

Robert Anton Wilson's



TRAJECTORIES

Newsletter

Number 12

The Journal of Futurism and Heresy

Spring, 1993



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Wanted—Dead or Alive?

Trajectories, like the Frankenstein monster, has once again risen from the grave. Once again, we apologize for the long Underground Journey before our Resurrection. And once again, we offer the usual explanation and/or apology: This magazine has a staff of four, all of us involved in other work most of the time, and all of us doing *Trajectories* as a labor of love in our spare time. After the last 12 years of Voodoo Economics, we feel as financially insecure as the rest of you, and find it harder and harder to find "spare time" in our busy schedules...

"In this economy," as some Red Queen told us once, "you have to run faster and faster to stay in the same place."

Frankly, I have considered abandoning this expensive hobby entirely and devoting myself exclusively to my books, which earn "real American money" (or at least Federal Reserve Notes) and hence support my devoting full-time energy to them.

However, together with the rest of our staff—the divine Arlen, the hardworking Scott and fun-loving Bob—I have decided to make our work-load even heavier for a while, in the hope that we can soon make it lighter (and more profitable). We will market several new products—audio tapes, video tapes and a new *Trajectories* anthology, to start with—and we hope to earn enough this way to not only make a profit but also to hire some temporary help a few days a month to keep us up-to-date and make this a more business-like operation all around.

And now, the Commercial Break...

Like most little publications (or PBS channels on TV) we now have to pass the hat. (NO! NO! Don't stop reading. Please! We intend to *sell to you*, not *beg from you*. We really haven't sunk as low as PBS yet.)

You can help our continuation and expansion in several ways:

ONE—Order our anthology of out-of-print pieces, *The Best of Trajectories* (with a new introduction and updates by RAW) for our once-only low pre-publication price of \$12.95. For details, see pg. 11.

TWO—Order any of the RAW books (on page 23) that you don't own already. All of them will repay your cash investment with wit, wisdom and fine writing. (Believe me: I wrote them all, so I speak with Impartial Authority about their contents.)

TWO-B—Order a few of those books for friends. Can you think of a better gift to prepare them for 2001?

THREE—Order the first of our *Trajectories*-brand RAW Video tapes ("Fear in the Night: Demons, Incest and UFOs"; 55 mins.) for the low introductory price of \$14.95. Production costs will force us to sell later tapes at the usual price of \$19.95.

FOUR—Order the first three of our RAW audio tapes (a set of over 20 conversations between RAW and Pat Ferguson of KAZU radio) for the discount price of \$12.00 (only \$4 a tape) to launch this new series.

FIVE—RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO TRAJECTORIES! Don't lose track of the Source of all this great data and all these great goodies. And here's our Special Super Deal: Renew your subscription before the next issue mails (figure about three months), *whether it's due for renewal or not*, and we'll extend your subscription by an extra issue per year of renewal. In other words, if you renew for one year/four issues at \$20, you'll get *five* issues (so each issue costs you \$4 instead of \$5.) Renew for two years/eight issues at \$35, and receive *10* issues (at \$3.50 per issue versus \$4.38). Or renew for three years/12 issues at

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Escape from the Dark Ages

Cosmography

by R. Buckminster Fuller
(Macmillan, New York, 1992.
277 pp., \$24.95)

Bucky Fuller's final book—left unfinished when he died in 1983—has finally reached print, after careful editing and re-organization by the man Bucky called his "adjuvant," Kiyoshi Kuromiya. Before saying anything else about this masterwork, I suggest that you can learn a great deal about the mathematical precision of Bucky Fuller's mind by hauling out a dictionary and looking up both "adjuvant," the word he preferred to "associate," and "cosmography," which defines his topic better than "cosmology" would.

Fuller always used the precise word to denote the exact meaning he wanted to convey and I have often found that his books reveal most if I read them with a dictionary at my side, not only looking up unfamiliar words but also checking on familiar ones, when I suspect I may have missed an overtone or a nuance.

Interviewing Bucky a few months before his death, I asked him what the ordinary person (one not trained in engineering or math) could do to further the "design science revolution" that he urged. He hesitated no more than two seconds. "Live with integrity," he said.

"Is that all?" I asked, somewhat discombobulated.

"It is necessary and sufficient," he replied. I have re-thought those gnomic remarks, and the words "integrity," "necessary" and "sufficient" at least once a week in the ten years that have passed since that day. I always get new insights out of these re-thinkings—insights

into Fuller, into the scientific ethic, and even into Buddhism.

A characteristic passage on the last two pages of *Cosmography* explores the same thoughts with further light and clarity:

"A few instances of persistent, misinformedly conditioned reflexes are the failure popularly to recognize the now scientifically proven fact that there are no different races or classes of humans; the failure to recognize technological obsolescence of the world-around politically assumed Malthus-Darwin assumption of an inherent inadequacy of life support, ergo 'survival only of the fittest;' the failure to ratify ERA, the equal rights (for women) amendment by the thus-far-in-history most-crossbred-world-people's democracy in the U.S.A.; or, with ample food production for all Earthians, the tolerating of marketing systems which result in millions of humans dying of starvation each year.

"Carelessly unchallenged persistence of a myriad of such misinformed brain reflexings will signal such lack of people's integrity as to call for the disqualification of humanity and its elimination by atomic holocaust.

"You may feel helpless about stopping the bomb.

"To you, the connection between the equal rights amendment and the atomic holocaust may at first seem remote. I am confident that what I am saying is true."

In less exact, pre-Fullerian English (easier-for-most-readers), conditioned reflexes govern us more than mind does. The failure of ERA indicates the persistence of one of these *mindless* reflexes. The sum total of all such reflexes create all our planetary problems.

These global problems synergetically add up to a drift toward endless repetition of obsolete habits—habits that now endanger our survival.

Integrity, meaning the mind operating honestly and creatively, fighting against its own conditioned reflexes, functions as the only force working counter to this mechanical/conditioned drift toward holocaust.

Closer to the front of the book, Fuller lists the major conditioned brain reflexes that underlie all our misunderstandings of Universe and our position therein. These habitual errors indicate that we remain "imprisoned in the Dark Ages" by "the terms in which we have been conditioned to think."

Fuller lists the major conditioned errors of our Dark Age society:

1. The belief in the objectivity (or externality) of "up" and "down."
2. The belief in straight lines that extend to infinity.
3. The belief in measurements based on fictitious squares and non-existent cubes.
4. The belief that "solids" are truly solid.
5. The belief that several lines can pass through the same point at the same time.
6. The belief in a 3-dimensional world independent of our brain reflexes.
7. The belief that there is more than one race of human beings.
8. The belief that Universe contains a male God and that aside from "him" everything else of importance is human and male-dominated.

(I think that if Fuller had lived to polish and fine-tune the book, he would have added on a few more "fundamental errors," e.g.:

9. The belief that money exists independently of our brains and only in a limited amount; and

10. The belief that resources also exist only in limited amounts.

Or maybe he regarded these enormous—and costly—blunders as not fundamental but derivative of the primary errors?)

Although most physicists and mathematicians would agree with Fuller about the fallacy of all the beliefs listed above, he does not bother quoting much of their works. Instead, he takes us, step by step, through the alternative world-view he has created since 1927, in which Universe has no "up" or "down" or "straight lines," and the tensions and compressions in geodesic systems offer simpler and more elegant formulations of our world than either the traditional Euclidean-Aristotelian-Newtonian system or the "revised" modern systems which still use pre-Fullerian geometries.

All the paradoxes and mind-boggling Strange Loops that infest "modern" (post-quantum) science now appear, in Fuller's recounting, as the results of applying Descartes' algebration of Euclid's flat-land geometry to a spherical space where Euclid just does not work. In Fuller's geometry, the paradoxes and Strange Loops simply do not occur. Universe becomes astoundingly "rational" again.

One of the most innovative and beautiful passages (pp. 146-159) explains, in terms of Fuller's synergetic geometry, the earliest form of synergy recognized by science—why alloying of two metals produces a whole stronger than the sum of its two parts. In wonderful mathematical precision, these pages prove more than the last 3000 books on "holism" by intuitive enthusiasts who never learned to discipline their intuitions, as Fuller does, with pure logic. You can't read those pages without a sublime new insight into what "holism" (or as

Fuller preferred, *synergy*) really means, and also into how much of Universe functions in these non-additive, non-linear modes.

In a sense, those few pages alone can lift you out of the prevailing Dark Ages, if you read them with full concentration.

Equal beauty and logic, in my opinion, permeates Fuller's entire discussion of "reflex" and "mind." Mechanical reflexes occur in human brains, as in all animal brains, he says, but "mind" only manifests when a human, using both intuition and logic, perceives a non-local generalization. In other words, reflexes sum up a finite number of special case experiences, but mind directly inhabits the same meta-physical (i.e., non-local) realm as cosmic law.

Too abstract? Let me try again: both mind and the cosmic laws it transceives remain non-local, non-specific, weightless, massless, temperatureless. In all these respects, they differ from reflexes and other mechanical systems, which always have locality, specificity, weight, mass, and temperature. Where mind in this creative Fullerian sense does not govern, reflexes fill the gap and, when reflexes become obsolete, the world repeats the same clownish brutalities over and over, like the trapped mechanical people in a Beckett play.

Fuller says it better, but in words that you will have to read more slowly.

Most of *Cosmography*, using simple synergetic diagrams, attempts to show the beautiful coherence of the post-Einstein Universe, and thus seeks to deliver us from further mechanical repetition of our misguided traditional concepts of "up" and "down," and "square" and "cubical" kinds of space. As we read, the Relativist world becomes shining new again, and we can visualize it in Fuller's tetrahedrons and octets and other simple

structures—just as if we had never understood Relativity before.

From the inside of the atom to the cosmos as a whole, Fuller shows us, again and again, the same nonsimultaneous but synergetic energy-knots creating the illusion of the "solid objects" we normally see. This book, thus, may stand as the best introduction to 20th Century physics—and also as a kind of analog of an Enlightenment experience, as Fuller's diagrams help us to literally see through the materialist model to the information-energy systems from which "solid" "things" emerge.

And, as I read, I remembered again my last interview with Bucky. I had asked him if "Universe" and "God" meant the same thing to him, as many of his readers have suspected.

"God," he said precisely, "seems like a rather small concept to contain the exquisitely interaccomadative coherencies of Universe."

Most typically Fullerian, I think: he said "coherencies," not "forces." The whole Aristotelian-Newtonian mythology of "force" represents another Dark Age reflex that he had outgrown.

Δ Δ Δ

From "Cosmography"

by Buckminster Fuller

Einstein's genius was synergetic.

All genius is synergetic.

*All children are born geniuses,
but most are swiftly degeniused
by the power structure's educational
system.*

*In the guise of education,
the system deliberately breaks up
inherently holistic considerations
into "elementary" topics.*

* * *

*I think all humanity has crossed the
threshold
to enter upon its "final examination."
It is not the political systems
or the economic systems
but the human individuals themselves
who are in final examination.*



Modest Proposals

Save Our Rats

Animal Rights activists have brought to the shocked attention of all humane people the unspeakable sufferings endured by experimental animals in medical-scientific research, and no decent person can read the literature of this subject without profound dismay and distress. Indeed, the illustrated publications of the anti-vivisectionists, in vivid crimson technicolor, often produce more than mere emotional discomfort: they sometimes trigger acute nausea or actual vomiting, just like anti-abortion leaflets.

The majority of people, of course, still appear unconvinced by this literature. Some perverse streak of prejudice in most humans obstinately inclines us to consider the minimization of human pain more important than the minimization of animal pain, and when we think that cancer or AIDS might strike us, or our loved ones, we remain selfishly willing to sacrifice any number of rats in the search for a cure. We amorally and unethically rationalize that the sacrifice of a few thousand rodents seems worthwhile to save millions and millions of human lives, now and in the future.

Fortunately, the Animal Rights movement does not allow itself to become discouraged by this lack of success in persuading the human-chauvinist majority. Like the anti-abortionists, the anti-vivisectionists know in their hearts that they serve True Morality, so they do not really need majority assent in the manner of the archaic 18th Century ideology of "democracy" (which nobody takes seriously anymore). Militant anti-vivisectionists simply ignore the law and trash laboratories with the same zest that the more extreme

"Right to Lifers" show in trashing medical clinics.

Considering the growing strength of the Animal Rights movement in many quarters, it seems probable that scientific laboratories, just like abortion clinics, will soon survive, if at all, only under 24-hour-a-day police protection, or with rabid pit bulls wandering the grounds, or in some such state of siege. In the age of the P.L.O. and I.R.A., the Red Brigades and the C.I.A., the ethics of nihilism—"If I don't like it, I'll smash it"—have become our norm, as Robin Morgan documented in her recent book, *The Demon Lover: On the Sexuality of Terrorism*.

I admit this *Fanoniste* mystique provides a great deal of excitement and a needed outlet for the males in the high testosterone (18-to-24 year old) age group—who statistically commit most of the violence in the world, whether they find a "cause" to sanctify their rampages or frankly set out as outlaws and pirates. This "Higher Law" mystique also supports the TV news shows, which might be at a loss to fill their time if somebody wasn't bashing or slashing or shooting somebody else or blowing up some thing or some place. Nonetheless, this "Live Like Che" attitude—a legacy of the worst last years of the 1960s—may not prove the best way to settle all human differences and disputes, and I would like to offer a modest proposal for a way to gratify the Animal Rights people without bringing all scientific-medical research to a grinding halt.

My inspiration comes from an Austrian political thinker who astonishingly anticipated the New Age in many aspects. The man to

whom I refer, like current New Agers, maintained a strict vegetarian diet. He consulted astrologers before making important decisions. He trusted "intuition" more than "mechanistic science"—which he (oddly) called "Jewish science." He loved dogs—although, eccentrically, he would only pet them when he had gloves on. He never allowed cigarette smokers in his house, which counts as a truly astounding New Age foreshadowing when I inform you that he was born over 100 years ago and died 47 years ago.

I refer, of course, to the man who abolished animal experiments in Germany: Adolph Hitler.

Now I admit that Mr. Hitler has a tainted and unsavory reputation in some quarters, but you have already seen (from the above) that he truly anticipated many New Age attitudes and deserves recognition as a major prophet of our times, even if he had some illiberal attitudes. Anybody who has studied Hitler's life knows he would have found Ramtha an ideal fount of wisdom; he imported Tibetan monks to teach yoga to his inner circle; he believed in reincarnation as ardently as Shirley MacLaine; and he, more than anyone else, created the now-fashionable philosophy that waiting for reforms through liberal democracy wastes time. He urged the bold and brave to abrogate law and do what their "blood" and "instinct" tells them.

Furthermore, Mr. Hitler's ban on animal experiments did not stop medical research in Germany, which made many advances under his regime. Athletes should note that his doctors pioneered the use of steroids and methamphetamines to produce a competitive edge.

Many useful things were also learned about how much pain, how much cold, how much electric shock, etc., a human could bear before dying; these lessons have proven invaluable to the C.I.A. and its allies in Latin America.

All this German medical research occurred without the sacrifice of helpless and pathetic animals. Mr. Hitler simply replaced quadrupeds with humans of the sort he considered "social undesirables," and hence research moved along just as speedily as in nations where innocent rodents are used. After all, an "undesirable" human resembles other humans, medically, more closely than a rat does, so if Mr. Hitler's ideas had achieved greater acceptance, medical research might even have accelerated world-wide.

Of course, many people have extreme doubts about Mr. Hitler's notions of which humans we should consider "undesirable." His list included Jews, homosexuals, Gypsies and all people who didn't like his politics much. (At one point he thought of adding modern artists to the list, just as if he had read Ayn Rand.) While this seems distasteful to our generation, Mr. Hitler's general principle of using rotten humans instead of decent animals in scientific research may still deserve re-consideration.

I propose that we replace rats and other laboratory animals with those humans recognized as true undesirables, by general agreement throughout America today: cigarette smokers.

I hope that nobody will reject this suggestion without serious examination. Cigarette smokers have already lost most of their civil rights in this country, and the majority of citizens approve, especially in California. Do we not believe in majority rule here? In the days of racial segregation, Blacks had to sit in the back of the restaurant, but now cigarette smokers feel lucky when *only* segregated to that degree, because

more often they find themselves not allowed into certain restaurants at all. In San Luis Obispo they don't dare even get out of their cars.

We have obviously demoted these wretches to a stage below that of "the Mississippi nigger" in 1950, so there certainly exists a public mood—a potential consensus—avid and eager to demote the nicotine addicts even further. Hardly a week goes by without the announcement of a new law to degrade, humiliate or dehumanize them. They thus make the ideal substitutes for the rodents whose sufferings can still move us to pity, since nobody in America has any pity for a cigarette smoker.

You can only realize how far we have already come toward total segregation when you travel in Europe, which remains almost totally desegregated. From Ireland to Italy, from Hungary to Spain, smokers and non-smokers sit in the same parts of the restaurant, drink at the same bars, dance together and (according to rumor) even have sex together. (Degeneracy and libertinism have always characterized European society, which has never had American idealism and puritanism to guide it.)

Since this solution has mass appeal, as I have demonstrated, it can easily pass our legislatures without serious opposition. It also creates a "moral alternative" to vandalizing laboratories, and will give the Animal Rights movement a platform that can very likely win the hearts of the majority. When you remember that Medical Science classifies nicotine as a drug, making cigarette smokers therefore "drug fiends," this modest proposal will seem not only plausible but virtually inevitable.

In the next step in our national "war against tobacco," we can place the nicotine addicts in "re-education camps." After that, their use in medical research will seem to all the inevitable "final

solution" to the cigarette problem.

I don't think that we should fear that this humane alternative to the plight of laboratory rats will encounter opposition in the courts by the American Civil Liberties Union. Step by step, as we have progressively segregated and chandalized cigarette smokers, the ACLU has clearly indicated a conviction that these vermin belong in the category of non-persons and do not possess "human" rights, anymore than a fetus does.

I hope and trust that this proposal will receive serious consideration by the gurus of the New Age movement, the "deep ecologists" (who should find it especially appealing) and the majority of all right-thinking people in the United States.

Abolishing Sin in Santa Cruz

Santa Cruz, CA, recently passed a law, authored by Councilperson Neal Coonerty, which seems to me another sincere New Left effort to abolish sin. I fear, however, that this Coonerty law—which bans discrimination in renting or hiring on the basis of "personal appearance" or "sexual orientation"—creates certain intractable logical problems which may lead to protracted legal struggles. In this brief note I will attempt to explain my misgivings.

1.) To avoid expensive and unnecessary litigation (one of the primary goals of any landlord or business operator) all of us should have a clear and unambiguous idea of what actions can potentially lead to litigation. Except as a last resort in collecting bad debts, litigation always seems a cure worse than the problem. Thus, in most matters, the *avoidance of litigation*, and the *comprehension of the guidelines to avoid litigation*, always remain paramount concerns.

But in matters relating to *intangible* and *subjective* inner processes of choice and decision, one simply cannot formulate clear



and unambiguous guidelines to avoid litigation.

Nobody, not even the Hon. Councilperson Coonerty, ever really "knows" why you choose A over B. (According to the Freudians, even *you* don't know.) Thus, you can never *prove* that your motive qualifies as "legally pure"; any attempt to find such "proof" leads inevitably to Kafka-like abysses.

Historically, in societies aiming at freedom, legislators do not even attempt such control over the citizens' invisible and unknowable states of mind, realizing that this leads to what Burke once called "that great Serbonian bog where armies whole have sunk."

In other words, when accused of "thought crime," you face the sort of no-win problem confronting Joseph K. in *The Trial*: you can never find a Court metaphysically capable of judging your inner "state of grace" (or lack of it) or attorneys who can find any sort of legal evidence that will "prove" innocence or guilt. I doubt that Constitutional scholars can even form a coherent idea of what might constitute either *evidence* or *proof* in this matter.

Pragmatically, the only rule most businesspeople have for dealing with our current herd of "politically correct" lawmakers (those who *do* increasingly try to control our invisible, unknowable mental states) consists of "When in doubt, play it safe."

In the present context, considering the matter of appearance first, this means that if two candidates apply for the same job, or the same domicile, the "pragmatically safe" choice will award the job or domicile to whoever of the two (in ordinary language) "looks funnier" or "looks weirder" or "looks uglier," etc., because if one chooses the candidate who looks less "funny," or less "weird," or less "ugly," an expensive law suit *might* result.

Thus, under the "when in

doubt, play it safe" rule, I suspect that in only one year after the Coonerty law comes into effect, tenants and employees in Santa Cruz will begin to look slightly strange and a bit bizarre, considered as a group, compared to the present year.

2.) Now, assume conservatively that only 1/20 of all jobs become available in a year's time, due to deaths, retirements, the founding of new enterprises, people moving elsewhere (to find better jobs, to live closer to parents or children, etc.). This means that the Santa Cruz Strangeness Quotient (SCSQ) will increase 1/20 in one year.

It then follows that in, say, five years the SCSQ will reach 5/20 or 25%; in 10 years, the SCSQ will = 50%, etc.

In 20 years then, the SCSQ will change $20 \times 1/20$ or 100%, and all employees here will look decidedly "weird" compared to people elsewhere.

Tourists will then come from nearby towns, or some not so nearby, to gape and ogle at Santa Cruz natives, for the same reason people have always gone to circuses, carnivals, freak shows or horror movies. We should carefully consider if we really want a town that looks like that. *Maybe* "we" (or a loud minority of us) do—I certainly stipulate that it would boost tourism—but we need to debate and carefully consider this issue fully before plunging ahead.

(And let us at least pray that the debate and consideration can occur thoughtfully, without the herds of the politically correct howling, chanting and otherwise drowning out all voices not entirely consistent with their Dogma.)

3.) In the above calculus, I have considered only a single generation. The results of Connerty's Law over a period of a few generations appear even more dramatic. In brief, the law can only produce *a breeding population of*

very "strange"-looking men mating with equally "strange"-looking women. In several generations, *the statistical definition of "human" will perforce change*, and businesspeople wishing to play it safe will hire only the strangest of the strange, the weirdest of the weird. Ergo, Santa Cruz must eventually, by *anti-Darwinian selection*, take on the look of one of those "sinister and ill-regarded" hamlets in the terror fiction of H.P. Lovecraft, where everybody looks vaguely ape-like, frog-like, fish-like or somehow inhuman (see, e.g., "The Dunwich Horror" or "The Shadow Over Innsmouth.")

4.) If you have jobs to offer or rooms to rent, the probability of a law suit against you will *decrease* as the number of "odd-looking" tenants or employees *increases*. Thus, under the "play it safe" rule, the more truly amazing-looking or nearly unbelievable tenants or employees you can find, the safer your legal position becomes.

Thus, within a generation, to attend to business, seek a profit and avoid interminable legal expenses and court appearances, you will do well to fill your premises not just with the somewhat "ugly" or mildly "unattractive," but with the truly, hideously *loathsome*, and especially the "terrifying" and "eldritch"—i.e., with those who look as if they had in fact escaped from Lovecraft's fantasy, or from *Tales of the Crypt*.

5.) A paradox then arises. At the precise point when Santa Cruz *does* look like Horror Comix, the Coonerty law will encourage legal actions by those who appear (or *think* they appear) conspicuously gorgeous and/or handsome.

In simple logic, if everybody in Santa Cruz looks like a member of the Juke or Kallikak families, or the Addams family, or a relative of Gill Man, a few Venuses and Adonises can argue, plausibly, that *good-looking people have de facto*

become excluded from dwellings and jobs. These "movie star" types will have suffered "discrimination," and they can sue. As we have seen, the Coonerty law (enacted) and the "play it safe" rule (un-enacted but omnipresent) will indeed discriminate against the comely, and lawyers will gladly encourage them in fighting this "injustice."

The increasingly subtle art of avoiding litigation under this law, it then seems, will consist of an initial strategy of hiring or renting to people who look creepy or crawly by ordinary standards, but to reverse this strategy and again hire some "normals" shortly before all Santa Cruz residents actually look like Godzilla and his sisters and his cousins and his aunts.

This requires extremely delicate judgement, and in any choice that requires supreme delicacy, lawyers will happily sue you for not having had *quite enough delicacy* to meet the "intent" of the law. You will never know if you have enough "Aliens" in your office to hire one "Sigourney Weaver"—or you will only find out when a law suit against you begins, and the lawyer for the plaintiff asks not only civil damages but \$23,000,000 in punitive damages as well.

6.) I have used extreme examples to illustrate one possibly defective aspect of this law, *but "average" examples create even worse potential legal disputes.* Thus:

"Beauty," as we have all heard, "resides in the eye of the beholder."

Two *seemingly* ordinary-looking people arrive to apply for a job you have advertised. Under the "when in doubt, play it safe" rule (always prudent and usually *necessary* for *survival* when dealing with *politically correct* governments), you try to decide which of the two might qualify as a *little* less attractive. The more unlike my previous grotesque examples these

people seem to you, the harder your legal problem becomes. If candidate #1 seems fairly comely but 20 pounds overweight, does that out-rank a huge hairy wart on the nose of otherwise-comely candidate #2? How many warts out-rank 30 pounds of overweight?

Since the safest choice consists in always choosing the less appealing candidate, and since beauty, as noted, appears relative, the optimum solution, as Game Theory would call it, consists in obtaining a consensus. In other words, install a one-way glass wall in your office and hire a few random citizens to sit behind it and vote on which candidate appears a bit more unattractive. (These citizens could also testify for you, if litigation nonetheless results, to show that you at least made a sincere effort to avoid hiring good-looking people.)

The Coonerty law does not propose to pay business people for installing these walls of one-way glass and hiring independent "citizen judges." This does not seem fair. Should not the city appropriate the funds to pay for this, as an incentive to those who truly wish to follow the intent of the law, either out of altruism or just to avoid endless litigation, and as a partial compensation for the judicial and other burdens this law will place on businesspersons?

7.) The law does not specifically include *smell* as part of "personal appearance," but most people do, in fact, notice odor and consider it in forming a judgement of a job applicants or possible tenants. Lawyers will certainly insist that the "intent of the law" should include smell—it certainly seems that the law would have included smell if Coonerty had thought of that—and, as I understand the legal mind, honest judges will have to agree with this viewpoint.

Once again, the change in Santa Cruz yields to mathematical

analysis. Under the "when in doubt, play it safe" guideline to avoid litigation, businesspeople will tend to hire whoever smells less pleasing. Thus in one year, Santa Cruz will smell 1/20 less pleasant than at present, and in 20 years 100% worse than at present, etc.

This can only "level off" when the town takes on the general aroma of an open cesspool and businesses feel "safe" in now and then hiring one or two less malodorous employees. Meanwhile, it would appear prudent to buy a gas-mask.

8.) When we turn to the matter of "sexual orientation," the logical and legal problems multiply like microbes.

Contrary to folklore, nobody can judge another's sexual preference by their appearance or "body language." The most experienced interviewers from the Kinsey Institute, studying sexual behavior for decades, still find that they cannot guess, in advance, whether a subject's life history will reveal an all-homosexual lifestyle, an all-heterosexual lifestyle, or a mixture, which may run from 90% gay/10% straight to 10% gay/90% straight, or even to 99%/1% either way.

"When in doubt, play it safe" simply does not apply here. The employer will have to *guess*, and will guess wrong around the half the time (as Kinsey interviewers do.) The endless litigation can prove satisfying only to the Hon. Mr. Coonerty—and to the lawyers.

9.) A way out might exist if employers had the right to ask the sexual orientation of candidates, *and prudently hire only those with unpopular or minority preferences*, but this violates numerous State and Federal ordinances. In this area of law nobody has the right to *ask*, but under the Coonerty Ordinance all employers will have to *guess* (with penalties for guessing wrong).

We seem to have surpassed



Kafka and arrived at the portals of George Orwell's Ministry of Love. This does not appear at all like a Constitutional legal system but like a cruelly labyrinthine trap.

10.) No rational person can seriously fear an increase in the number of masochists in Santa Cruz; masochists hurt nobody but themselves. But a law banning all forms of "discrimination" will also attract an influx of sadists, will it not?

How many new sadists does Mr. Coonerty wish to lure to our community?

How many sadists do the majority of us want?

Some may claim that the Coonerty Law does not mention sadists and "really intends" only to increase the number of gainfully employed homosexuals here. *But the law does not single out homosexuals as some specially "blessed" group among all the sexual minorities, because if it did, it would conflict with State and Federal ordinances against such special group bias.* Lawyers will quickly find it profitable to insist on *what the law does exactly say.*

(Meanwhile, we can expect some spectacular demonstrations, with signs like "A LITTLE DISCIPLINE NEVER HURT ANYBODY," "NO GAIN WITHOUT PAIN," etc., and the inevitable chant, "Hey Hey Ho Ho Sadophobia Has To Go.")

11.) How many necrophiles do we really want? The Coonerty law opens the floodgates to them also.

12.) I have no personal bias against people who want to have sex with toy poodles or dobermans, but what will the toy poodles and dobermans think about this?

Have the Animal Rights people had a chance to comment on this perplexing issue? Has the Hon. Coonerty given any effort to deciding the "age of consent" for dogs? For cats? For swine? For other animals?

In summary, the Coonerty law

does not advantage ugly homosexuals only but *all unpleasant-looking people with sexual "orientations" different from the majority.* It will benefit not just the groups already mentioned, but hunchbacked child molesters, dwarfish rapists, obese foot fetishists, pock-marked leather fetishists, etc., along with generally ugly suideaphiliacs, deformed iguanaphiliacs, foul-smelling ichthyophiliacs, etc. (See R. Kraft-Ebing, *Psychopathia Sexualis*.)

13.) Considering these *possible* consequences of the Coonerty Law—all of them highly *probable* eventually, due to well-known propensities of the legal profession—we should perhaps take steps to make the image of Santa Cruz (although a weird one) appear more "fey and whimsical" (like St. Olaf's on the TV comedy "Golden Girls") than downright monstrous and nefarious (like Lovecraft's demoniac towns, already mentioned.)

(In other words, we will find it easier, in the long run, if nearby towns—and the nation as a whole—only regard Santa Cruz as ridiculous, rather than sinister. People laugh at the absurd, but often attack what they fear.)

To start with, we might order our police to abandon their present uniforms and dress in clown suits. We could also require that teachers in our schools, male and female, must wear those "Groucho Marx" comedy spectacles which give the wearer huge eyebrows, an astounding false nose of gigantic proportions and a *bandito* mustache. Statues of Salvador Dali, say, and/or The Mad Hatter, Pooh Bear, Wile E. Coyote, The Three Stooges (in scuba diving suits), etc., outside each government building would also help create a ludicrous rather than frightening ambience.

Removing the dull ruminations by DWPS (dead white politicians) from these buildings might also

help our "comic, not sinister" image, if we replace them with bits of bizarre or inscrutable humor—e.g., **Keep the Lasagna Flying Proudly Over Capitola Mall, The Mome Rath Doesn't Exist That Can Outgrabe Me, When Laws Are Outlawed Only Outlaws Will Have Laws, I Always Believe Three Impossible Things Before Breakfast,** etc.

Most helpful of all, perhaps, the Township should consider the propriety of buying some full-grown adult ostriches, standing a regal 8 feet high, and allow them to mingle with the City Council during all important public hearings, bringing to our urgent municipal proceedings the absurd and pathetic dignity that only these giant wingless birds embody. The mad surrealist poetry of this legislative innovation should appeal to both Mr. Coonerty and Ms. Atkins, even if they prefer not to meditate too deeply on its possible symbolism.

14.) Assuming that Jeffrey Dahmer's lawyers somehow win him an early parole, he would appear the ideal future Santa Cruz renter and employee. Once he announces, casually, "Oh, by the way, I like to sodomize little black boys and then cook them and eat them," everybody will see him as Ideal Tenant and Ideal Worker, since his presence will in itself serve as *a truly spectacular legal, logical and Public Relations argument against any charges of homophobia, sadophobia, necrophobia or miscellaneous "discrimination"* that might later arise.

Others of Dahmer's "orientation" will think of this and we can expect them to arrive here soon. The politically correct may rejoice in this triumph of their odd logic, but how many others, who have not yet achieved full correctness, can sincerely share the rejoicing?

In none of the above have I

considered the emigration of businesses away from Santa Cruz and the rising unemployment that will result. Nobody knows how many businesses will just move elsewhere, and I do not attempt to estimate. Perhaps many will stay, because of the lovely scenery and climate in these parts. *Let us hope so.* Many, however, will prefer to leave rather than attempting to do business in this Kafka-like-context, and we should also ask, even if we cannot answer immediately, how much more unemployment do we really want?

I can only conclude with words attributed to Henry David Thoreau: If you scan the horizon and see a politician approaching with the intent to improve your morals, *run for your life.*

Abolishing Sin in Santa Cruz II

After writing the above, I sent copies to all members of the Santa Cruz City Council. None of them bothered to answer, except the Hon. Neal Coonerty, author of the legislation, who told me, in effect, to go to hell and take my logic book with me.

Undaunted, I tried to infiltrate a pro-choice viewpoint into the local paper, the Santa Cruz *Sentinel*. I wrote:

"In the recent letters about the City Council, nobody pointed out that the Coonerty anti-bias law does not achieve the 100% political correctness claimed for it by its admirers. This law still allows a possibility of bias, or personal choice, if the owner of a business has the low cunning or craftiness to conceal her (or his) real motives in hiring or firing.

"We will only achieve 100% correctness, I think, when business people have no choice at all about who they employ. *No choice means no bias*—and, let's face it, anti-choice has become what modern America symbolizes. We can only achieve the ideal no choice/no bias Utopia by turning all

hiring over to the City Council itself, which nobody can suspect of bias because it has always shown a perfect record of Pure Reason and incorruptible honesty, only equaled by our wonderful State Legislature and our glorious Congress.

"Businesspersons may object to the no choice idea at first, but remember: where you have no choice, you also bear no responsibility. My 100% politically correct plan will save you untold weeks, or months, or years, and uncounted legal fees in fighting the law suits that will certainly arise if you do retain choice; and no way exists to predict what occult divinations a court will consider

reasonable in trying to guess if you choose A over B because you liked A better than B. Evade all this hassle by allowing the City Council to choose your new employees when you have vacancies to fill.

"Sincerely. . . (etc.)"

The *Sentinel* did not consider this letter Fit To Print, evidently suspecting a satiric intent. I doubt, however, the stories told me by old timers who insist the editors took the letter to a graveyard and buried it at midnight after driving a stake through it.

Santa Cruz remains the world capital of Political Correctness.

△ △ △

Clintonburger

The Bildgerbergers, a secretive group of financiers who meet only once a year, will go to any length to avoid publicity—which perhaps explains why the major media, ever fearful of offending its masters, never mentions them. (The underground press, both Left and Right, prints any and every tidbit of information or rumor about them it can get its hands on.)

Recently, a friend in Australia sent us a copy of *New Dawn* (Vol. 1, No. 7; November, 1991) in which we found, for the first time anywhere, a list of some of the guests invited to a Bilderberger conference—in Baden-Baden, Germany, June 6-9, 1991. Some of the guests included Wilfried Martens, Belgian Prime Minister; Karl Otto Pohl, president of Deutsche Bundesbank; Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands; Lord Roll of Ipsden, president of the Warburg Group and board member of Kissinger Associates; Katherine Graham, chairperson of the *Washington Post*; David Rockefeller (you've heard of him?); Lord Carrington, from the board of Hambros Bank, involved in the Sindona-Calvi-P2 drug laundering "ghost banks" in Italy and Latin America; and a virtually unknown chap back then in June 1991: Gov. Bill Clinton of Arkansas.

Yes, the same Bill Clinton, born in poverty (as he keeps telling us), who only earned \$50,000 a year as governor, but, after meeting those fun Bilderberger guys, somehow acquired the \$100,000,000 it takes to run a Presidential campaign.

Wanted—Dead or Alive?

continued from page 2

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Blowing in the Wind...

Je Suis Marxiste Tendence Groucho

20,000 farmers in India tried a new form of nonviolent resistance recently, surrounding the capital buildings in Bangalore and laughing loudly for two hours. Protest leaders hoped this would prove more effective than shouting angry slogans, explaining, "We want to laugh this government out."

(Syracuse Post Standard, March 24, 1992)

Going Too Far

When John Henderson, 29, and his girl-friend Zoe D'Arcy, 19, decided to have sex in a railway coach in England, the other passengers maintained British decorum and studiously looked out the windows or read their papers. But when John and Zoe lit up two cigarettes in the afterglow, the indignant passengers complained to the conductor. A London magistrate fined John and Zoe \$142 each for violating smoking regulations and "committing an indecent act."

(San Jose Mercury News, August 8, 1991)

Angelology

According to *Religion Watch*, angels have become a matter of great concern again, after a century of decreasing interest. Quoting the *Wall Street Journal*, RW finds interest in angels increasing in groups as "disparate as Catholics and New Agers, the devout and the unchurched." *Newsweek* also featured the rebirth of angelology in its April 17 issue and asked whether America "is experiencing some sort of collective fantasy of supernatural rescue." RW also points that out several "angelic" influences appear in the popular film *Grand Canyon*—events not identified as supernatural, but

nonetheless arriving at suspiciously opportune times to rescue people in distress or re-direct them to new paths.

RW does not mention that Aleister Crowley's Ordo Templi Orientis has become the most influential occult lodge in America and that its members each take an oath to seek "the Knowledge and Conversation of My Holy Guardian Angel."

(*Religion Watch*, June, 1992)

The Drug War Staggers On....

DARE to Fink on Your Parents

The war on drugs took a new (or very old) turn in Searsport, Maine, last year, when Crystal Grendel, 11, incited by an anti-drug program in school, turned in her own parents for smoking Weed. Although nobody went to a concentration camp *a la* the *Hitlerjugend*, Crystal's father received one year's probation and her mother lost her jobs as school bus driver and teacher's assistant. The emotional shock devastated the family. Crystal, a former A student, now gets mostly Cs, shows anxiety when a police car passes, and says "I would never tell again. Never. Never."

DARE, the program which persuaded the girl to snitch on her parents, started in Los Angeles and has come into use in schools in almost every state. "Parents Against DARE," in Fort Collins, CO, has started a rival program, trying to spread the warning, "This is the stuff of Orwellian fiction. This is Big Brother putting spies in our homes," said a spokesperson for the organization.

(*Wall Street Journal*, April 20, 1992)

Another War on "Drugs"?

The FDA's growing fury against all forms of alternative medicine reached a new peak of violence on May 6, 1992, when armed FDA agents raided the office of Dr. Jonathan Wright. Dr. Wright, who received his MD from the University of Michigan, and has operated the same medical clinic in Tacoma, WA, for 20 years, has long advocated nutritional and herbal approaches to certain diseases and has experienced increasing hostility from the AMA/FDA hierarchy, but the doctor only felt the full fury of the New Inquisition in this raid.

The agents knocked down a door (without asking to have it opened) as if busting a crack house, terrorized the entire staff by threatening them with drawn guns, and seized everything in the office—medicines, herbs, documents, case files, even postage stamps.

Said the local *Post Intelligencer*: "Gestapo-like tactics." Said the *Journal American*: "absurd overkill." Three months later, the FDA has not returned any of this confiscated property, nor filed any charges against Dr. Wright. He has started a suit against *them*, however.

Wouldn't you?

(*Health and Healing*, July 1992)

Arbeit Macht Frei

• In Raleigh, NC, the State encourages fully domesticated citizens to install signs saying "Operation Marijuana Watch" on their property. The landowner promises to snitch on anybody he sees growing the Devil Weed (or acting "suspicious," whatever that means) and grants the State the right to snoop around his land anytime, day or night, looking for other signs of Evil.

• Meanwhile, in Columbia, SC, the state has tried to replace drugs with dove massacres, under the slogan "Shoot for the Future—Don't Use Drugs." Animal Rights activists protested vehemently, and Heidi Prescott, national director of the Fund for Animals said, "We are outraged at the absurdity of giving people two choices—shooting doves or shooting drugs." Brock Conrad, director of the bird slaughter, fired back: "It's just kind of hard to reason with these groups."

• In California, NORML (National Organization to Reform Marijuana Laws) has called for a boycott of Anheuser-Busch, a principle sponsor of the wildly (often hilariously) inaccurate "Partnership for a Drug-Free America" ads on radio and TV. Anheuser-Busch produces such products as Budweiser beer, Bud Lite and Michelob, all containing the mind-altering drug, C_2H_5OH , often linked with violence and addiction.

(All 3 items above from *Urine Nation News*, July 1992)

More Judges Jump Ship

Two more judges—from conservative Orange County, CA, amazingly!—have joined the mounting list of law enforcement people, scientists and clergy who now form a nation-wide anti-war movement on drugs. In April Superior Court Judge James Grey argued that the war has done much more harm than good, and urged legalization of pot, heroin and cocaine. Three weeks later, U.S. Magistrate Ronald Rose also urged legalization, saying "We have to take the profit out this Dante's Inferno..."

Grey, who formerly served as a federal prosecutor, said that after he urged legalization 60 per cent of the mail he received supported his position.

(*Brain-Mind Bulletin*, June, 1992)

Depression, Fate and Neurochemistry

A report in the June, 1992, issue of the *American Journal of Psychiatry* reveals that a specific neurotransmitter, norepinephrine, appeared in higher levels among depressed patients than among others—but it appeared most frequently in those who blamed their problems on either "society" or on specific individuals. Those who blamed their situation on more abstract forces—"fate" or "luck" or "destiny"—did not have any clear correlation with norepinephrine.

In another study, blacks and Hispanics appeared less likely to use safety belts than white people (averages: blacks and Hispanics use belts 67 percent of the time; whites, 75 percent). The same study showed that blacks and Hispanics also agree, significantly more often than whites do, that "you can't change your destiny." (*Science News*, June 13, 1992) Those who believe in this spooky kind of predestination—an anthropomorphism of "fate"—also seem inclined to depression even without the high levels of norepinephrine found in other depressive persons.

Maybe this means that white people usually need endogenous chemical imbalances to become clinically depressed, but minorities get depressed and/or fatalistic just because of the way our society treats them?

Words to Live By

The *Los Angeles Times* (April 26, 1992) printed what some celebrities replied when asked a prescription for peace on Earth. Highlights:

Mother Teresa: "If we love each other as God loves each one of us there will be peace."

Charlie Manson: "Relax. Be now."

Isaac Asimov: "I'm pretty sure Christianity doesn't help." Stephen King: "My prescription for peace? Die. There's none to be had on this Earth."

The Toyota Next Time

A 17-year-old Russian, Vitaly Klimakhin, has written what will almost certainly achieve recognition as the dullest novel in history. The same length as *War and Peace*, Klimakhin's untitled epic consists of the single word "Ford" repeated 400,000 times, and took the author 107 days of work to complete, at ten hours a day. Although nobody has offered to publish this book—editors say it sags badly in the middle—Guinness examined the manuscript and promised to include Mr. Klimakhin in the next edition of their *Book of Records*, for the most times a single word has appeared in one novel. Asked what other recognition he hopes for, the youthful author said hopefully "Maybe Ford will give me some money or something."

So far Ford Motors has not responded to this broad hint.

(*Wall Street Journal*, June 26, 1992)

Moderation in All Things...

Ancient Greek wisdom received new confirmation in a study by four University of Texas researchers, who found that students reporting moderate use of drugs also showed greater life satisfaction than either total abstainers or heavy users. Drugs used by the 683 students in the

survey included both legal buzzes (booze, cigarettes and tranks) and illegal highs (pot, speed and cocaine) but moderate use, rather than legality or illegality, correlated most closely with happy lives. Patrick Clifford, leader of the research team, did not shy away from saying, "Heavy users, to be sure, are not very happy. On the other hand, moderate users are happier than anyone else." He also suggested that total abstinence, as promulgated by the "Just Say No" program, correlates with a limited and rigid personality.

Similar studies of alcohol alone have all tended to show that moderate usage, rather than abstinence or heavy use, correlates with longevity and general good health.

(Such statistical data does not apply to every individual. Recovering alcoholics, for instance, should not try to become moderate drinkers just because that correlates with longevity for other people.)

(*Brain/Mind Bulletin*, July, 1992)

The Dead Past:

*More Notes on
Mysterious Fatalism*

Speaking about minorities and fatalism, the latest issue of *Extra* (\$2.50 from FAIR, 130 West 25th Street, NYC 10001) contains 35 pages of extremely well documented evidence of pervasive (if euphemistic) racism in all our major media. The FAIR staff finds this sugar-coated racism in "liberal" as well as conservative sources, and shows how choice of words, choice of which stories to feature and which to ignore, and even choice of which headline to put on a published story all combine to perpetuate a soothing mythos in which (a) all racial injustices occurred in the distant past, and none occur in the present, and (b) whites all try to be nice but minorities irrationally hate them for those long, long ago "past

injustices" (which never occur in the present).

(*Extra's* examination of media coverage during and after the LA riots seems to me a masterpiece of critical analysis, showing how propaganda can distort things right in front of the viewer's eyes.)

The last page of *Extra* recounts two recent studies of American racism. In each study, "matched" white and black subjects went to apply for the same jobs or the same rental apartments. Although the matching included equally expensive clothes and equal college degrees, the whites consistently got the jobs or apartments much more often than the blacks—who probably became more inclined to depression and/or fatalism. (Wouldn't you?)

Out of Chaos, Order

As reported in *Trajectories* #3, two Princeton scientists who examined 832 studies of the effect of mind on random number generators found that target numbers appear far beyond the range permitted by laws of probability, and no evidence indicates that flaws in methodology could account for the overwhelming body of evidence produced in all these experiments. Now, a new study of minds trying to influence random number generators (by Jahn and Dunne at Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research lab) has also found positive results, and adds two new bits of data to the puzzle:

1.) Distance has no effect on the success ratio. People far from the apparatus scored as well in producing target numbers as those closer by.

2.) Attempts to produce higher numbers succeeded more often than attempts to produce lower numbers.

30 participants performed 265 experiments over a four-year period. Some performed as far from Princeton as Kenya, India and New Zealand.

(*Brain/Mind Bulletin*, June, 1992)

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Fearful Symmetry: Reflections on "The Silence of the Lambs"

by Robert Anton Wilson

The Silence of the Lambs...a title resonant with religious connotations...a movie with a reputation for cold terror which every viewer presumably has heard even before entering the theater...Between a title so salvific and a word-of-mouth reputation so malefic, you know you can expect a weird trip...

Alpha and Omega

The film opens with only a woman on screen: running, climbing a fence, running again. The only sound: female panting. Such female panting can signify coitus, or child-birth, or flight from danger; but here it signifies none of these. It indicates running an obstacle course, as the woman will run a more difficult psycho-spiritual obstacle course in the subsequent story.

"Starling!.... Starling!" One English word shouted twice: the first male voice, and the first human speech, we have heard. The woman turns, approaches the man who shouted. It becomes evident that "Starling," here, does not designate a bird, but the woman herself. "Starling, Clarice," says Jack Crawford, head of the FBI's Behavioral Science Division, consulting her file (drumming the name into our minds) and he has an assignment for her: the plot of the film begins. She will go to visit an imprisoned serial killer, to obtain inside insights on another serial killer, still on the loose.

Modern criticism has taught us to study the first and last words of a book or film most carefully. "Starling" (as a word in itself, not just the heroine's name) invokes Venus (patron of birds), Hagia Sophia, the Holy Spirit: pagan, Gnostic and Christian images of spiritual eros or erotic spirituality. "Starling, Clarice," as Jack Crawford calls her while looking at her file: the "Clarice" resonates with Latinate roots for clarity, brightness, intelligence. (The "star" in "starling" also suggests symbols of illumination, e.g. the Silver Star of Masonry, the Argentum Astrum of Aleister Crowley.) The name

"Clarice Starling" proves very appropriate for this totally unique heroine, who Crawford sends to interview a totally unique villain, Dr. Hannibal Lecter.

And just as the verbal script began with two beats announcing the heroine ("Starling! Starling!"), it ends with four beats, terminating (forever? or just for a while?) the strange relationship between her and the monster who has become her teacher, mentor and initiator: "Dr. Lecter. . .Dr. Lecter. . .Dr. Lecter." Starling calls into a dead phone. Does she want him back so she can arrest him, or so she may learn more from him? Or both? Jodie Foster gives four types of ambiguity to that marvelous last line.

We recognize Joycean labyrinths within a Joycean unified vision when a film begins with the name of the heroine repeated twice and ends with the name of the principle male character invoked four times. It comes as no surprise that *Lecter*, in German, means a visiting professor who lectures in a foreign language. Dr. Lecter indeed teaches in a "foreign" language made up hints, ambiguities, amphibology and even anagrams. *What* he teaches takes Clarice on a walking tour through Dante's *Inferno*.

Ishtar's Walk

Indeed, as we analyze this peculiarly haunting film—only the third in all film history to have received all *five* of the top Academy Awards: Best Film, Director, Script, Actor and Actress—we see that it belongs to the mythic pattern Jungians call "the underground initiation." Clarice Starling descends into the most hellish pits of the human unconscious, then rises to live out the salvific implications of the title. Like Osiris and Dionysus and Joyce's Tim Finnegan, Clarice becomes a symbol of the psyche's quest for rebirth.

But before any resurrected male gods appear in history, Ishtar descended into hell and rose again, in Babylonian mythology; so did Inanna in earlier Summerica; and Persephone in Greece (among others). Clarice Starling

represents the primordial and paleolithic Great Goddess whose underground journeys only millennia later got adopted into male forms by patriarchal religions. This film's psycho-archeology carries us back past the recent layers of the collective unconscious to the oldest and most somatic levels: the death/rebirth of the Goddess contains all the symbols of childbirth and new life.

Clarice descends, first, into the maximum security ward of a hospital for the criminally insane—the ward where they keep the most dangerous "cases." Here she meets a cannibal, of course—just as a cannibal appears very early in *Finnegans Wake* and a surprising number of fairy tales. Just as a cannibal (Peking Man/Woman) stands at the dawn of our history as a species.

This particular cannibal, Dr. Hannibal Lecter, quickly reveals himself as the kind of antagonist that will cause even Starling trepidation. Considered so dangerous that the asylum keeper (Dr. Chilton) keeps him locked behind both bars and shatterproof glass, Lecter also quickly exhibits an intelligence of genius level, and an empathy missing in most sociopaths. (We will learn that he can turn that empathy off at will.)

The contest appears uneven; we worry about Starling. She has two bachelor's degrees, in psychology and criminology; Dr. Lecter has an M.D., a couple of decades practise as a psychiatrist, and knowledge of the murderous mind *from the inside*. You never once feel that the bars and the glass can protect little Starling if Dr. Lecter really decides to "play games" with her.

(In *Red Dragon*, an earlier novel by Thomas Harris, author of *The Silence of the Lambs*, Dr. Lecter played a very nasty game with another FBI agent who hoped to use him without being used in turn. That agent, Will Graham, ended the book disfigured and nerve-wracked, no longer able to do police work. Dr. Lecter had playfully helped Graham to find the killer he wanted, by helping the killer find him.)

So: the first dialogue between Starling and Lecter starts on a high pitch of male-female tension. Which one of them will succeed in using or conning the other? Lecter has all the advantages of age, experience and genius, but Starling has even more smarts and more guts than we guessed at first. The contest clearly ends in a draw. "Fly back to school, little Starling. Fly, fly, fly," says Lecter, loftily dismissing her (and unconsciously invoking the bird/saviour archetype). He seems miffed that she did not fall over in shock at his first (deadly accurate) analysis of her motives in studying psychology: desire to escape her "poor white" background and its economic and intellectual limitations.

As Starling starts to leave, she receives a splatter of semen from another cell, housing a multiple personality case: Freud as well as Jung would see this symbolism as the beginning of a rebirth process. Then, *seemingly* offended by this mock Immaculate Conception, Lecter *seemingly* has a moment of kindness. He gives Starling her first clue, to help her on the case of "Buffalo Bill," the serial killer that the Behavioral Science Division believes Lecter can outguess quicker than they can. We don't know, of course, if Lecter has really decided to help or has started one of his sadistic "games" with her...

We start to believe (a little) in Lecter's "sincerity" when Miggs, the inmate who shot his seed on Starling, commits suicide the next day and Dr. Chilton, the chief psychologist, insists that Lecter drove this patient to kill himself by whispering unbearable things to him in the dark of night. Lecter more or less admits this, in his next meeting with Clarice, when he barely hides a smirk of self-satisfaction after saying that "Multiple-Miggs" will never offend her again.

I must admit this Miggs bit fair turned my hair, so it did. It reminded me of the time a cat, wishing to please me, killed a song bird and dragged it into the house to lay at my feet. The love offerings of predators can make one feel quite uncomfortable. Worse: since Lecter knows so much about Starling already (we have seen that), this blood offering may constitute the first move in selling

her the con he wishes to perpetuate on the FBI this time.

Indeed, Lecter's motives remain an unending mystery as the movie proceeds. Clarice never really knows for sure, and neither do we. In the book, Dr. Lecter asks once if Starling accepts the common diagnosis of him as a sociopath, and she says, correctly, "I haven't observed the lack of affect yet." In the film, Anthony Hopkins and Jodie Foster magnificently convey this bottomless ambiguity, even though those particular lines got cut. Hopkins's condescendingly witty and narcissistic Lecter does not "lack affect" but he does certainly lack "super-ego"—and yet...and yet...More and more, like Starling, we move toward *almost* trusting him.

In fact, I think the movie has proved so unnerving to so many audiences precisely because we, like Starling, *almost* trust Lecter—even though we, just like Starling, know that you can't dare to trust such a man. In short, Dr. Lecter succeeds in conning us, and that proves more terrifying (to intelligent viewers) than all the explicit violence which director Jonathan Demme has so skillfully avoided. (Where recent shock/thriller directors have crudely "grossed us out" Demme much more subtly works on weirding us out...). We can only take small comfort in the fact that clever little Starling *seemingly* succeeds in conning Lecter, too, by persuading him to believe promises the FBI has no intent of keeping.

(Incidentally, I intend no sexist put-down in repeating Dr. Lecter's snide description of our heroine as "little Starling." Director Demme continually uses Jodie Foster's short stature to make the contest seem even more unequal, and her victory—or partial victory?—becomes all the more heroic. "Starling is Hollywood's first real heroine, and not just a steroid case," Foster has said...)

Meanwhile, back in the second Starling-Lecter interview we paradoxically come to "like" Lecter a little (the con starts to work...?) when we learn of the "negative reinforcement" Dr. Chilton has chosen to punish him for his role in Miggs's suicide. How does one de-condition a sociopath? Dr. Chilton decided to do it by sticking a TV set

outside the cell (where Lecter can't turn it off) and leaving it on the religious channel, at top decibel level, 24 hours a day. Dr. Lecter's icy contempt for this tactic, marvelously underplayed by Anthony Hopkins, ironically dramatizes the charm of the intelligent sociopath: terrifyingly free of human pity for others, he also (and therefore) remains enviably free of all-too-human pity for himself. I thought of the old poem:

Lo, the happy sociopath,
He doesn't give a damn.
I wish I was a sociopath—
My God, perhaps I am.

As the contest/agon/affair between Lecter and Starling proceeds, he negotiates her into a one-down position: she must play the patient, while he gets to play psychiatrist again. For each revelation he draws from her, he gives one revelation about Buffalo Bill, the mad killer the FBI desperately wishes to capture. In the Ishtar myth, Ishtar had to give away one article of clothing at each door as she descended the seven rings of Hell, until she stood naked at the bottom. Lecter has psychologized the myth, and Starling stands psychologically naked when his educational work on her concludes.

(Some think the strip-tease derives, via the Dance of Seven Veils, from Ishtar's descent through the Babylonian seven hells. Whether we believe that or not, Lecter has invented a psychological strip-tease, with Ishtar-ian mythic roots.)

The joker lies in the fact that Starling gradually "strips" Lecter also. In explaining Buffalo Bill, Lecter explains himself in reverse fashion, as through a mirror darkly.

Love Is Never Having To Say You're Sorry

It comes as a distinct shock to realize that the relationship between Starling and Lecter both duplicates and parodies the traditional Hollywood love story. Nonetheless, they meet with mutual distrust, they have misunderstandings, and by the end of the film he has clearly revealed affection (if not romantic "love") for her, and she seems in danger of feeling something of the same for him. As a good cop, she can't let that happen, can she?

Listen again to Foster's intonations of "Dr. Lecter" in the four-beat closing notes of this dark symphony and you will realize that the real terrors of this film do not appear on the surface at all, at all. On a walk through hell, in the Jungian sense, you always have to confront the internal forces that may destroy you, as well as the external ones.

Grok this deeply: Beginning with Landru, quite a few famous serial killers, once in custody, received hundreds of love letters from women who somehow thought they could reform or redeem them. Masochism cannot entirely explain this, nor does it appear an exclusively female aberration.

Many of us wish we could have talked to Marilyn Monroe before she swallowed those pills, right? More remarkable: I once saw a group letter from some Quaker ladies who thought they could persuade Nixon to stop killing people in Vietnam and Cambodia. Some people want to save (redeem) everybody; some, more limited in imagination, only want to "save" those whom they find sexually attractive. "Co-dependency" names but doesn't really explain this kind of seduction, but all mystics recognize it as a "danger on the Path."

And one part of all of us finds Lecter attractive enough to wish that, after his escape, he would restrain his damnable appetites and just settle down in Rio, like a "good" retired shrink, and write more brilliant articles about the criminal mind.....

The greatest sequence in the movie—the one that ruins everybody's nerves—comes after Dr. Chilton, in hopes of stealing publicity from the FBI, has had Dr. Lecter moved to a jail in Memphis. This sequence contains one high point after another—Starling's final revelation, the story of the spring lambs, the meaning of the title, the inexplicable physical contact between her and Lecter, and the brutal murder of the two guards when Lecter escapes. It works not just as a crescendo of shocks but also as a crescendo of psychological paradoxes and Gnostic salvific symbolism.

Wonderfully, the sequence starts with a comic bit about the limits of language—"Is he a vampire?" a naive young cop asks Starling, and she replies,

with dry understatement, "There's no word for what he is." When she approaches Lecter's new cage (without the extra glass barrier...) he shows mild surprise that she found him again and says, with Hopkins' most marvelously multi-faceted irony: "People will say we're in love." This launches just about the most wrenching combat in dialogue since Sophocles let Oedipus and Tiresias have at each other with hammer and tongs at the dawn of drama.

Here we learn—as Lecter's repeated "*quid pro quo*" becomes more and more ominous—that Clarice once tried to save a lamb from the slaughter on her uncle's farm, and failed; that, in nightmares, she still hears the lambs screaming; that her drive for success in the FBI comes not just from the male or yang ambition Lecter spotted at their first meeting but from a very yin attempt to save all the innocent little lambs that she can.

And we learn, too, why Buffalo Bill never sexually molests his victims, why he does not skin them until he has first killed them; we learn that the precise difference between a sadist and a religious lunatic lies in the fact that the lunatic, *like Starling herself*, wants salvation and rebirth. Buffalo Bill simply has the delusion (common, I would wager, since the rise of Radical Feminism) that if he can lose his masculinity and "become" a woman, he will no longer feel alienated, sub-human and autistic. A woman's skin, he thinks, will cover the "shame" of his maleness. (Most New Left males try a variation on this ploy by adopting Radical Feminist slogans, especially the craziest anti-male slogans.)

Lecter, it appears, also has his rebirth fantasy on an unconscious level. His crimes all aim, ultimately, at transformation into a sort of Nietzschean Superman.

Like Buffalo Bill, Lecter cannot tolerate the estate of "mere" manhood. Feminism has, perhaps, made that estate unbearable for two generations of males by now, most of whom (fortunately) show the pain in less spectacular symptoms than those of Lecter and Buffalo Bill. But, I dare hint, every male running around beating a drum at a Bly seminar understands these two villains, even if he doesn't particularly care to

understand them.

After these nightmarish psycho-social themes have been passed so fast we hardly digest what we have heard, the obnoxious Dr. Chilton arrives and Starling has to leave. At this point, Lecter reaches through the bars to hand her the files containing his final clues. She reaches out—although everybody has told her of the horrible things that have happened to cops or orderlies who got too close to Lecter—and, as he passes the papers, their hands touch, *very* briefly. More than anything else in this extraordinary film, the brevity of that shot convinces me of the genius of Jonathan Demme. It goes by so rapidly, amid so many high points, that it almost functions subliminally.

On first viewing, we register only the vague impression that something unthinkable has happened, and we missed it. On later viewings, we notice the hands touching and grow increasingly puzzled. Does Dr. Lecter, amid his other whimsies and games, have a list of people he "likes," who he will not make into his victims? One can hardly believe it, but if this film says anything, it says that a human mind, in wisdom or in madness, transcends the understanding of any other human mind.

At the end of the film, as in the book, Dr. Lecter actually communicates with Starling one last time, to assure her that he plans her no harm. "The world is more interesting with you in it," he says.

Intellectual Beauty and a Good Hearty Meal

When Starling has left their last interview, Dr. Lecter (who has obtained permission to have a tape cassette in his cell) punches the "play" button and the rest of the scene has the accompaniment of J.S. Bach's "Goldberg Variations," in the piano rendition of Glen Gould. The incredible, super-human complexity and intellectual beauty of this music seduces our senses, and the camera pans over a sketch of Starling that Lecter has just completed. (She appears the only human he has found interesting enough to render into art, in all his eight years imprisonment. The other sketches of his that we see all show street scenes in Europe—places he admits he loved, and

which, as he told Clarice in one of his boldest lies, he has resigned himself to never seeing again.)

Two guards enter, to feed the ogre. Johan Sebastian Bach sings on, like eternally knotted light, and, in a flash, Lecter's long-planned escape scheme goes into action. (He has out-conned his conners, and expected Chilton to double-cross the FBI: he has foreseen all and planned correctly.) We see two men killed so quickly that Lecter seems less Superman than Superanimal. Then he takes a moment to dine on them before completing his escape. Demme's genius again stuns me: Bach flows all on through this, not the discordant and (predictably) chaotic music almost any other Hollywood director would use. The loveliness of the soundtrack does not quite function as irony: rather, it adds to our terror. With that music, Lecter almost seems to us as he seems to himself: just another predator enjoying a good meal, just another part of the natural order. "Tyger, Tyger burning bright/In the Forest of the Night..."

Most people will swear they saw things in this scene which Demme never showed. Actually, nature films contain much more explicit violence in the predator/prey sequences than Demme in this "horrific" scene. At every point where most modern directors would gross us out, Demme more insidiously weirs us out. (Incidentally, I learned the distinction between "gross out" and "weird out" from my children, in their teen years.)

Once he has fed, Lecter finishes his escape, and leaves a void in the movie. We follow the steps by which Starling and her superiors at the FBI track down Buffalo Bill*, and we follow the strange "luck" which lands her in Bill's house without realizing she has reached her goal, and, while the rest of the task force remains busy elsewhere, we watch Starling, alone in the dark with an armed lunatic, once more prove her intelligence and guts, under greater stress than ever. She has saved one of the "lambs," bringing Bill's latest captive out of the house alive. Splendid (if orthodox) thriller material...but all the time we want to shout, "Yes, yes, but what the hell has happened to Hannibal Lecter?"

We do not get the answer until the very last minute, after Starling's promotion and her celebration party, when Hannibal the Cannibal suddenly calls Starling on the phone, checks that the lambs have stopped screaming, makes the promise quoted above, congratulates her on her promotion, and with one final merry jest, walks off into an ambiguously Hispanic town. (Mexico? Brazil? Costa Rica? Spain? Who can guess?) (In the novel, Lecter went to Brazil, after first setting up a mail drop in London, evidently to continue playing "games" with American law enforcement officials.)

At the bottom of the psyche, all opposites merge and the Dragon becomes the Saviour, the Ogre becomes Teacher, as Jung and Joe Campbell knew...

All great art has about it an element of infinity, and lives on in one's memory like a personal wound or a personal triumph. No surprise that *The Silence of the Lambs* copped the top Awards (Film Critics Circle, International Film Critics, and others, along with the Oscars), even though it came out so early in the year that conventional wisdom held the award-givers would have forgotten it by the time they came to vote. Nobody who saw it has forgotten it yet. Like the Ishtar myth below its surface, the film speaks in many tongues and multiple symbols. I have only touched a few of the depths in this short note, for, like Dr. Lecter's ironic smile, this film, on any number of re-viewings, always leaves you wondering how much more it signifies than you have thusfar understood.

Thank God that Starling saved at least one of the little innocent lambs.

* Briefly, for the benefit of those who missed the film: since Bill wants to conceal himself in a female skin, the FBI finds him by following Lecter's plan of searching among the files of those rejected for sex-change operations at Johns-Hopkins for one who fits Lecter's sketch of Bill's presumed character.

△ △ △

***I gave my heart to
know wisdom,
and madness and
folly,
and it was all vanity
and vexation of
spirit.
—Ecclesiastes, 17***

***"It is dangerous
to be right when
the government is
wrong."
—Voltaire***

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FIJA MARCHES ON

The Fully Informed Jury Amendment or FIJA (see *Trajectories* #8) continues to make news in every part of the United States. This Amendment would compel judges to inform juries of a right they have had since Magna Carta, but which many judges in the last century have tried to conceal from them—namely, the right to follow their individual consciences and common sense, by "nullifying" any law they consider unjust (i.e., releasing a defendant even if he or she had, in fact, violated that law.)

Nationwide, over 600 newspapers have now printed debate about FIJA; and the Amendment has won endorsement from groups as varied as LEMAR (LEgalize MARijuana) and the Libertarian Party. (The National Rifle Association has endorsed FIJA, then reversed itself and withdrew endorsement, and will debate it again this year.) On the local level, action remains hot:

- In Alaska, Rep. Richard Foster plans to sponsor FIJA legislation in the upcoming session.
- In Arizona, Rep. Lisa Graham and Sen. Carol Spinger sponsored FIJA legislation which, although defeated this time, caused well-publicized debate and won the endorsement of the largest newspaper in the State, the *Arizona Republic*. Activists intend to leaflet outside the federal courthouse in Phoenix, and Superior Court Judge Ronald Reinstein has endorsed FIJA.
- In California, Dixianne Hawks, arrested last year for "jury tampering" (after she distributed FIJA literature outside a courthouse where her son stood trial for drug possession) has had all charges against her dropped, and FIJA received a great deal of free publicity due to this case. The California Green Party will soon debate whether to include a FIJA plank its platform this year.
- The Colorado legislature will also debate FIJA this year.
- FIJA legislation, proposed by two representatives in the Georgia legislature, has won the endorsement of the Georgia Taxpayers Association.

- In Iowa, the state Republican Party has endorsed FIJA, and FIJA activists have won election to the Democratic platform committee.

- In Louisiana, the legislature will debate FIJA this year and the FIJA bill has the endorsement of both the Black Caucus and the Cajun Caucus.

- Two legislators have proposed FIJA in Massachusetts and one activist daily distributes FIJA literature at the Norwood courthouse.

- In Mississippi, Ms. Nancy Freeman got arrested for "jury tampering," in a manner similar to the Dixianne Hawks case in California. Freeman had distributed FIJA leaflets outside a court where she and a friend faced trial for possession of marijuana. *FIJActivist* points out that the court will have to show Freeman's FIJA literature to the jury if the prosecution goes forward.... Maybe that explains why the case against Hawks never came to trial in California?

- FIJA failed to pass in New Hampshire but generated lively publicity, and sponsors will try again.

- In New Jersey, Chief Justice Robert Wilenz grudgingly admitted in a recent decision that "jury nullification is an unfortunate but unavoidable power" but argued that "it should not be advertised." (He apparently fears that, if informed of their rights, the American people may begin meddling in their own affairs.)

- Senator Joseph Galiber has introduced a FIJA bill in New York, and the IRS moved a tax case out of the Syracuse court into Albany—allegedly because they found too much FIJA activism in Syracuse. "Soon they'll have no place to run," one FIJA spokesperson wrote, with perhaps excessive optimism.

- In South Carolina, African-American FIJA activist Sasha Kennison succeeded in persuading the national Congress of Racial Equality to endorse FIJA.

- In Pennsylvania, Richard Thompson has started a FIJA-oriented computer network called Common Law.

- In Tennessee, a FIJA bill proposed by Rep. David Shirley died in committee, while in Utah, the FIJA bill defeated there last year has been again brought to the floor by Rep. Reese Hunter.

- In all other states, FIJA groups have already organized and all of them eagerly seek legislators who will sponsor the amendment in their state houses. Meanwhile, the debate gets into more and more local newspapers, even though still banned from the major national media.

As we have pointed out in this publication, FIJA remains unique among proposed "reforms" in that it does not have to become law to accomplish its objective. When enough Americans know the actual law of juries and understand that *de jure* they have the right, and *de jure* they always had the right, and *de facto* they can never lose the right, to nullify any law they find morally or legally repugnant, FIJA will have accomplished its goal. The Magna Carta rights of juries will exist again, whether the states compel judges to tell jurors this or not. Prospective jurors will already know their rights *before* entering the courtroom.

(Source: *FIJActivist* #10, Winter, 1992)

The Jury According to Noah Webster (1828)

JURY: A number of freeholders, selected in the manner prescribed by law, empaneled and sworn to inquire into and try any matter of fact, and to declare the truth on the evidence given them on the case. Grand juries consist usually of twenty-four freeholders at least, and are summoned to try matters alleged in indictments. Petty juries, consisting usually of twelve men, attend courts to try matters of fact in civil causes, and to decide both the law and the fact in criminal prosecutions. (emphasis added.)

—Noah Webster's
*Dictionary of the English
Language*, 1828

Weird Times

The new *Fortean Times* has appeared (from FT, Box 2409, London, NW5 4NP, England) and contains the usual assortment of mind-boggling tales. For instance:

- A photo of a car that almost literally got flicked by the "flying finger of fate," in Blackpool, England. A giant hand, part of an art exhibit, had fallen onto a Ford Escort and the gruesome results look very much like the "angry fist of God" smiting a sinner in an old-time lithograph.

- A necrophile mortuary attendant in Bucharest got the shock he deserved when the corpse of a young girl suddenly came back to life while he was raping her. The girl's parents refused to press charges since their daughter "owed her life to him."

- Strange coincidences: a woman in New Jersey walked into an eyeglass shop and discovered her long lost daughter (whom she had placed for adoption 22 years earlier) working as a saleslady... A pizza chef in Northumberland met his long-lost sister when she ordered a pizza...In Nebraska, a man shopping accidentally encountered the mother who had placed him for adoption 28 years earlier...And a 48-year-old miner in Greenfield, England, caught in a heavy wind, got hit by a flying newspaper 30 years old—which contained a story about an auto crash he had as an 18-year-old lad in 1962.

- More funny coincidences: Two Dorset men named Bill Noy and Bill Fox went out to buy cars and immediately saw two autos with license plates B111 NOY and B111 FOX (they bought the cars...)... Two Dutchmen set sail in a boat they named CHAOS and

immediately got lost—then, when they tried to call for help, their radio broke down...Two policemen involved in the pursuit of a runaway bull in Lincolnshire had the names Bull and Bullock...When a play called *Niagara* opened in Glasgow, violent rain and leaking roofs drenched the audience in a waterfall...A month later a "freak gust of wind" picked up a car in Cardiff and threw it six feet, killing four out of five of the passengers, who made up a Rock band called Violent Storm.

- In Manchester, England, a burglar alarm alerted police, and subsequent examination of the security video showed a figure that appeared for only six seconds—at the exact time the alarm went off. The security company said double exposure could not have created the effect as the cassettes automatically get demagnetized before re-recording.

- Two human feet, found independently by two separate tourists on beaches in Tasmania, baffled police—because they did not come from the same human body. (This yarn gets even queerer and spookier as you think about it...)

- Animal Rights activism took a new turn in Trento, Italy, where a stag fell on the hunter who had shot it, thereby killing him...In Chartres, France, a rabbit hunter got shot to death after he put down his rifle and a rabbit jumped from its burrow and bumped against the trigger...An Iranian snake-hunter died of his wound when a snake coiled around his gun and set it off...Two women, in different parts of Europe, both wives of pheasant hunters, suffered severe injuries when falling pheasants crashed on top of them.

- Drivers in Tucson, AZ, recently saw a scene right out of Disney. Bob Briggs, proprietor of a Domino's Pizza shop, got dressed up as a giant red rabbit, and stood in the road to attract

business. Bobo the Clown, promoting Pizza Hut across the street, ran over and bopped Big Bunny Briggs, knocking him flat.

Elsewhere on the Weird Frontier, Jerome Clark in *International UFO Reporter* (March-April 1992) quotes CSICOP psychologist Ray Hyma as admitting CSICOP had a tendency toward "frightening fundamentalism." (This rather closely parallels my words in *The New Inquisition*, where I charged CSICOP with "Fundamentalist Materialism." Synchronicity, perhaps?)

In a study published in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* (Jan., 1991) George P. Henson quotes some similar opinions about CSICOP: Sociologists Pinch and Collins described CSICOP as a "scientific vigilante" organization; medical professor Louis Lasagna said of CSICOP's writings, "One can almost smell the fiery *autos-de-fe* of Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition"; engineer Leonard Lewin noted that while claiming devotion to Reason, CSICOP mostly relies on "rhetoric and appeal to emotion."

Meanwhile, the first of the Geller-Byrd libel suits against CSICOP and its superstar James Randi has finally come to court, and the "skeptics" (as they dub themselves) now have to prove that Randi either did not lie, or at least did not knowingly and maliciously lie, when he and they falsely reported that Geller drove a man to suicide and Byrd served prison time for child molestation. Noboc seems to think they will win—the man Geller allegedly killed actually died of natural causes, and Byrd never served time for child abuse or any other crime. Current CSICOP mailings plead for further funding to fight wicked, heretical ideas because they may go bankrupt due to this "persecution unless we all send them barrels of barrels of money. Δ

Feedback

In his book *Food of the Gods* (Trajectories #10), Terrence McKenna seeks to promote the thesis that the mystical-intuitive-shamanic point of view is culturally useful, and that it is a point of view to which Western society demonstrates its hostility by its banning of chemicals which induce such a viewpoint, e.g. marijuana and LSD; but he promotes this otherwise-reasonable thesis by making assertions which appear to be not merely mistakes in judgement but gross errors of fact. For example, his unfavorable comparison of the competitive sugar/caffeine/cocaine-driven capitalist West with the presumably cooperative laid-back socialistic East stems from his false belief that the latter is "fully engaged in a re-examination of first premises, while the West pursues a business-as-usual attitude in a surreal atmosphere of mounting crises and irreconcilable contradictions." Of course, perhaps McKenna is right if "re-examination of first premises" is intended to mean "finding our why socialism failed," though I do not think this is what he intended. Indeed, such loyalty to a collapsed social and economic system seems amazing in the present day, and I am sure McKenna could find employment as a writer for a socialist newspaper if only one could be found that hadn't gone out of business.

Another of McKenna's factual mistakes seems to be bred of the false impression that the former socialist empire embraced psychedelics, whereas in fact it forbade all drugs save alcohol, which its people imbibed in great quantities to take the edge of the horrible realities of the workers' paradise.

A third factual error is McKenna's implication that the socialist East was not—unlike the West—preoccupied with materialism: In fact, socialism is totally materialistic, whether in consideration of its philosophy of dialectical materialism and economic determinism or its formal rejection of all things spiritual and religious. (True, the Eastern bloc did not reject psi, but psi was considered to be merely another form of materialism.)

A fourth factual error which McKenna makes—although only implicitly—is to suggest that the

mystical-intuitive-shamanic perspective is not merely useful, but *better* than any other; but if one considers the level of both material and spiritual well-being in the capitalist West, as compared not merely with the socialist (or *formerly* socialist) East, but with any society in which the mystic-intuitive-shamanic perspective predominates (which is most of the third world) then it becomes clear that the West is far ahead, no matter how despicable McKenna may find caffeine, sugar and other substances characteristic of Western culture, though they are widespread in the East as well, and would be just as widespread there were the East not so poor as to be unable to afford them.

But in spite of his factual errors, McKenna's book does raise one interesting question, though it is not a question he would think to ask, and indeed is one from which he would recoil if it occurred to him: *Are the psychedelics of the East a significant cause of its cultural underdevelopment?* That is, though we may feel strongly that one's choice of drugs is purely a personal decision which ought not to be subject to government control, it remains to be answered to what extent psychedelics such as marijuana retard or advance economic development, intellectual achievement, social structure and the other characteristics by which we judge culture. Certainly, when we compare Iran, where marijuana is legal and alcohol is illegal, with the U.S., where the exact opposite is true, we are struck with the idea that perhaps—at least from a social perspective—marijuana may not be the be-all and end-all that it is made out to be by some of its proponents.

But in any event, McKenna does not seem sensitive to the fact that alcohol itself was vehemently opposed in the West, and that there is considerable Western feeling against his other whipping-boys, caffeine and sugar. Nor does he seem to realize that the turn on/tune in/drop out philosophy cannot be widely practised except in a culture which is rich enough from its capitalist enterprises to support a class of introspective parasites.

John Bryant
St. Petersburg Beach, FL

McKenna replies:

Responding to Mr. Bryant is a frustrating enterprise. One can deal directly with pointed criticisms; in fact, it is interesting and fun to do so. It is less easy to reply to someone who seems to read so quickly that he consistently misses the point entirely. This is the case with Bryant, whose mind seems to me to be a very blunt instrument indeed.

Example will make clear my meaning. Bryant opens with a few remarks concerning the "socialist East" and the "capitalist West," seeming to imagine that I am defending the former. Then, after this total misreading, he writes "Of course, perhaps McKenna is right if 're-examination of first premises' is intended to mean 'finding out why socialism failed,' although I do not think this is what he intended." But that was *precisely* what I intended, and what most readers knew I intended! This guy should wake up and smell the coffee—oops, make that the Cannabis. Communism is dead as a doornail everywhere, except in the minds of right-wingers in the grip of severe withdrawal from enemy-addiction.

Next, in a rambling and unfocused fashion, Bryant moves on to suggest that the "cultural underdevelopment" of the "East" (notice that we've switched Easts here; now he seems to be talking about India or China) is somehow due to the drugs they sometimes use, while our own shining pinnacle of civilization is assumed to be due to alcohol, tobacco and caffeine. Has it occurred to Bryant that cultural achievements arise out of a multitude of intersecting influences—cultural, religious, linguistic, pharmacological and climatological? Apparently not.

To believe in only one cause lying behind something as complex as a civilization is sophomoric and downright silly. There are doubtless intelligent criticisms of my theory to be made, but Bryant's lumbering diatribe, freighted with misconceptions, intellectual carelessness, cultural chauvinism and outright racism, ain't it.

Terrence McKenna
Occidental, CA



To Be Self-Evident

No statement of this truth is accurate:
still, there is truth in the statement:
All men are created equal.
What? The statement
bristles with absurdity,
unfairness: first, the gender
word, then what can only be
a curious lack of observation
of the world of differences.
Granted, it's hard to see
when they are grown.
Though some can see it
even then. Meanwhile, consider
a few newborns, fist-to-mouth,
waiting to be fed.
You can glimpse it now.

Each child is born equal
in needs and therefore
equal in rights.
Among these rights are
love, learning, shelter,
the exact things that
turn a nameless creature
into a human being, someone
you might want to be around
in future, someone with whom
you and yours might possibly
enjoy some bloodless, threatless,
entertaining even, interaction.
Is this so hard to grasp?
As of 1993, apparently.

—Arlen Wilson

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