

Twygdrasil And Treehouse Gazette #82

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Rest in Peace

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ILLOS: various home photos of my parents (Front, p6,12,18,24).

MY FATHER DIES

My father died March 10th. He had the consolation of it being at the ripe old age of 89.

Also, he had another consolation. He achieved a lot. Maybe he wasn't a major celebrity in his field of psychiatry but he was at least a minor celebrity. The obituary that I print on the back page is, for the most part, true. He was a pioneer in psychiatry.

Sometimes his positions have been accepted and are considered good things; sometimes not. All creativity is the luck of the draw. You will note there is not much in the obituary on his decades long fling with Reichian therapy a la Wilhelm Reich.

I have come across a number of people who describe their father who just died as rotten. That doesn't fit my father. In the scheme of things, he was a decent enough individual.

While being a man of some fame, he was also a family man. He sometimes even brought us to the conferences he attended. A jarring note might be that some were on sexual deviation. Which many in the '50s would not associate with decency. However, it accords with him being a family man.

Sometimes he had the stars of sexual research over to the family house for get togethers. I don't know whether he actually had Dr. Ruth over. I know he had Masters and Johnson there. I remember most a Dr. Goos.

However, my father was not without faults. What drove my father was pride. And that was also his achilles heel as far as I am concerned. His patients never saw this part of him. He was always easygoing with them. And tolerant. And understanding. The reason was: what they did was their business.

However, what we as his kids did reflected on him and that was a different matter. Sometimes I could hold a conversation with him, but other times me doing it was difficult. In any case, even when we could converse, he was distant.

I am sure he was ashamed of me. I tended to be fat, flabby, awkward, and unambitious. To him, they were sins. And I was sinful. His pride demanded he have a son better than that.

He never lost hope, however. Would that he had! He often carped at me. Sometimes the carping turned into a Niagara. This infuriated me so much it nearly took over this part of my account. I caught myself just in time. Anyway, I am sure I have complained about his carping enough in other *Twygs*; so I don't have to complain more.

On the other hand, his pride demanded things which, as far as I have been concerned, were pleasanter. He took pride in being generous. That we were distant did not mean that I was disowned. He financed whatever education I wanted even if he did not totally agree with it. I also received a lot of money I never asked for. More important than this largess: I always knew I could go home again.

Another pleasanter aspect of my father was he tried to make me the son he wanted by encouragement as well as criticism. He always encouraged my writing. He was a fan of my publication *JOMP, JR*. We never discussed it in depth, but he always praised it.

I am more ambivalent about the books and novels my father encouraged me to write. To, in that way, gain fame a son of his should have. One was a history of magic I have actually been interested in writing. But I had neither the self-confidence nor the

fire in my belly. These projects just petered out. While I must have disappointed him greatly, I don't know how disappointed I am. I do not know whether I was suited for these tasks.

Still, it was encouragement as opposed to carping.

I have to give him actual credit that he submerged his ego one time when I wrote a series of short stories that lampooned him. I had convinced myself then that the stories lampooned another psychiatrist. But, reading them now, it is unmistakable. He knew it too.

There was an episode even more extraordinary. It happened the Xmas before he died. He had heard that I had not taken the torrent of carping during my Summer visit too well. So he was quiet. Even though I know he had a real reason to carp – as opposed to the demons of his mind – he kept quiet. This showed that among the things he took pride in was compassion. Buried, though it sometimes was.

I was not the only one of his kids my father carped at; he carped at my brother too. He could also be very hard on my brother. One of my father's barbs I was going to present was aimed at my brother not I.

However, my father did eventually warm up to my brother. For the last year or two, my brother, a psychiatrist and M.D., was in effect my father's physician. And when my father was ill, first with pemphigus and then cancer, his infernal pride broke down. And he told my brother things he had never told us kids. It was a nice gesture even though I suspect some of his memories had dimmed with the decades.

My sister claims she was close all along. I can believe it. She is hard driving; something my father really liked. Something I lacked. And my sister could avoid a lot of

tsores by turning on her bubbling comedienne's wit and charm. She also became particularly close as the end drew near. And my father made her the first executor of his will. And instructed her about his responsibilities, his finances and his house.

I never really had an extended period of mourning, I am afraid. Just a funk that hung over me for several days. However, since my father has died, my sister has had to resist full blown depression that periodically gets the better of her. This has been in addition to the period of mourning.

Of course, his death came at a time when her boy friend, Warren Zevon, was dying too.

Who knows when the problem really started. My father had been tired for the past year or so. While his medical indicators said nothing, I hear, even in this age of advanced medicine, they wouldn't. That is how fast liver cancer spreads.

Around Valentine's day, My father was snowed in and he noticed he was suffering from jaundice. Also, he was tired beyond the norm. When the snow was cleared away, my brother convinced him to go to the hospital emergency room. There a Cat Scan revealed lesions on his liver.

Later, a biopsy proved beyond question he suffered from liver cancer. My father was too frail to withstand the rigors of cancer treatment. My wife suggested radio frequency ablation. My brother must have suggested several things. But the oncologist said my father was too far gone. There was nothing my father could do.

Except sleep.

The most comfortable sleep he could get. However, sleep for much of that time was not comfortable. He would toss and turn

and twitch. And his breathing was fast. It helped when my sister got a hospital bed he could adjust. But that wasn't the solution.

When I visited, he was able to get up and go to the bathroom the first night. The next night he needed help. He would hold onto us as best he could. We would help him as best we could. It became increasingly difficult. It made things easier when a port-o-potty came with the hospital bed.

He had no appetite. I don't think he ate practically anything at all while I was there. He would have a little water. And a little chocolate milk. And that was it. At one point, we asked him whether he wanted food and he said, "What's the purpose."

He lost massive amounts of weight. Near the end, he started looking less and less like a human being and more and more like a skeleton.

It was sad seeing a man who had been so vigorous in life degenerating into a vegetable. His medicine, his finances, his assertiveness became as nothing. He could hardly raise his head.

My sister decided he needed an aide to watch over him. She hired a man from Aruba for one night. He did succeed in giving my father a bath but my sister was dissatisfied. He seemed to be more interested in seeing my father's hair combed, which at that point was intractable, than his health. Or, more important, his comfort.

My sister hired another person from the same agency, a Black woman from New York City, Linda. You know the Black stereotype: she was the polar opposite. Ascetic. Educated. She had been an English literature major at New York University. And, during down times, she read some heavy duty stuff: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Albert Camus. At one point, she got her hands on an edition of William Barrett's *Irrational*

Man, a book on existentialism my father had lying around.

Of course, while Linda may have been more interested in her minuscule literary career than being a hospice aide, she was a brilliant hospice aide. She certainly knew a lot more than the fellow the night before. She knew more than many doctors, apparently. Would I exaggerate to say that she was an angel of mercy?

She suggested to my brother a morphine compound that would slow my father's breathing. Did it help kill him? A friend of mine thinks so because it slowed his breathing. I think it just quieted him down myself. My understanding is the morphine was administered orally and would not have been enough to kill him.

In addition to the morphine, Linda knew all sorts of tricks to keep his lips moist, and him hydrated.

Before she suggested the morphine compound, I had returned to the DC area. Then a day or two later, I had to go back: my father was dead. Had these measures failed. No, extending life was not the idea behind them. The idea was that my father die peaceably.

Did he? My sister noticed that his eyes were wide open when he died. But my brother the doctor pointed out that would have happened no matter what. As far as we know, he died peacefully.

THE FUNERAL

Now for a lighter note – the funeral. My father was an Atheist. No question about it. He was what is known as Secular Jewish. And he was outspoken about it. But he had one eye on the relatives. Some of whom are Orthodox. He always said funerals were for the living, not the dead. So he had arranged,



My parents at the Great Wall of China 1987

before he died, for a Conservative Jewish funeral.

Is it the job of clergymen to alienate people at funerals? I have heard from my Catholic friends that that is what happens there. I told you a couple of years ago how priests alienated a friend of mine at her mother's funeral. Always, of course, unwittingly. I have heard several more tales since then.

However, the priests who alienated their parishioners did so because they did not even try to grasp the situation. Did not try to grasp the health problems of one parishioner, the name of another, the tone another wished to set for her mother's funeral.

The Rabbi who presided over my father's funeral spent enough time finding out the situation. No, he rubbed us wrong in

any ways. He was a small man who nonetheless had a tendency to look down on people. He also seemed only interested in building up his business. And it could have been any business: he didn't seem to emphasize God, religion, ethics too much.

Anyway that's the way he seemed. He was completely uninterested in the history of Judaism. And my tidbits of arcane knowledge on that subject annoyed and confused him.

Anyway he felt that my sister and brother were the only ones that mattered. I was a nothing. They were the ones most active in making.

Should I have been asked to speak at the funeral service? Probably only those who asked spoke. I am not totally aware of protocol at funerals. As much as I know on arcane matters, I am sadly ignorant on the specifics of such practical matters. Also, I was ambivalent about speaking.

Still, because of the Rabbi's attitude, I have held it against him.

Another turnoff. As I said, the Rabbi spent a lot of time trying to get a good idea of what my father was like so he wouldn't make a fool of himself. For me, this was not an unalloyed good. He went on longer perhaps than he had to. And he did not like it when I reminded my brother and sister

that the people had come to take away the hospital bed. And it had to be attended to immediately. The service man was in a rush.

Of course, although he was kowtowing to my brother and sister, he alienated them too. He suggested that being Secular Jews – LIKE MY FATHER WAS – was not the way to go. That it would likely end in the disappearance of Judaism altogether in America.

He had a point. But that was not the place to make it. My brother and I, having been married to gentiles for over twenty years, were lost causes. And my father was dead. A completely lost cause. We later found out that he had convinced my brother to at least say he was going to attend Temple for at least one service. I don't think my brother went.

In addition, he advertently insulted my sister-in-law Debby. And he brushed off my, albeit alzheimers ridden, mother at the funeral proper. Which annoyed all of us.

What were the roots of the antagonism between we and he. Obviously, this is religious Jewish people vs. nonreligious Jewish people. But, also, I gather this is a conflict inherent in that particular Temple.

If the Temple's wealthy directors didn't like this man's style, they wouldn't keep him. I am sure they like his practical bent. They probably see money raising as important for a Rabbi. About his arrogance, I bet they see it appropriate for his standing.

The Rabbi wasn't the only one with a role to play at the funeral. All of us did. The day of the funeral I was assigned to get the Franks. Once again, I would be out of the center of things: this time, I wouldn't be involved in seeing all the guests were catered to. On the other hand, getting the Franks to the funeral was high priority. They

have been regarded as my father's closest friends.

They are retired husband and wife psychiatrists. I spoke about them last *Twyg*. Cyril is from Wales and Vi is from Brooklyn, but somehow they have gotten along over forty years. They have also known my father almost as long.

However, because of health problems, neither one of them could make the drive from Princeton to our family home on the Jersey shore in West Allenhurst, New Jersey.

There was an extra plus to this. They are friends of mine too; so driving them was a pleasure. As opposed to the problems my brother and sister were having making the reception come together.

Finally, we got to the funeral home. As I said, as much as I know about many arcane matters, I know little about such practical matters as funerals. My father, in his coffin, looked more as he did near death than in life. I didn't know why. The Rabbi later cleared this up. He commented that that was the way we did things in the Jewish tradition.

Also, I didn't know to ride from the funeral home to the cemetery in the procession. And I got bawled out by the home's limo driver because of it. But the Franks, being iconoclasts, loved it. They loved it so much I didn't bother to go in procession back to my family home for the food and drink.

Among the people who came to the funeral home was someone that MY BROTHER HAD CURED. He said he had been to quite a number of doctors and my brother was the only one who could do anything for his Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. I am sure that was because my brother was the only one who would take the time to

figure out his problem. Of course, to give enough time to each patient, my brother can't take medical insurance.

As to why this patient of my brother's came to my FATHER'S funeral, I don't know. Except maybe that my brother is alive and in good enough health.

MY MOTHER LIVES

What was happening to my mother all this time? Her alzheimers got worse. She failed to recognize my father after a while. She considered him a nice stranger.

Sometimes a not so nice stranger. After my father had been diagnosed, she called the police on him because she felt he was stealing things. My father did not have the strength to stop her. Because the local cops knew who my father and mother were, they took her down to the local hospital for observation.

My brother had to come and convince the doctors there she was harmless and to let her go.

Sometimes my mother recognized my father. While my father was lying there on the couch with little strength, she would pester him with photographs. And keep him awake with her talking. When sleep was all he craved. While I was on watch, I would shoo her away. Something she didn't like. She was convinced he was as interested as she was.

Ultimately, she somehow learned by osmosis not to wake my father. Instead, to hold his hand, to kiss him, and to let him sleep in peace.

When he died, she started telling everyone whom she could what a war hero he was. Sometimes she would burst into tears about how ill appreciated his heroics had been.

My father had been in the Flying

Tigers during World War II, alright, which was a prestigious outfit. However, he wasn't a pilot but a flight surgeon. And he wasn't there as a volunteer. He hated the war, he hated the military. These facts he was very emphatic about in life went off my mother like water off a duck's back. She praised what a war hero he had been at the funeral reception and several days afterward.

Otherwise, this was a good period for my mother. Coming into contact with so many people had a beneficial effect on her – temporarily. Her paranoia was eclipsed. She accepted my sister-in-law Debby, whom, shortly before, she had accused of stealing every missing item. Debby was delighted.

My mother became like a child.

After my father had died, we retained Linda, the aide, the Angel of Mercy, to take care of my mother. This was something Linda apparently was less enthusiastic about. She confided in me later how an aunt of hers had become violent under alzheimers and she hadn't wished to repeat the experience. I think the agency handled alzheimers as well as hospice care, and had twisted her arm.

She was good with my mother as long as my mother remained like a child. She found activities for my mother. During this time, my mother did a sketch of Linda. Linda felt it was too boyish but, even under the alzheimers, she captured the woman. Her nobility.

Unfortunately, my mother's *nice* period was very very shortlived. More people in her life was a temporary boost not anything permanent. In two weeks, my mother turned against Linda. She claimed Linda was trying to kill her. She did receive a bruise somehow or other, but my mother could not give a coherent account of how she got it. And Linda didn't know.

My mother also claimed that Linda tried to steal money from her. Apparently

my mother had tried bribing her to leave, and that had gotten transformed in my mother's mind.

What probably angered my mother about Linda was this. My mother had somehow gotten into the attic and Linda had forceably taken her out. Something we approved of. The attic could be dangerous place for her.

The next morning, my mother was still angry with Linda. And Linda, with memories of her aunt in mind, left as quickly as she could. Leaving my sister holding the bag.

We went through a number of aides after that. The hospital was where we lost most of them. For a time, we put my mother in the hospital so she could be tested. Which she hadn't been. There are legal, financial and health reasons why she should have been tested. But she had been reluctant and my father had not pushed her.

The crux of the matter was Did she have alzheimers? We believed it, but there are other things that can cause delusional behavior. As my brother the doctor says, even the failure of the body to assimilate Vitamin B-12.

Immediately, the aides started dropping like leaves. One aide, I found in my mother's hospital room applying her makeup. My mother meanwhile was several floors down all alone. She had been abandoned there for the MRI test. But the loneliness made her too hysterical to be tested.

My sister fired that aide and hired someone else. Who decided the parking would cost too much and left. It was \$4 a day and we gave her money for it. After that, my sister decided to fire the agency. But, without an aide, my mother wandered the hospital; there weren't enough nurses to watch her. She made it to the gift shop and

the front desk. The people there reported she was obviously in quite a bit of distress.

Finally, my sister decided to bypass the strictly medical services, and hire from employment agencies offering nannies, maids, etc.

From one, we got the two Mayas. Russians. Immediately, one spoke on the phone to Georgia in Russia, fortunately on her own nickel. And then decided she had to return there – right away. The other Maya, a big woman, stayed for a time.

By the way, the tests proved that my mother had alzheimers and not vitamin B-12 deficiency. Or any of the other things that might cause dementia.

Back at the family home, she felt it wasn't at her home. She felt her home was elsewhere. Apparently, her parents' house, which hadn't existed for fifty years.

In the middle of the night, she would continually get up, dress and try to get back "home." She could not be convinced the family home was home. She would wake my sister. Sometimes three times a night. My sister said she did not get any sleep for three nights. Apparently she got sick as a result.

But prospects were looking up. I don't know how we wound up with Shirley, a Jamaican woman. Shirley is a natural for this work, with experience, intelligence. And a good sense of humor that allows her to slough off a lot. My mother has been well cared for while Shirley has been there. Shirley's a good cook beside – as well I know.

Another thing made my mother more tractable. My brother the psychiatrist had been giving her medication. And adjusting it. Ultimately, he found a mix that made her less paranoid and more manageable. More like the child she had been for a time.

It also made her more like a zombie. And it destroyed her art work. All the

characterization has gone out of it. It is sad. I am very sad.

She had periodically forgotten how to draw before. One time, she traced an outline of a photograph and said it was worth more than we paid for it. It was a photograph of her late husband, my late father. But, after such episodes, she would remember how to draw.

Now her gift was gone completely.

On the other hand, it was difficult living with her without the medication. I am certain even she found it hard living with herself without the medication. She couldn't have been very happy with paranoid fantasies, the obsessions, and the feeling she was in a strange place. And, later on, getting very little sleep, which made her crazier.

I guess that is why she took her medication.

I don't know at which point my sister reached the conclusion that she should put my mother in "Assisted Living." My father had made her swear that my mother would always live in the family home.

Having heard from friends, I told her that it was doing neither her nor my mother good. There would be no oversight of the aides hired, especially when my sister returned to California. They could easily be elsewhere than watching over mom. And then there was the problem of stealing. Plus Assisted Living would give my mother easy access to facilities, like activities and medicine, she wouldn't have at home.

There was a more important reason I found out from my experience with my mother: one aide cannot give round the clock care, like these places, with a number of aides, could.

My sister resisted for the longest time. She wanted to follow my father's orders. But she came to the conclusion I was

right. I think she was also told by an expert at an alzheimers organization in Princeton. My brother was a little harder to convince. He believed that Assisted Living would be more expensive.

And then there was the problem of how my mother would be treated.

How she would be treated was indeed a problem. My sister and brother went to ten Assisted Living facilities. There, the residents looked like zombies. They had been overmedicated. Plus having enough supervision was a problem. In one, the nurse on duty was not on duty. While these places tended to have beautiful enough grounds and buildings, they were warehouses.

However, my brother and sister found two facilities where the residents were not zombies. And where there was enough supervision. The one with the more beautiful grounds was full, but the other had a vacancy. Also, it was near a medical facility – just in case.

I toured it. No question about it, the residents were medicated. But not so much as to be zombies. And they seemed busy socializing, as best they could, with each other. It was lunch so we didn't see the game playing and the newspaper reading. Of course, we could not see the outings.

One of the residents, Lloyd, still didn't look bad even though his face had been scraped. And wherever he went, he had a woman around his arm. Whether either could remember the relationship is anyone's guess.

Anyway, my sister and brother reserved a room for my mother. And when I came, I saw her name on the door. My brother or his wife Debby were going to call 1-800-MATTRESS. And were trying to figure out which paintings and awards to put in the room. I wish them luck in getting the couch there from the basement in our family

home.

We got my mother that place just in time. My sister was afraid Shirley would find out what we were doing, and resent she would soon be without a job. She did find out, but she didn't resent it.

She had no intention of staying too long. Even Shirley could only take of my mother for only a few months, and then she would need a rest. And to start over. Taking care of alzheimers patients must get to conscientious aides, especially a patient they care 'about' – as well as 'for.'

SOME ODDS AND ENDS

I have grown tired of writing and will end soon. Still, I would like to say a word about the travails of the will. My sister wanted to stay with my father's lawyer and his accountant. But there was a definite problem in having a 96 year old lawyer. And neither the lawyer nor the accountant would give us any estimates of what they were going to cost.

Ultimately, my sister figured out that they may not have even known what they were doing. For \$250 an hour, no less. So she decided to fire them. ...Good for her.

Is this the sort of people my father trusted? Maybe being a fixture in our home town, he could. I don't know whether we can. Then there is a matter of what service we would actually be getting from them.

Fortunately, my father didn't trust his broker to make his investments for him. Which my brother did and took a bath. Instead, chastened by losses, my father limited his investments to tax free bonds.

Including New York City bonds from the '70s. The city was going through financial woes then and had set the rate at 12% to lure investors. Too bad these bonds are going to mature soon.

I will be even shorter about the task of cleaning out the family home. My father never threw anything away. When he was vigorous, much was organized. But, ultimately, his part of the house got to look more like a trash heap. Why was he keeping old *TV Guides* and mail order catalogs from the Year One?

My mother, on the other hand, had never organized any of her things. I remember, in the eighties, reaching into a drawer and finding a 1953 *Good Housekeeping*. Then there were dresses, shoes and other things often piled willy nilly.

To find some place for my mother's aide to sleep, we had to open my sister's old room and wade through a pile of clothes and shoes. There were racks, but the clothes and shoes had long since overflowed the racks.

I and my sister gladly let my brother's wife have the clothes. She claimed they fit her and her kids. My mother's clothes? My mother was always well dressed, but I suspect her kids are going to find them too dowdy. If she doesn't ultimately reach that conclusion. I don't know how many trash bags of clothes they took out of the room. I think twenty barely dented the mess. However, eventually, the aide had her room.

I guess that is as much as I want to write for now on my father's death and its consequences.

COMMENTS ON MAILING # 232

THE SOUTHERNER



COVER. I gather Cyrillic is based on the Greek alphabet. Using transliteration, Baghdad seems to be spelt



My parents on a cruise

something closer to Bagdad, without the 'h'.

☺▲☺ Didn't we have the Curt Phillips TAFF ballot in the previous issue? And isn't that vote over with? Oh well. I myself have often forgotten to change or delete from one issue to another.

☺▲☺ I like exotic maps too. Old maps, where the continents are laid out differently. Or maps of fantasy lands, like Edgar Rice Burroughs' Mars or Elric's world in Michael Moorcock.

GARY BROWN columbia is lost

☺▲☺ Your job is to communicate bad news too. One page in the paper is there because it doesn't bring glad tidings, the

obituary page. So it doesn't mean you are reveling in the Columbia disaster that you reported it. And did it as professionally as possible.

NORM METCALF tyndallite

☺▲☺ So Norm, who was it who wanted Breen's *Greek Love* book. I have it; my sister said I could take it. And, given its subject-matter, I'm hot to trot to get rid of it.

☺▲☺ Where did I read that David M. Parry had *The Scarlet Empire* ghostwritten? DeCamp's *Lost Continents*. In all honesty, I don't believe DeCamp had any more information than we do. I think he figured that a man of wealth who spent his time manufacturing would be more likely to hire a ghost than write a novel himself.

For me, its readability would also indicate it was written by a pro.

☺▲☺ I like the notion that someone choosing different socks in the morning changed history. Of course, while Wheeler's theory of alternate universe says that could happen, you couldn't write a decent science fiction story about it. How much suspense and characterization can you get out of socks?

☺▲☺ Maybe L. Ron Hubbard had few *Astoundings* with more than one story. Still, that issue I saw, while perusing the *Astoundings* in the MIT Science Fiction Society Library, was mostly L. Ron Hubbard. And it does not contradict what you have said. If memory serves me right, it was one very long story. ...Or should I say novelette? ...Or should I say novel?

☺▲☺ You got it. It is the grandiosity of the concept that makes Isaac Asimov's

Foundation Series great. And that compensates for the deficiencies in style and characterization. Which, if memory serves me correctly, were flatter than a pancake.

ct. Ned Brooks. You're honest, Norm, in admitting that it would have been difficult for Captain Nemo to get usable coal in a volcano, like he did.

I gather Cavourite would be off the Periodic Table. No matter acts in an antigravity manner. It would have to be of parallel elements that have antigravity powers, which are as yet unknown to science. And, what's worse, impossible according to modern science.

ct. Guy H. Lillian III. My experience with A.E. van Vogt has been that he could be great and terrible at one and the same time. He could be great in his concepts – even if they didn't always make much sense. However, without John Campbell, Jr. he could be terrible: his plotting, characters and styles swerved very close to the unreadable.

Howard R. Garis, who actually researched and wrote the original Tom Swift series, probably had a much better batting average for predictions than H.G. Wells. In fact, I heard most of the inventions that the original Tom Swift invented were eventually developed.

Of course, Tom's inventions were not quite as fantastic as Wells'. I read one book in which Tom invents a locomotive that goes 120 miles per hour.

On the other hand, this would not have phased H.G. Wells. I read his comments about critics who compared him to Jules Verne. He said No comparison. And he characterized his SF novels as "fantasies."

THE LATE HARRY

WARNER. JR. I don't know whether Dickens' *Christmas Carol* would be considered an alternate timeline. The fellow with the alternate timeline website wouldn't consider it an alternate timeline.

And, I suspect, rightly. He points out that what usually happened in literature before the 20th Century was only a few events were changed in history and otherwise it went along quite as it would have.

Harry Warner, Jr., figured that not surfing the web had protected him from swindlers, pornographers and fences. My father-in-law figures not having a computer and receiving email has protected him from viruses.

However, in my father-in-law's case, no way will his wife allow him to have a computer.

NED BROOKS

the new port news 208

ct. Me. Soyburgers taste enough like hamburgers but their texture is more like a vegetable's than a meat's.

I agree that only those who believe in free will have it. But I suspect for different reasons. I believe if you look at the same thing one way, you are determined – and even predestined. Another way, and you have free will.

My sister's laptop has gotten the Klez Worm twice. And she had to reformat it twice. Knock on wood, with all I do without antivirus software, nothing has happened to me so far.

I told Norm where I got the idea the *Scarlet Empire* was ghosted.

♥▲♥ I wonder if the Order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem, which has both males and females, is part of the Co-Masonry movement, where the idea is that a lodge has both males and females.

♥▲♥ Actually, I didn't find Blackwood's horror stories boring. In fact, I found them quite good. And there certainly was enough conflict in them – though often not a whole lot of action. So it surprises me that his Uncle Paul novels have no conflict at all.

♥▲♥ In short, asbestos doesn't become friable; it's what it's mixed with or woven with.

♥▲♥ ct. Guy. Sure, a lawyer would ask a witness if a person has "free will" – if the witness is a psychiatrist. Whether competent to do so, they are called upon enough. In my late father's favor, I have to say declaring someone incompetent was a last resort. Only if that someone was destructive of other people or him- or herself, would he do that.

♥▲♥ ct. Sheila. I tend not to take nutritional and food safety warnings too seriously. I have reached the conclusion no one can be rational on the subject of food. Especially when they walk like fanatics and quack like fanatics. So you and Sheila can eat your heart out on cheese. (Maybe I should rephrase that.)

♥▲♥ ct. Brown. You say the schools are closed in Georgia if the heat in them is deemed inadequate. At one time, Georgians would have sounded like wimps to me.

However, experience has taught me that may not be the case. When I went to college, during the first big snow, I mentioned to a friend from Wisconsin that it

was sufficient to close the schools in my area. And he wondered if we were a bunch of fairies.

I suspect our reaction to the weather depends on what we are used to. In Georgia. I bet, they are not used to prolonged cold. And not prepared for it. And, in New Jersey, we were not used to the snows of Wisconsin. And not prepared for it.

♥▲♥ About Cuba being self-supporting. Not totally, not even today. A friend of mine, a lefty, went to Cuba. And she says that the reason the people there are reasonably well dressed is that relatives in the States send them clothes.

On the other hand, what nation is totally self-supporting?

♥▲♥ ct. Robe. I guess the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which I work for, is banning websites individually. Over time, more and more porno, and even erotic and game, websites have become verboten.

♥▲♥ ct. Copeland. MS Word can convert older versions of Corel Wordperfect, but it tends not to want to convert later versions. I guess, on the grounds, that Microsoft might be helping a competitor.

♥▲♥ I got a CD of the Oxford English Dictionary for \$229. I bet I could have gotten it for \$199 if I had waited till the end of the year and merchants wanted to unload the old versions. (How out-of-date can they be?)

♥▲♥ ct. Metcalf. I guess you could get an older French version of *The Wandering Jew* by interlibrary loan, and find out what French idiom was translated "chain up your curb."

RICH LYNCH

variation on a theme #19

☛▲☛ Our February snow storm was the snow of the Century in the DC area. And it was the snow of the last Century too. Only a snow in the 1920s outdid it.

☛▲☛ ct. Me. I was never that clear on the comet theory about the Tungusta disaster. In Siberia early in the last Century, where there was an explosion and all those trees were knocked down. The detail did not seep in that the comet had to have vaporized in mid-air. Anyway, since you agree with the theory, I figure in effect you are saying I am basically right.

☛▲☛ I never learned the ending of the novel where the Confederate Army had marched on Washington after Bull Run? For all I know, it was foolhardy, and the end of the Confederacy. Of course, you're probably right: in your typical alternate timeline, the Confederates would have won the war.

☛▲☛ I'm sure the GPO'ers were warned not to give out their home addresses and phone numbers. But apparently the whole organization had broken down. And the employees were trying to salvage what they could. If doing business at home would do it, they did business at home.

☛▲☛ ct. Ned Brooks. In Virginia, I have done 80 miles an hour and been passed. This is a très Conservative State, and they regard speed limits as liberal, foreign and Commie; so the legislature and the people have destroyed them with a vengeance.

Twenty-five years ago, Virginia was still a très Conservative State. However, speed limits were considered a Conservative idea and enforced to the mile per hour.

☛▲☛ ct. spiritus. I have had many

theories about why APAs are dying. My latest is that young people usually do not wish to associate with old codgers like us. (Toni and some others excepted.)

As a Toastmaster for seven years, I have found people like to be with like. When the Blacks took over my club, the Whites fled. When the Whites took over my club, the Blacks fled. When the top military officer left the club, the military fled. I guess if the military had succeeded in taking over the club, the civilians would have fled.

People cannot be convinced of the obvious. In a club, like Toastmasters, devoted to speeches, the best clubs are diverse. People don't tend to give the same old speech.

☛▲☛ ct. Gary Brown. I thought Jeff has scanned all zine quotes with a pen scanner, and thus he hasn't had too much trouble incorporating them into his zine. ...Or has he?

☛▲☛ ct. Toni Weisskopf Reinhardt. Rich, you don't get how pro-gun Hank and Toni are. You wear your guns every hour of the day. That way if some mad killer comes along, you can kill him. Or mad hijacker and you are pilot, you can kill him.

Years ago, someone let loose a machine gun in an Alabama cafeteria and killed a number of people. One survivor kicked herself for not having her rifle right with her.

☛▲☛ There is a recent autobiography by Cy Feuer. He was not a classical composer; or really any composer, unlike Meredith Willson. Instead, he produced Broadway Musicals with an Ernie Martin. Famous musicals, such as: *Guys and Dolls*, *Can-Can*, *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying*, *Cabaret*.

He and Martin might have produced Willson's famous musical too, *The Music Man*. But they gave up the rights to it.

STEVE HUGHES

last minute stuff

🍷▲🍷 THE MAILING. Ah, when they make shocking accusations against politicians, that's mudslinging? When we do it, it is the truth. That seems to be whole basis of politics.

🍷▲🍷 TAX TIME. I know if you were the absolute dictator, the government would never spend money on the tomfoolery it does. Everything it spends money on would be sensible. Also, other people would pay the taxes – which is sensible too. It would be a much better system than democracy.

However, think of what things would be like if Gary Brown were the absolute dictator.

🍷▲🍷 Your taxes are up this year! I thought Congress enacted all sorts of tax cuts. Maybe you were better off under Clinton. Or maybe when the highest rate was 92%. The way you tell it, these tax cuts are getting very expensive.

🍷▲🍷 INTERLUDE. I gather that taxes are so complicated because lobbyists get rewarded by increasing the number of tax breaks. That is by making the tax system more complex.

There was an idea during the '80s to simplify the tax system with a flat tax, but that seems to have gone by the board. I'm sure the lobbyists didn't like that.

STEVE HUGHES

travelers tales. v2, #1. mar. 2003

🍷▲🍷 I guess it is easier to race hang

gliders than it is to race mules. Mules refuse to race. Then there are crab races, which are a joke.

On the other hand, I bet racing hang gliders is an impressive sport. Your graphics certainly are impressive.

GARY BROWN

the complete comic comments and gremlin index. feb. 1, 2003.

🍷▲🍷 I wish I had some '60s project to tell SFPA about. Unfortunately, not only do I not have such a project; my experience of the '60s is starting to be a blur.

🍷▲🍷 FINDING FANDOM. I guess it was difficult in those days before the internet to find people interested in comics collecting like you.

Certainly comics collecting would not have found its way into the mass media. Especially then. We were supposed to be one homogenized country that watched TV each night.

It is true, you mention later, that letters from comics collectors often appeared in comics' letter columns. But who reads letter columns?

🍷▲🍷 Ah. Fatman. a hero after my own heart. I wrote a short short story with a fat hero once. He loves a fat heroine but she wishes to continue the illusion she is thin.

🍷▲🍷 I seem to remember Steranko was a big deal in the comics scene during the '70s. ... Whatever happened to *Mediascene* after you left?

🍷▲🍷 WAYNE DEWALD. Good, you guys had a sense of proportion about what you were doing. No pretensions of changing the world; which was rare at the time. That probably was why you accomplished

something.

🍷▲🍷 INDEX. Actually, the illos are not bad at all. Even the primitive early ones look like what they are supposed to look like.

DAVID SCHLOSSER

peter, pan & merry #48

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. You're right that we're getting to the age when some of our co-generational relatives will die. But why did the difference have to be as little as two years? And why did Wayne have to be two years younger than me?

🍷▲🍷 Israel will be criticized no matter what. So it shouldn't matter whether it gets criticized for either surgical anti-terrorism or massive reprisals.

On the other hand, more Israeli casualties in the short run should not be an argument against surgical anti-terrorism; not if it makes the Palestinian population less hospitable to terrorists in the long run.

🍷▲🍷 Anything we should really do about the long run problems of new medical treatments, except keep monitoring for them after the FDA Ok's them? The sick need to have a cure as soon as possible.

Or are long run problems such a problem that the FDA should be slow to approve?

🍷▲🍷 There is a good reason why the governments of Arab countries did not assimilate Palestinians. They were afraid of them. Afraid that they would pressure for premature action against Israel. Afraid they would join in movements to replace those governments with more militant governments.

🍷▲🍷 Getting ideas about how to fight al Qaeda terror from Tom Clancy?! No, the Administration's strategy is fictional enough. What with dirty bombs and smallpox.

A friend of mine pointed out that all people had to do to find that airplanes were not secure was to read the papers. There were several incidents where cranks gained access to the pilot.

So what I say is we should look in the papers and see where our real vulnerabilities lie.

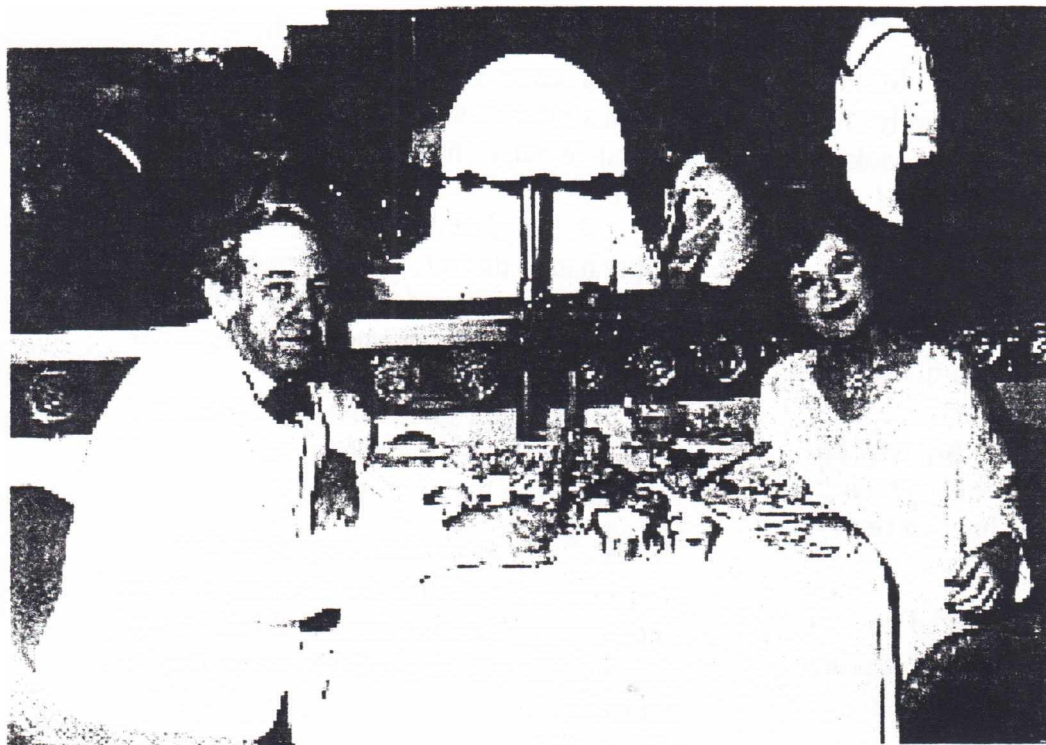
🍷▲🍷 You're absolutely right that Congress can't abolish the electoral college. The Supreme Court is another thing. In any case, neither will be abolished soon: they're traditions.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Don Markstein. My take on "reality" programs is it is *surreality programming*. Who knows what to make of all those bizarre rules. They are up there with Salvador Dali and the Federal government.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Guy Lillian III. I disagree completely with counting second and third place votes toward first place. Second and third place votes mean voters wanted the candidates in second or third place.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Gary Brown. Politics is the Art of the Possible. You need massive support for the most important policies. And, if you can't get it beforehand, you pray you can get it after..

🍷▲🍷 ct. TKFWR. The idea behind cultural threats, like McDonalds, is that people are attracted to them. If they weren't, they couldn't threaten to become part of the culture.



My parents in a restaurant

♥▲♥ I hear the big reason employers hire immigrants, especially illegals, isn't wages: it's that they are less likely to talk back.

♥▲♥ $APAC = NC^{-1}$. I wonder if the popularity of Jackie Chan's humorous Kung Fu movies means the Kung Fu genre is taking its last gasp. No one can take it seriously anymore. I know that happened to the spy genre. More and more spy films were parodies of James Bond. Which, to some extent, was itself a parody.

♥▲♥ No, no, rather than the universe dying if all LASFAPA OEs are in one place, I suspect a hole will open up to another universe.

TOM FELLER

frequent flyer. march
17, 2003

♥▲♥ AIDA. Did the Aida musical have the famous last scene where the Radames and Aida are singing in the vault and using up their oxygen? That has come in for a lot of derision even though the two characters would have used up the oxygen sooner or later.

♥▲♥ RITE OF PASSAGE. Nureyev named Giselle as the ballet a beginner should see. It has been a real crowd pleaser.

♥▲♥ STAR

TREK. I guess I am the only person in the world who liked *The Final Frontier*. I had had a lot of experience with the New Age, and the movie seemed to have their number: i.e., people seeking a guru to make their decisions for them.

♥▲♥ What makes a good Star Trek? People liked its personalities. And ideas they regarded as novel and spectacular. Also some schmaltz, let's face it. So I suspect, in a good original Star Trek, the Star Trek personalities would interact with something novel and spectacular.

Creatures or robots from outerspace threatening the Enterprise or the universe would be out. They, by now, are old hat, and allow very little interaction. I suspect any talk of God would be out. People go to a Star Trek movie to get away from seriousness like that.

♥▲♥ ACADEMY AWARD. Why can people believe in flying saucers, ghosts, wizards and elves. And not musicals? Flying saucers, ghosts, etc. put magic into their lives. Musicals are considered old hat.

But, as these things go, I bet eventually musicals will be new hat again.

♥▲♥ I read a novel by Virginia Woolf. *Orlando* was curious. She lives five hundred years as a male, and then changes her sex to female. I also read some short stories by her. They were very unaction packed slices of life if I remember correctly. ... Or was that slices of tedium?

♥▲♥ CORPORATE SCANDALS. During Enron's latter days, if Kenneth Lay had faith in his corporation, it would mean he had faith in an enormous fraud.

♥▲♥ ct. Me. At one time, it seemed to me the only alternate histories available had the Confederates winning at Gettysburg. That became such a boring cliché that I yearned for a more novel alternate history.

I wished someone had expanded on these few short passages in a Philip Dick novel. There the edifice building species evolved from the *Australopithecus Robustus* rather than, as in our world, *Australopithecus Gracile*. The evolved *Robustus* created wooden satellites and wooden rockets.

Another alternate history I had wished to see was what if Germany had won World War I. Certainly a better prospect than them having won World War II.

♥▲♥ For some reason, we still remember the bad Star Trek episodes. The flying flapjacks sticks in my mind. And the episode where Spock's brain is stolen runs a second. Of course, I am convinced now that

some of the really bad episodes were put-ons.

♥▲♥ ct. Eve. Moving always put stress on my marriage. My wife always threatened to divorce me the first second she entered a new apartment and saw all the unpacked boxes. However, in a half-hour she had reconciled herself to the place.

GUY H. LILLIAN III spiritus mundi 194

♥▲♥ What you have is a pre-travel report. I hope in your post-travel report that your expectations were fulfilled.

♥▲♥ The Doofus' insurance company paid for a chiropractor? I knew that they have good luck with bad backs. Also, I know my late father, a physician, believed in them for bad backs. But I didn't know they were that respectable yet.

♥▲♥ So, Guy, can I assume you like the Mardi Gras, especially as it is celebrated in the French Quarter? That tits for beads is your thing?

♥▲♥ ct. Me. Actually, I found appealing in their way the whole Atlantic City gang, those who watched Wayne's ashes be spread there. I have a thing for fellow eccentrics.

♥▲♥ There is an alternative to my sister giving up her career to care for my mother: to find Assisted Living for my mother. Which my brother the doctor can inspect periodically. Then my sister could do the the estate's financial stuff from California. And can once again pursue her career in cosmetology.

I know my late father made my sister swear to stay with my mother. But my sister

has an excuse: my mother's alzheimers has degenerated since then.

And now that my mother no longer believes she is home and has been looking for a place that disappeared fifty years ago; the whole purpose of keeping her at her home has been undermined.

♥▲♥ About Arnold Stang, I remember a *Mad Magazine* parody poster where the head of Arnold Stang was grafted onto the body of Steve Reeves. The finished product was dubbed Melvin. The caption underneath also claimed that, in the movie, the whole Turkish Army would play "Andy."

♥▲♥ About people going free who commit crimes under intoxication. I think I was talking more about principle than any law on the books anywhere. I know intoxication is at best a mitigating circumstance.

The opposite would be to throw the book at anyone who commits crimes under intoxication. Again, this is theoretical. The worst was in Late Ancient Palestine, where intoxication was an aggravating circumstance.

♥▲♥ 1968 was not a bitter lonely time for me. I was too out-of-it for that.

♥▲♥ And, by having a constituency of ranchers who ate up his swill, James Watt was that much more evil.

♥▲♥ I agree that Philip Dick was a cool writer. He used to be my very favorite. However, *2001* brought home even better than *Androids* the theme of machines becoming more human than humans. I remember that the humans around Hal were pretty bloodless. When they died, who cared. But when Hal died, that was pathos.

♥▲♥ We will see whether the Democratic candidates who have been antiwar have a foot up in 2004 or have committed political seppuku.

Bush's wars, as much as I hate the idea, could be wildly popular in the boondocks. And it could bring some prosperity, and Bush could be a shoe-in. Or the next war could turn out to be no-win and unpopular. And not forestall a deteriorating economy.

If I was a betting man, I 'd bet on the former: popularity, a better economy and a Bush second term. Just like the Bush people are. But the latter has happened in the past: to Bush, Sr., to Richard Nixon.

♥▲♥ I don't see medicine as a conspiracy like Karl Wagner or Ted Sturgeon did, but rather as a comedy of errors – with the joke on us. The patients in wanting the latest cures are pricing them out of reach. The doctors in wanting private practice to continue are destroying it. And the drug companies may yet go bust raising the price of good health.

♥▲♥ Who knows, agitprop might yet make the Clinton years a time of depression and foreign catastrophe. In politics, up is very often down. And vica versa.

♥▲♥ Too bad, I was hoping *The Ring* would have turned out to be a decent horror flick. But if I couldn't make heads or tails of it, that, for me, would be the kiss of death.

♥▲♥ I am glad skyscrapers are no longer the boxes they once were. They are a little bit more interesting. So I might welcome the new World Trade Center even if the esthetics are not all there. Or anywhere.

♠♠♠ ct. Gary Robe. If I were Gary Robe, I would contact the people at the MIT Science Fiction Society Library, at, of course, MIT. I think the contact info is on the MIT website. I bet they have been getting journals with the Hugo nominees. And preserving them. I couldn't vouch for it, though.

♠♠♠ Saddam is a sack of shit, no question about it. And the war is not completely pointless because we got rid of him.

However, are we handing bin Laden a present? He gets rid of one of the secular rulers he hates. And he gets the rest of the Arab world pissed off at the U.S. Of course, he wants more and won't compromise, but this seems a decent down payment.

♠♠♠ I didn't like Silverberg's *Book of Skulls*. While it had a novel element or two, it struck me as too much of an attempt to cash in on the Youth Revolution of the late '60s and early '70s. The Silverberg I liked best was *Downward to Earth* (1970). About imperialism, extraterrestrials and the very fabric of reality itself.

But nobody agrees with my taste. I disliked Heinlein's *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*. Admittedly for political reasons. And liked *Farnham's Freehold* (1964). His novel where slavery has returned but the position of the races has reversed itself; the Blacks being the slavemasters.

That was universally panned for being racist – anything could be racist then – but I thought it was quite the opposite.

♠♠♠ I had hoped the American general that Bush put in charge of Iraq came from Brooklyn. Then his son could say, "Yonder lies the palace of my fadder da

Caliph."¹ Life would then imitate a bad Tony Curtis movie.

RICHARD LYNCH

harry warner, jr. (1922-2003)

♠♠♠ I'm going to miss Harry. I publish the fanzine *JOMP, JR.*, and he was my favorite letter writer. My next favorite was the late Buck Coulson. Too bad both are dead.

For some reason, what sticks in my about Harry was this odd trivia he remembered: a silent film in color, *The Viking* (1928). It was about the Norse visits to America.

♠♠♠ It is no wonder Harry started by sending a letter to *Astounding* when he was thirteen. At the time, science fiction basically was the prozines. Of course, the short story and magazine fiction have taken a nosedive since then.

GARY BROWN

oblio no. 195. february-march 2003.

♠♠♠ BUSH'S AMERICA. I have nothing against someone wanting privacy. I don't believe that wanting it, in any way contravenes, free speech. On the other hand, giving Scalia an award for free speech is a

¹ You may have seen "Yondah lies the castle of my faddah." And attributed to Curtis in *The Vikings* (1958). But, as far as I can tell, his father didn't have a castle in *The Vikings*. The quote up above was attributed to the *Son of Ali Baba* (1952). Of course, the Curtis' character wasn't the son of a Caliph in *Ali Baba* either. The movie could have been *The Prince Who was a Thief* (1951). However, since no one can cite the real source, I suspect the quote is apocryphal.

travesty. I guess the City Club likes the idea of limiting free speech.

🍷▲🍷 MARGARITAVILLE. Let me understand this: Jimmy Buffett is great because he combines a tacky Florida giftshop atmosphere with cheap beer and wine. I guess I'd have to be there to appreciate that mystique.

🍷▲🍷 You mention Gray Morrow. His byline was on the daily Tarzan strips online, but recently the syndicate decided not to give the one doing them a byline.

🍷▲🍷 WINTERHAVEN. In all honesty, sounds like your baseball outing would not have been such a hot time except that your kids were there.

🍷▲🍷 MOONEY'S ILLO. I can't get over my kid notion that spacemen are great and cowboys are great. So what greater than a space cowboy. Of course, Jim Mooney mixes another genre in, and makes things even better, sex. I love his va-va-voom space cowgirl.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. I disagreed with my late father's politics too: he was a Reaganite during the Reagan Administration. I didn't argue too much with him then, however, because it wouldn't have done any good. However, he saw one too many Fundamentalists at the '92 Republican Convention. And he, Atheist that he was, became a liberal Democrat ever after that.

🍷▲🍷 As I said, this could happen during a hijacking and that could happen. There is no way to protect against everything. We have to go with real possibilities as opposed to the fancies we have been hearing so much about.

Locking the cockpit door would just

have protected against 9-1-1. The hijackers only had box cutters so killing passenger after passenger would not have been an option.

As for what will go on beyond 9-1-1, I haven't heard of many al Qaeda hijackings recently so I presume that they will try other tactics. Likely, getting their suicide bomb by other means.

🍷▲🍷 If George Lucas lived with Linda Ronstadt for years, I presume he had been on a date with her. And those awful love scenes are from a surfeit of old movies.

🍷▲🍷 What was Tom Daschle thinking blowing pro-Iraqi War and then anti-Iraqi War. He was thinking of playing both sides. Something a lot of people try to do, but something you really can't do.

The problem, of course, is that we have been living in a Republican era. And 9-1-1 has made it even more of a Republican era, sad to say. However, our best bet is not speaking out of both sides of our mouth, but waiting for a sea change. Whenever that will be.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Ned Brooks. There was a *Wall Street Journal* article in the past year about how Gays really like SpongeBob SquarePants. They identify with SpongeBob's sunny attitude.

🍷▲🍷 ct. David Schlosser. A woman from Minnesota once pointed out to me that Frostbite Falls in *Rocky and Bullwinkle* was referring to International Falls. Known as the coldest place in the country.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Sheila Strickland. Your damned straight many library schools want warm bodies. I got in and got through one. And I was really out of it at the time. Of course, there were no jobs when I started

hunting, and just lucked into this one.

Apparently, Sheila had the bad luck to choose a school which wanted more than warm bodies. As to what they wanted, that wasn't clear.

♥▲♥ ct. Janice Gelb. The Bush thing is that we should give up French wines in protest. Someone said he was giving up Texas wines in protest. And that is much less of a sacrifice.

♥▲♥ I made up some mock spam recently where the claim was that this one company could increase the size of your penis to four feet. It said women will mob you and men will envy you. Someone commented that rather shetland ponies and elephants will envy you.

I asked my wife what earthly good a four feet penis would do a man. And she said he could be a really great tripod.

SHEILA STRICKLAND revenant #17

♥▲♥ I can see someone immediately thinking the shuttle exploding was Arab sabotage because there was an Israeli on board. These are not only Terrible Times; it is also an Age of Conspiracy Theory.

Which reminds me of this anecdote. I was at a seminar held by the skeptical psychologist Ray Hyman. There was a government project to use the technique of remote viewing. To perceive psychically what the Russkis, the Chinese were doing. If the project was still around, it would be crystal gazing at bin Laden.

However, it is no more. The CIA had passed it off on the Defense Intelligence Agency. And the Defense Intelligence Agency had passed it back. So, in the early '90s, the CIA finally decided to kill the

project for good. It had a report written by a skeptic and a believer to the effect that remote viewing is not ready for prime time. The skeptic being Ray Hyman, who was telling the anecdote.

Afterward, Hyman was interviewed on Larry King. And Larry said that the CIA COULD have continued the project and not told him. Ray had to admit that it COULD have. It exasperated him that he couldn't really answer this argument.

I can. COULD is proof conclusive when it comes to our most cherished beliefs. But ridiculous things COULD be. Like I COULD be Elvis. And that they COULD be doesn't add a scintilla of proof.

So what does this have to do with conspiracy theory? COULD is the basis of all conspiracy theory, and of our age.

♥▲♥ Of course, Hollywood booed Michael Moore. He's fat and his clothes aren't much to look at.

♥▲♥ ct. Me. No, a name change, like Special Libraries Association to SLA, isn't going to give us librarians respect. But it's cheap and easy.

♥▲♥ ct. Oblio. I wonder what a League of Superior Gentlemen of the 18th Century would look like. Maybe it would include Baron Munchausen, Benjamin Franklin, the Count Saint-Germain, Molly Pitcher, Giovanni Casanova. Of course, some of them lived at different ends of the century.

♥▲♥ Under my Honest Preamble Act, we would have to call the USA Patriot Act, the Act to Wrap Ourselves in the Flag.

♥▲♥ ct. Winter Wanderings. The Southern foods Northerners are most squeamish about are pig's feet and



My parents at the shore (Loch Arbor, NJ?)

Scouts navigate
by the North
Star anymore.
It's by the city
lights.



Archimedes did
use weight to
test for
adulteration in
gold. But not
for gold. The
test for gold
over the
centuries has
been rubbing it.
Until the 18th
Century, when
assaying came
into being and
weights were
actually used to

chitterlings.



Don't put yourself down. Your
zine was a perfectly good one. You packed a
wallop in a few pages.

MIKE WEBER
then and now



My, how your little honorary
daughter has grown. A situation like that
happened to me recently. At my father's
funeral, I saw my cousins Mortie and Bernie.
I remember when I was four years old and
they were in the Navy. Now they're in their
seventies.

I wonder what they think of how
little Richard has grown.



ct. Me. So not even the Boy

test for gold.



Either way Atlantans did
Sherman's bidding. If they didn't burn
supplies and materiel, Sherman's Army,
which lived off the land, would take and use
them. If they burned them, it was denying
them to the Confederacy. Which was
Sherman's main purpose.



Maybe it might be worth it for
my site to link all the oddball books in my
bibliographies to Amazon. Maybe not. I
don't know how many people would ever
stop at a site of mine.



What kind of suspense can you
have in Charlaine Harris' mysteries if one of
the protagonists is a telepath? I guess the
telepath would have to concentrate hard to
read someone's mind and has to take care in
picking his or her subjects.

♥▲♥ ct. Ned. So, for you, whether a bullet shot in an aircraft will do damage depends on where it lands. Of course, what are the probabilities a bullet will land there?

On the other hand, you are another person who disagrees with Gary Robe that, in general, a bullet will do much to the 'skin' of the plane.

♥▲♥ More than now, college kids used to try to put over hoax students. There were others beside George Burdell. In 1935, one ostensibly of Princeton, an Ephraim di Kahble, said that he was scared by the Princeton Tiger, and would rather an orange and black guinea pig be the school mascot.

♥▲♥ ct. Metcalf. Well, we've had enough people objecting to mercury and sodium batteries operating Verne's Nautilus. The ball is now in Norm's court.

♥▲♥ I hear there are still some Frederick Faust manuscripts waiting to be published. The same is true of other authors. I know Johnny Gruelle left Raggedy Ann manuscripts that are waiting to be published.

I wonder how many authors have been like that over the years.

♥▲♥ ct. D. Schlosser. At this point, Saddam seems to have been defeated with relative ease. I wonder if the real war is going to begin. Us vs. Islamic Fundies? Shiites? Kurds? ...Us vs. the Palestinians in Syria?

♥▲♥ ct. GHLIII. Take pity on I and Guy. We beat the Draft so we wouldn't know a Congressional Medal of Honor from a Bronze Star. ...Or our astral bodies from a hole in the sky.

♥▲♥ Great! By remembering your comics, you found a crossover between

Marvel and DC in 1972, three years early. I seem to remember Eldridge Cleaver borrowed the style of the New York literary establishment for his *Soul on Ice*. I read both Cleaver's book and an essay anthology of their work around the same time.

♥▲♥ ct. TKFW. A.E. Van Vogt claimed he had formulas, like the Futurians did. To allow him to write without rewriting. But his formulas are puzzling.

One, if memory serves me right, is you have to have a new idea every 2,000 words or so. While his books are chocked full of ideas, I don't think there are that many. I think what constituted a new idea didn't have to be much. Too many ideas are not why his post-Campbell novels are on the very borders of readability.

Also, van Vogt had a science fiction sentence, which he claimed he used for writing. He found it pregnant with possibilities. I myself found his SF sentence a receptacle for vague generalities, and probably one of the reasons his post-Campbell novels are on the borders of readability.

♥▲♥ ct. E. Ackerman. I gather the powers-that-have-been couldn't make up their mind whether the Coast Guard is military or not. It seems to have been switched between civilian and military agencies over the years.

MIKE WEBER

house joint memorial 40 - New Mexico

♥▲♥ As much as I think civil liberties need to be defended, sounds like Tacoma Park, MD declaring itself a nuclear free zone. Also, it sounds like telling hair raising stories to baldheaded men..

RANDY CLEARY

avatar press. mar. 27th, 2003

🍷▲🍷 RANDY RANTS. Nope, you're too good a guy to rant.

🍷▲🍷 The cartoon of the porpoise doing his own fishing reminded me of an artsy film of – I guess – the '50s, where a fisherman is reeling in all these big fish. And he reaches for a sandwich and is dragged into the sea.

🍷▲🍷 The Blue Oyster Cult is still around? Don't I remember them from 1970? ...Oh well, at least Lothar and the Hand People are not still around.

🍷▲🍷 PIP PINCHES. I don't know. People who lie so their side will win usually receive immortal glory. Unless their side loses, and then they don't have gravesites where embarrassments can happen.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. The original *Declaration of Independence*? ...Whose? ...Where? ...I have heard of the Mecklenburg (NC) Declaration, which supposedly was crippled for the one famous one in Philadelphia. But, I gather, the Mecklenburg original hasn't been found yet.

🍷▲🍷 I don't know whether I like *mummer* better than *cock-un-sucker* for someone who refuses to give oral sex. But you know the cure for AIDS: sit down and shut your mouth.

🍷▲🍷 It does sound like a real turkey, that alternate history where Einstein is left with the Indians, and develops the atomic bomb for Chief Sitting Bull, or some such. It may even be the worst alternate history.

However, I have to try to match you. I confess this was science fiction at the time. For the year 2000, I have an idiot dwarf

become President. That hasn't happened. The current President is not a dwarf. ...I know I shouldn't let politics enter into these things.

Also, my alternate history had some curious technology. Solar and windpower have been developed. Houses have sails on them. And it is not uncommon to see suburbanites with a wooden leg and a parrot on their shoulders pushing lawnmowers.

🍷▲🍷 Yes, people can get fixated and narrowminded. Bertrand Russell, the philosopher, claimed that cranks he met at parties were particularly fixated and narrowminded. If he was to have a conversation, he had to narrow the distance between himself and them. With people who believed you should only eat nuts, he argued only Brazil nuts should be eaten by the faithful. And with those who believed the English and Scotch were two of the Ten Lost Tribes, he argued the Scotch were from Manasseh and the English from Ephraim. Not vica versa.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Sheila Strickland. It's true that academic bureaucracy is fairly close to Communism in its idiocy. But it seems like industry is trying to compete.

GARY R. ROBE

tennessee trash #52

🍷▲🍷 I was going to say that we shouldn't worry about things not being according to schedule. Everything is always done by the seat of its pants.

On the other hand, having read your account, I have to admit Conclave almost didn't take place: what with the erratic weather and the disconnects between you and others.

On the other hand still, it did take

place, didn't it?

☺▲☺ You're favorite Mexican dish, black mole? Is it made out of moles? Is there any meat on a mole?

☺▲☺ To paraphrase what they say about the Olympics, the object of the Tae Kwan Do tests is not to win; it's to get good exercise and learn Tae Kwan Do.

☺▲☺ The *Peshwar Lancers*, where, because of a new ice age, the British Empire was transferred to the East after 1878. It sounds vaguely like John Brunner's novel *Times without Number* (1962), where the Islamic Moors take over Spain but England is under Catholic Spanish rule well into the 20th Century. When, somehow, time travel has been developed.

☺▲☺ I think Saddam's strategy was urban guerrilla warfare in Baghdad. But the Iraqis weren't willing enough to fight. Maybe especially after Saddam was finally killed. I am wondering whether they would fight harder if they saw the cause as Islam or the Shiite sect or the Kurdish nation.

☺▲☺ ct. Me. My Mom was supposed to have had rheumatic fever when she was born. And the doctor supposedly gave her only six months. But she lived eighty-four years. And her heart is not her problem.

So the same may happen to Isaac's heart. And, who knows, he may turn out to be an athlete. One never knows.

☺▲☺ I have been told being corralled into Communion could only happen in a Jesuit Church. Where the belief is we are all part of the same congregation. Other Catholic Churches would be careful to only serve bread and wine to communicants. As would nearly all Protestant Churches.

I have to admit this Church did not know I was Jewish. Of course, they didn't bother to ask. I was served Communion, and that was that.

And since I didn't want to spoil the service for my friend, I partook. So maybe, in a way, I was part of the same Congregation.

☺▲☺ ct. Ned Brooks. I guess you can find coal in volcanoes. But how often?

☺▲☺ ct. David Schlosser. Don't ask how immigrants survive on their salaries in agriculture and on the assemblyline. You don't want to know. A lot of employers, and others, don't want to know either. So I've been led to believe.

As for the 10¢ an hour they pay in China, I know part of it is the exchange rate. Here, as they say, you couldn't even get a shoeshine for 10¢, and that was in the '50s.

JEFF COPELAND hello kitty 40000

☺▲☺ Actually, I have heard a lot of reasons for the Iraqi war, but none of them are casus bellum as far as I'm concerned. That Saddam is in cahoots with bin Laden, that he threatens to conquer the Arab world, that he has weapons of mass destruction he can't be trusted with, that he is a son of a bitch as dictator.

The first three I deny. The last was true enough: Saddam was a son of a bitch. But I don't regard that as casus bellum; there are sons of bitches all over the globe.

About these objections to the Iraqi War, maybe you are giving the same ones.

☺▲☺ I don't know whether Bush's people handled the press so much better in the 2000 Election than Gore's. Rather the press was afraid of the Conservatives Bush

was courting.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. Of course, the writers of Slash fiction, while being educated, may be terrible writers.

The only thing I disagree with here is that amateur porn is necessarily better than 'professional' porn. They both are likely to be baaadddd. In fact, the pros may be worse. One fellow found his material rejected by editors: there weren't enough blow jobs on the first page.

🍷▲🍷 Apparently chemical warfare wasn't all that effective against the Iranians. Saddam still, as I said, got his butt kicked.

🍷▲🍷 Monicagate kept Bill Clinton from being a power broker within the Democratic Party? My understanding is he is – maybe not THE power broker.

And, anyway, he was held at arm's length by Democrats through his two terms. Remember the anti-Clintonites could just as well have been Liberal as Conservative, depending on whose side their bread was buttered.

Liberals, Moderates and Conservatives were all out to get him originally. They all smelled scandal and impeachment. They all smelled Watergate with each as Sam Ervin. On the other hand, there was more than a bit of Richard Nixon in Bill's unfortunate original image And that was the image that dogged him through his presidency..

🍷▲🍷 The problem with search engines created solely for advertising is that nobody uses them. On the other hand, Google has gotten the message. It may get money shortrun by shunting searchers to advertisers, but will lose its audience over the long run.

🍷▲🍷 Nah, the problem with educationists is not that their ideology is just a way to get a better job. No, they apparently believe in their Ph.D. theses, and are fanatics about their ideology.

They believe in all the appearances of education, and ignore its content. The idea behind learning reading visually, as opposed to mouthing words, is that only plebeians mouth words. Also, it is only an education if students read academically 'in' tomes. These days, not the classics, but the most boring of diversity palaver.

🍷▲🍷 To a point, people will learn if we challenge them. But I suspect Sartre will forever remain too difficult for Kindergarten.

🍷▲🍷 So I got a straight answer: 113 dead Israelis in the World Trade Center disaster. Not all the Israelis stayed home. On the other hand, I notice no French, Pakistanis, or Swedes were killed. Does this mean there was a French-Pakistani-Swedish conspiracy?

🍷▲🍷 ct. Guy Lillian III. Was Copeland's Restaurant the idea of Al Copeland, who also founded Popeye's? I say that because there is a Copeland's Restaurant next door to my office in suburban Virginia.

Not that it's necessarily good Louisianan food. A friend of mine from Baton Rouge hates their Cajun dishes. She found their gumbo inedible.

🍷▲🍷 The ex-wife of the sniper Muhammad believes he was out to get her. I doubt that. If he had been, he and Malvo would have aimed more at her. Instead, they aimed at random strangers to feel like gods, as opposed to their powerless mortal selves.

And, for that reason, deserve a long term in slammer.

♥▲♥ It's easy to see why North Korea was removed from the 'axis of evil.' The Bushites are wimps. They only believe in shooting fish in a barrel. They see North Korea is a fish that can bite back.

♥▲♥ The James Bond movies are parodies of the audience; its love of impossible daring do. And the audience gets the joke.

♥▲♥ ct. Janice. If you can't get the transcript of the speech at the White House site, try the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, one of the databases in GPO Access (<http://www.access.gpo.gov>). While it is clunky, you can use it in a pinch.

EVE ACKERMAN **guilty pleasures 28**

♥▲♥ There is a problem with believing people you respect on the issue of the Iraqi War. In that case, their views may have nothing to do with its merits. When people say something, it adds credibility to it. It does not matter what its merits are. And when someone does something, like invade Iraq, it lends even more such credibility. And when enough people have defended the war in Iraq, it adds such credibility that much more.

Fortunately, this war didn't take too many American lives.(I would just as soon not know about the Iraqi lives.) And your neighbor Adam is likely to return safely.

♥▲♥ BLIZZARD ROCKS. Ah, Boston, my old stamping grounds. I spent ten years there. I remember going down Newbury street thirty years ago as a

borderline hippy ~~more borderline~~ geek. Many's the time I almost got killed in the Boston traffic.

I remember the Prudential Center too. In fact, I remember when it was nearly finished. The workmen decided to play a joke. For a weekend, the word PRUDE was seen all over Boston. That Monday, the word PRUDENTIAL was completed.

♥▲♥ Ralphie sending his girl friend a dozen red tulips, a valentine and tact? Young men must be more romantic than they were in my time.

♥▲♥ It's just as well you don't have a spy in Boston to keep tabs on Ralphie. In my experience such knowledge gives parents more of a chance to foul up. It certainly allowed my late father to foul up royally.

Also, in my experience, no parent can avoid revealing whom the spy is if they have a spy. Anyway, my late father always did.

♥▲♥ ROAD TO PERDITION. I don't think producers are ashamed of bringing religion into mass market movies. I think they are afraid of driving off a sizable portion of the audience. I would imagine Fundies, who always complain about a lack of their religion in the mass media, would be the first to complain about too much Catholicism in a movie.

♥▲♥ ALEXANDER HAMILTON. Take Alexander Hamilton off \$10 and put Ronald Reagan on it. It is in line with the Republican policy of naming as much as possible after Ronald Reagan. They made a big brouhaha about renaming National Airport Reagan National Airport several years ago.

But they better be careful what they name. When Francis Sargent was governor

of Massachusetts a long time ago, the legislature named a highway after him. One which went nowhere. His office said it was a cheap shot.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Markstein. The Rawhide Kid gay is just the beginning. Slash fiction may yet take its place among the classics of literature.

GEORGE WELLS

insert dignified title here

🍷▲🍷 George, if you're not going to use a manual typewriter, you could at least use a suitable typeface like **Old**

Typewriter. Or **Royal Pain**. Or **Gutter Vomit**. Or something like them.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Me. I have some info about women wearing propeller beanies. I emailed Lee Hoffman about it. And she, of hermit fame, emailed me back. She said, despite legend, not many women fans wore propeller beanies during the '50s. And, despite legend, not many male fans did either.

Since Roger Sims remembers propeller beanies in Detroit fandom and the beanie began in Wisconsin, I guess it was a sectional thing.

🍷▲🍷 No, I didn't know anyone at the time with black leather jackets; so the ones in that bar where "Rubby Ducky" was being played were strangers. Now they aren't necessarily strangers: my ritzy in-laws wear black leather jackets.

As for my purpose in that bar, if my memory serves me right, I wasn't imbibing much; but partaking of the bar's Italian food. Cambridge, Massachusetts had a number of bars with great food.

As did Kent, Ohio. I once was living

at a rooming house there, where everyone was supposed to be a teetotaler. I told the husband and wife owners I was thinking of going to Jimmy's Stag Bar. For the food, I added. I didn't have to; they said they loved eating there.

🍷▲🍷 What do I mean by the *nature of your zine*? If it wasn't arbitrary and capricious, it wouldn't be a George zine. And that's why we love it.

🍷▲🍷 Maybe I should buy King Clave cds rather than either crying for Latvia or bombing Tanna Tuva.

By the way, I think King Clave means King Key. Ned would know better.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Gary Brown. Well, if you can steal only really close election, then maybe stealing elections should be a misdemeanor.

As for Jeff's quotes, I have appeared in them. One of the quotes he thinks was by Leonardo da Vinci was actually by me. And then there was another quote from John Stuart Mill. But don't tell.

🍷▲🍷 I can see Lex and Clark as the new Odd Couple. And you could start a *situation tragedy* each week with them in it.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Don Markstein. Maybe they could revive the Rawhide Kid as a '50s ad man. What do you think?

🍷▲🍷 About Frederick Faust (AKA Max Brand), they say that a monkey who typed long enough would write Shakespeare's plays. There is also the reverse monkey effect. If Shakespeare wrote long enough, he would begin to sound like a monkey – even if his prose remained deathless.

Perhaps Faust's work suffered from the reverse monkey effect. Which is why it

palled on you.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Ned Brooks. Your joke about how the arm of a German Shepherd was grafted onto Hitler is a classic.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Sheila Strickland. The rumor is that Ashcroft is going to start a new Spanish Inquisition here. There are signs of it. One firm is selling thumbscrews five for a dollar.

LIZ COPELAND

home with the armadillo #57

🍷▲🍷 It is very understandable why you had that Ziggy cartoon as your cover. This has been a year of trials and tribulations for you, hasn't it?

🍷▲🍷 Good luck that there's no last piece of kidney stone. Of course, you're going to have to have the hysterectomy anyway, but less surgery is always best.

🍷▲🍷 It sounds great that you are back to gardening again after a period when you felt so bad that you couldn't even read any new books. How are the allergies doing? How about your back? It can't hurt you as much if you're able to do gardening. Or can it?

🍷▲🍷 LES ROBERTS. I knew about the ethnic communities in Cleveland. An old girl friend of mine came from a Czechoslovakian Jewish home there. Her parents had pretty thick accents. They had another Eastern European trait as well. They could never get into mowing their lawn. And, in fact, had a competition with their neighbor, also Czechoslovak, to see whose grass could grow tallest.

🍷▲🍷 Dithering was one of the problems with another Cherryh book I read.

Also, that she had created great technology and a great background. And used none of it for the main plot, which droned on and on and on.

T.K.F. WEISSKOPF

'yngvi is a louse' and no other graffitos

🍷▲🍷 ODDS AND ENDS. Toni, it's like whether bad poetry is poetry at all. Bad poetry is still poetry. Poetry where the rhyme and rhythm are off is still poetry.

And minuscule publishing is still publishing. Even if I write for ten readers, it is still publishing. It doesn't seem that way if you're a big publisher. How dare the web crawlers, publishers on demand, zine hacks, etc. claim to be publishers! But they are.

🍷▲🍷 I can't get too shocked when someone calls someone in the political limelight ugly, stupid, deserving death, deserving alzheimers. That is an indication of the buttons that politics pushes.

From what you say, you seem to consider these insults, gloats and curses gratuitous. No, I get the impression these people have considered the politicians in questions a menace to the culture.

However, I myself wouldn't insult, gloat or curse anyone over politics. Given how hot button, irrational and uncertain politics is, I doubt it is worth giving up civilized behavior for.

🍷▲🍷 ISLAM THE MAGNIFICENT.

There are also some passages in the Bible that are dubious. Death for masturbation. Death for disobeying your mother and father.

And just like Christians, Moslems, in my experience, have been all over the map. In the Straight Dope column recently, Cecil Adams called around to Islamic religious

leaders and found that often the Seventy-Two Heavenly Virgins is interpreted metaphorically. As for the cutting off of hands, I hear even fundamentalist Saudi Arabia has only done it once to a robber. As a matter of principle. Of course, to a foreigner.

In my experience, Moslems have certainly been all over the map. A friend of mine from Malaysia was a Moslem but his attitudes toward sex were very similar to the West. Also, historically, the Turks and the Egyptians have prided themselves on being very Westernized. This may be changing but I still meet quite a few Westernized Moslems.

🍷▲🍷 MAILING WALL. 84% of all news personnel may be liberal Democrats. Is that true of the CEOs of those TV stations, newspapers, magazines, etc.? That would seem more apropos.

🍷▲🍷 All previous tax cuts generated more revenue for the Federal government? The Bush tax cuts seems to be the exception.

So, come to think of it, do the Reagan tax cuts.

🍷▲🍷 ct. Gary Brown. Pat Gibbs said Saddam was bin Laden; now you say he was Hitler. Saddam got his butt whipped by the Iranians. Then he got his butt whipped by the Americans over Kuwait. Then he got his butt whipped by the Kurds. If he hadn't been stopped, his men might right now be paddling up San Francisco Bay in canoes. Where they would get their butt whipped bad once again.

THE END

Noted doctor dies at 89

Psychiatrist Edward Dengrove, Ocean Township, was a pioneer in behavior therapy.

By **MICHAEL CLANCY**
STAFF WRITER

OCEAN TOWNSHIP — Edward Dengrove, a psychiatrist who helped pioneer the fields of behavior and hypnosis therapies, sexology and forensic psychiatry, died from liver cancer at his North Edgemere Drive home yesterday. He was 89.

A World War II veteran, husband and father of three, Dengrove



**Edward
Dengrove**

practiced psychiatry in Monmouth County for more than six decades. He still saw 15 patients who visited him regularly in the office adjacent to his West Allenhurst home.

He helped popularize the field of behavior therapy, which in a departure from Freudian psychoanalysis' concern with treating inward root causes of psychological distress, treated patients by helping them modify their behavior, his family said.

Dengrove helped found the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy, based in New York, even though it was a young field that was not highly regarded at the time.

"The field that he started that was looked upon with so much derision gradually became the pre-eminent field," said his son, Robert Dengrove, a psychiatrist from Long Branch. "My father saw that happen in his lifetime."

The association is now the second largest

See **Doctor**, Page B3

Doctor was pioneer in behavior therapy

From Page B1

professional association for psychiatrists in the nation, said Robert Dengrove.

A man driven by curiosity and pragmatism, Edward Dengrove innovated techniques in sexual and hypnosis therapy, during the 1950s when those fields were not widely accepted.

Though serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Dengrove worked as a field surgeon for the American Volunteer Group, the famous U.S. combat pilots known as the "Flying Tigers."

While he wrote hundreds of articles for scientific journals, he also wrote regularly for Reader's Digest, TV Guide and Playboy. He was also one of the first forensic psychiatrists to testify in the state, said his son.

"My father used to say he was an 'eclectic psychiatrist,'" said his daughter, Lois Dengrove, a former comedian from Santa Monica who now works for a hair care company. "He wanted to gather as many tools as possible for his toolbox so he could treat people."

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Ida Libby Dengrove, an Emmy-award winning courtroom artist for NBC television. In addition to Robert and Lois Dengrove, the couple has another son, Richard, a librarian for the federal Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.

His children described a colorful childhood growing up in West Allenhurst: Dr. Ruth Westheimer was a sometime guest; their father once hypnotized a suitor who hoped to marry his daughter to gauge his intentions and suitability; a short, unassuming man fond of bow ties, Dengrove would share his latest research about human sexuality or try new hypnosis techniques on them.

But his family said that no matter how hectic his professional life could be, he always made time for them.

Inside the box that contained his will, his family said, the psychiatrist left his wife and children books and articles for them to read on the topic of grieving.

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