seem to require the fewest a priori assumptions, and perhaps the least tortuous reasoning to do the job.

Actually, the hypotheses accepted by the vast majority are not accepted for that reason, let alone with the appropriate degree of tentativeness. The normal course is to swallow whole those favored by the culture in which the individual develops; the logical criteria of number of a priori postulates and accuracy of match between

details of theory and observed data receive hardly a passing thought even amongst the scientifically trained. One's view of the nature of the universe seems to be the same sort of thing, psychologically, as one's system of social and moral values; they're established by the same process in childhood, resist alteration in adult life with much the same solidity, and among all tribal peoples are inexplicably intertwined in the



mass of oral teaching unquestionably absorbed by the child. From the evolutionary standpoint, which was all that mattered up to five hundred or a thousand generations ago, that's an obvious advantage; not surprising that it's still the racial norm. But it's not exactly rational. ((Neither is typing over the top half of a topnotch drawing, for which I apologize to the artist.))

Mechanism is the philosophy of our culture. Gained ground and took over with amazing rapidity, chiefly because it's only opposition of note was the non-rational, myth-based world-view of Christianity; the latter's discrepancies with observed data, or at least the complexity and logical inelegance of the additional a priori postulates needed to make it conform, mounted and mounted until the only fairly data-consistent alternative being put forth at the time, the philosophy of mechanism, gained the field--one might almost say, by default. The allegiance of the intelligentsia of the western world--who are capable of changing from one system to another when their noses are rubbed in the glaring defects of one and the logical soundness of the other for several generations--has brought the bulk of thought in the culture around to the acceptance of mechanism; the old view that day-to-day happenings are the direct expression of the will of the Biblical God rather than the mechanistic operation of the natural laws of causality is rarely met with today.

The trouble is, mechanism--which can be defined as a metaphysic which attempts to derive the body of observed phenomena from the assumption of a small number of types of non-sentient entities interacting by means of a few different types of (associated) forces according to invariant laws--is only one of a large number of equally rational theories which can be constructed to explain observed phenomena as adequately; perhaps an infinite number. Logically, it has no advantage over those others beyond reducing the number of postulates to the minimum consistent with our current progress in physical theory; at present it's clearly inadequate to account for one important area of observation, viz, that the universe exists, since neither the nuclear fluid globe nor the hydrogen-aloud hypothesis works out mathematically, while the steady-state hypothesis, like the 'in-breathing-and-out-breathing-of-Brahma' -type picture resulting from Einstein's equations when currently-likely values for the density of the universe are plugged into them, simply begs the question of beginnings. The expectation, not too clearly thought out, is apparently that further, more basic work in mathematical physics will tie in space and time, probably on the quantized basis that Heisenberg's late work suggests, and come up with a convincing mechanism by which the universe can generate itself from nothingness; this would require that the nature of space-time be such that the absence of the stress-whorls called matter is both possible and an inherently unstable condition, or something of the sort, thus reducing the 'givens' to one, the entity of space-time. This line of thought has a number of ob-

"You mean you paddle along the river for a hundred miles in an Indian style canoe through the snakes and alligators?"

--Robert E. Gilbert

31

vious difficulties, but its vague promise appears to make the Beginning paradox untroublesome to the few who bother to think much of such things.

The psi phenomena are something else again entirely; by the credo of scientific thought, if even one clear-cut, physically impossible psi phenomenon were admitted as correctly and accurately observed, the mechanistic philosophy receives a body-blow; modern physical theory is a beautifully coherent structure, all in all, and it has no place whatever for a carrier of information similar to that carried by light which does not attenuate with the square of distance, for a mentally controlled field capable of moving substantial masses, etc.; and neurological research has pretty well zeroed in on the structure and function of all parts of the brain and nervous system; making the impossible-by-current-physical-knowledge assumption that we possess an organ capable of interacting with a light-type non-attenuating information carrier, discriminating the desired from the undesired info (when the latter would compromise, at least, simultaneously-impinging images of every spot on the planet) and conveying it to the optic centers--where is the nerve bundle that services this organ, let alone the organ itself? The situation is equally bad for telepathy and psychokinesis, and really mind-crogling to the mechanist for precognition. ((According to current theory--which seems consistent in this respect, at any rate--precognition is a required member of any set of parapsychological abilities; since it has been the stated position of the field workers that psi operates outside the bounds of normal, unstressed space, it is therefore obvious that any such abilities would be independent of time also, since time and space are apparently meaningless when considered separately. It would be an interesting, if highly questionable, idea to consider what aspects of psi would be revealed could the power be demonstrated within the vicinity of one of the conjectured dimensional discontinuities that the "world-wrecking" stf authors use with such abandon. Comment?)) The admission of psi to the category of correctly reported observations must, to the logically-self-consistent mind, reduce the probability of correctness of the mechanistic metaphysic to a very low level and leave one casting amongst dozens of equally likely (at this stage of knowledge) hypotheses which have suddenly become more probable than Ol' Tried-&-True.

More than one psychologist has suggested that most people entering scientific training or showing unusual interest in science have an insecurity about the nature of their environment which leads them to desire dependable, rational, understandable explanations of phenomena, and that perhaps the very best scientists are those few whose childhood traumata at the hands of unpredictable and incomprehensible adults has resulted in, besides the desire, an ingrained pessimism about its ever being satisfied that leads them always to doubt and question the logical edifices they create or learn, however beautifully coherent. That view is perhaps excessively harsh, but the fact remains that the average person with a scientific trend or thinking will prefer ignoring evidence that psi observations are valid to finding himself cast mentally adrift without any single encompassing metaphysic with which he can structure his view of reality.

Personal observations accumulated of several years of activity as a lay psychotherapist (before I traded chasing that chilly bitch Athena for the service of smiling, pot-bellied ol' Mammon, He Who rewards His devotees with the good things of life) are inconsistent with mechanism, although very nearly as much so with any existing religious philosophies (at least those I know about) with the partial exception of Zen Buddhism/Taoism...and they're accepted chiefly because they don't contradict observations, lacking as they do metaphysical dogmas, and only partially because after one's had enough insights what they do say begins to seem rather suspiciously valid.

But a good, healthy dose of mescaline, after reading Andriya Puharich's The Golden Mushroom (a serious work, despite its publisher-imposed title) and a few others of that ilk to get one in the proper frame of mind, would likely do more explaining than any more verbiage. Running out of paper, so I'll call it quits.

MS: What do you think of the I.F.I.F.--the Harvard mescaline/psilocybin/L.S.D. boys? ((I haven't enough information to make a value judgement. The objection to the Harvard experiments is that many of them are carried out in participants' homes, rather



than in a controlled environment. This is valid, but the experimenters also have a point in their defense, i.e., that normal conditions are the environment they want. I'd have to see the full arguments and refutations on both sides of the issue before I'd want to take sides. However, something like 99.99% of all the experiments with these drugs use no control group, which is not an exactly wonderful idea. ::From my admittedly incomplete (but usually reliable) sources, I understand the only way to obtain the hallucinogens (a misnomer: they very rarely produce actual hallucinations, in the sense that delirium tremens produces them) is to be part of a government or government-sponsored research group. And the same sources make no mention of any testing in the psi field of the drugs--their main effect appears to be a heightening of perception and appreciation of optic stimuli, though there now seems that there may be a use for the hallucinogenics in treatment of mental illnesses of certain kinds. In 0.2% of experiments on this line, unfavorable results have been obtained: psychotics become manic depressives, with a large amount of the unfavorables becoming suicide prone while under the effects of the drug being tested. It's a complex and wonderfully intriguing field.))

AND we also heard from such as James Ashe, Ronald and Donald Duplechain (twins, you esp testers--interested?) Martin Gardner, Robert E. Gilbert, and a whole bunch of people whose letters are buried in the files--but I'm tired and don't want to dig them out, so those of you who don't get mentioned please forgive me, and write again.

Nine pages of letters--that's overdoing it...but let's overdo it some more!

19??

We had a ball those first few days  
Or rather the live ones did  
I don't remember so much excitement since the 1948 elections  
When millions poured into Times Square and shouted  
Well they poured into Times Square this time too  
But nobody shouted because nobody felt like shouting  
(the dead people couldn't shout back at them)

They had to pick up bodies stacked like cordwood on a Carolina farm  
The ones who were left that is  
(oh you can bet they'll never be the same)  
They didn't smile I guess they were tired from so much excitement  
The night before when the plane had come over

Everything just seemed to stop for a moment  
And some fool screamed that we were being attacked  
Starting a panic that lasted all night and most of the next day  
And of course there was looting murder rape fights in the streets  
And the Governor had to call out the militia  
To put down insurrection riots attempts to overthrow law and order  
Nobody knew where the guns ammunition grenades came from  
But they came from somewhere

A lot of people millions I'd say can die in twenty-one hours  
When there's shooting knifing arson broken bottles  
And bombs homemade or otherwise  
All because a Russian cargo plane goes off course  
In the middle of the darkest night of the year.

--Jay Anderson

## Editorial Continuation

This issue has several things wrong with it which should be explained to you, the readers. It is two months late. It is far smaller than I originally intended. It is not as neatly stenciled or printed as I would have wished. All these factors are results of one event.

That event is that I was offered the opportunity to attend Treadwell High School at Memphis for my senior year. Now, I hasten to add that there is nothing at all wrong with the local school. I hate it with a passion, but there's nothing wrong with it. (I just resent being required to waste my time on such idiotic courses as Agricultural and Industrial Arts, General Science (equivalent to about a third rate Sunday supplement), and Mississippi History. I further resent having to waste my time on Driver Training, Physical Education (I can stay in quite adequate shape by myself) and Activity Period.) So it was that I jumped at this chance, even though I will get home only on certain week-ends and holidays. Attending Treadwell will also afford for me a resident status at Memphis State University, thus cutting my tuition about in half.

But this sudden decision has upset a lot of plans and schedules. I have been very rushed to put my affairs in order, so to speak. I have a couple of trips planned with friends that will keep me busy, including a proposed pilgrimage, via Merc Meteor and sleeping bag, to the East Coast. So Stranger Than Fact has taken a back seat until I have scraped together enough time to wind it up and go to press.

It was originally my intention to discontinue publication, refund subscriptions, and drop the whole bit. This I told to several people. I have reconsidered. I am going to continue publication, on an infrequent and irregular schedule. In other words, I'll take my time and every now and then another issue will come off the roller. Granted, this is rather unusual, but it has at least one advantage: not being under a schedule, I can use only the pieces of highest possible quality.

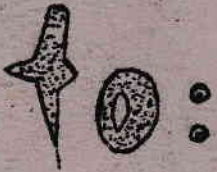
Right now, though, I want contributions and letters of comment. Don't neglect to write because STF has become infrequent -- the more good material I have, the more incentive I'll find to publish. I want a letter of comment or a contribution from every single reader. Unsolicited work and LOC's should go to this address, 803 Bell, Greenwood, Miss. They'll be forwarded to me. (Actually there's no such thing as an unsolicited article around here. I'd write to every reader to ask him if I had time. But if I had that much time, I wouldn't be writing this.) I especially want reviews and articles on general literature and general interest subjects: politics, music, art, sports, girlchasing, and the like.

Okay, kiddies. The issue was almost finished when the cyclone hit, so the material is a little dated, mostly in the editorial. That'll give you a good reason to write -- I never knew a fan yet who'd pass up a chance to gripe. (By the way, in ref. to the "Junkyard" caption, I am now a Goldwater man. I just didn't think Lodge would punk out like he did, that's all. All the way with LBJ -- all the way OUT!) So long for now. Loosen up those typers!

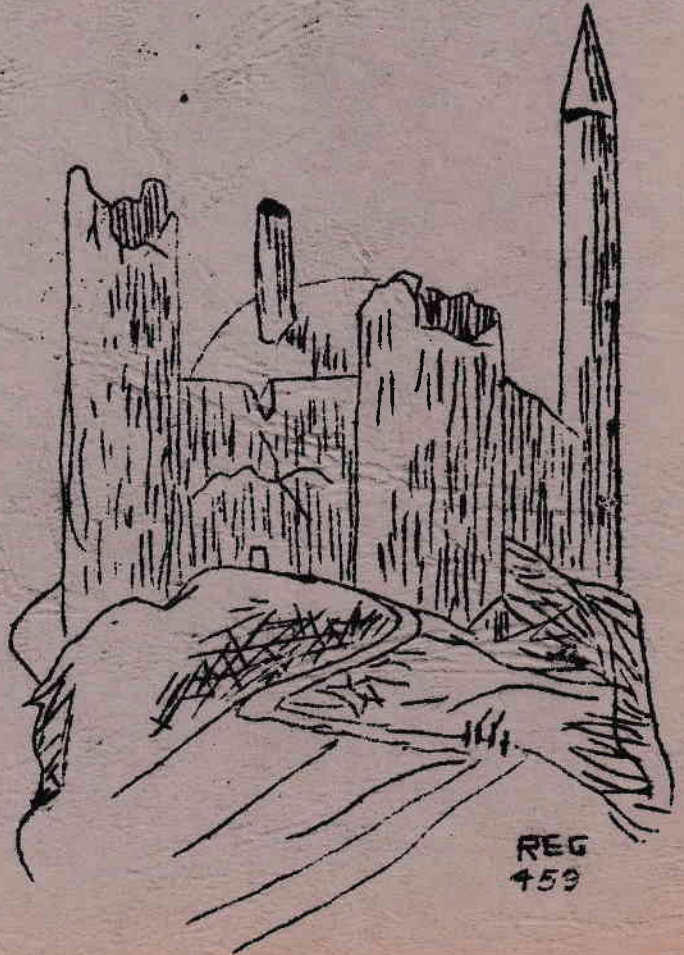
*Jim Harkness*



# Stranger than Fact



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459