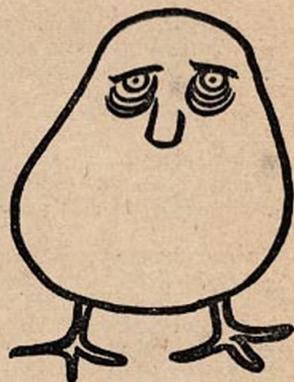


## freethought criticism and satire

# The Realist



March 1960

35 Cents

No. 16

## An Impolite Interview With Albert Ellis

Albert Ellis received his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Clinical Psychology at Columbia University. He has taught at Rutgers and N.Y.U.; has served as Chief Psychologist of the New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies; and over the last decade he has been in the private practice of psychotherapy and marriage counseling in New York City.

Dr. Ellis is the author of several books—including *The American Sexual Tragedy*, *How to Live With a Neurotic* and *Sex Without Guilt* — as well as more than 150 papers in various professional journals. His latest book, *The Art and Science of Love*, will be published this month by Lyle Stuart. Now in preparation, in collaboration with Dr. Robert A. Harper of Washington, is a major work on the theory and technique of rational psychotherapy.

The questions in this interview were posed by Robert Anton Wilson and Paul Krassner.



**Q. How would you explain the difference between rational therapy and psychoanalysis?**

A. There are many significant differences between these two systems of psychotherapy. In fact, the techniques which are most used in classical psychoanalysis are those that are least used in rational therapy.

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## EDITOREALISMS

### The Two Faces of Jack Paar (Concluded)

"Who do you think you are—Hamlet?"  
—from "The Climate of Eden"

"Jack Paar," writes Henry Morgan (with whom a *Realist* Impolite Interview is scheduled), "is the oldest little girl in TV and a fine reason, if he represents a national point of view, for allowing the Russians to take over the rest of everything without all this talk. . . . If Paar is even worth attacking, there is something wrong on Lafayette Street."

We feel, however, that Paar is worth "attacking" precisely because he *does* represent a national point of view.

Perhaps the most significant thing ever uttered on The Jack Paar Show was Fred Demara's crystallization of what he had learned from his exploits as *The Great Imposter*. Said Demara: "Most people would rather be liked than right."

Paar is the epitome of that statement—and of what is wrong with our times.

Let's examine his actual words on that fateful night when NBC got caught with its Hugh Downs.

"I'm leaving the 'Tonight' show," Paar said. "There must be a better way of making a living than this. There's a way of entertaining people without being constantly involved in some form of controversy which is on me all the time."

The fact that a network official had deleted, from the previous night's taped show, an old joke involving the initials W.C.—meaning "water closet" (toilet) and being mistaken for Wayside Chapel ("You can go there only on Thursdays and Sundays")—was not really the point of controversy.

For Paar conceded that NBC had the right to edit out the anecdote; he was disturbed only because their "not, in some way, telling you the content of it, leaves a terrible impression in your mind."

Jack Paar isn't opposed to the principle of censorship. He is merely opposed to being weaned from public favor.

"If you read some of the newspapers," said Paar, "you'd think that I had committed a terrible obscenity."

And, of course, he *avoids* "obscenity." He boasted how he had denied guest appearances to, for example, Christine Jorgensen—she of the celebrated castration complex (resolved the hard way)—because that would be in "delicate taste."

This, however, didn't prevent him, during a previous show—upon being told that Christine was engaged to be married to a prince—from exclaiming: "Boy, won't *he* be surprised."

On another occasion, though, he interrupted the author of a book which had been banned in Texas when he began to explain that his novel wasn't pornographic just because a teen-aged girl seduces a blind man. . . .

But Paar said nothing about "delicate taste." He asked that his guest change the topic—"Let's talk about something else, pal"—and the *reason* was "be-

cause if we discuss seduction, they'll think I'm in favor of it."

Yet, two weeks before the Paar walk-out, NBC's chief censor, Stockton Helffrich, in his monthly private memo to Continuity Acceptance personnel, wrote:

"What if the so-called taboo areas, deriving from the peculiar nature and the restrictions of network television and from our culture generally, including the fragmentary pressure groups within it, were more often ventured with certain obvious qualifications included? . . .

"There are a number of controversial practices and facts and artifacts which yet, in valid context (sometimes panel discussions, sometimes not), either have been or could be in varying degrees utilized in television more often. Utilizing them does not of necessity (in fact often to the contrary) mean condoning them. But how are the very standards we talk about for the young to be achieved if material affecting these standards is usually concealed?

"The following is not a taboo list, an approved list, or even a suggested list. It merely covers some of the realities and issues extant in the world we cannot completely ignore or, facing, brush-off as too exceptional to worry about.

"Alcoholism (as in Carney's exceptional and controversial departure 'Call Me Back') and dope addiction; amorality (a surprising excursion into so-called free will was Rod Serling's 'A Quiet Game of Cards'); big business and/or political corruption (in the vein of everything from 'Born Yesterday' to ex-Studio One's two-part 'The Defender'; the Steve Allen or Sid Caesar or Mort Sahl satiric gems spoofing bonafide psychiatry, the military, vested interests and play-it-safism generally. . . .)

"Birth control and . . . such matters as unwed mothers; pre-marital and extra-marital sex relations; sexual deviation and, as in polygamy, variation; incest; nudity, transvestitism, and voyeurism; momism, miscegenation; divorce; the indiscretions of highly publicized performers and public figures.

"Sadism, violence, fratri-, infanti-, patri- and suicide; kidnapping; white collar crime, tax evasions; euthanasia, capital and other punishment. Mendacity . . . status motivation (I've heard a key fetish behind the majority of adolescent crimes is the owning of an automobile); super-catered weddings; the Santa Claus myth; adult delinquency and parental irresponsibilities generally; lip service religion; sectarian denomination-alism; irreverence and atheism; inter-faith friction (Martin Luther, Tindale, the Jews and the Crucifixion, etc.); spiritualism, reincarnation, extra-sensory perception.

"The thing that is intriguing about all of these is that more of them than you would think have been ventured both in the motion picture field and on local or network television but of course not as frequently as on the legitimate stage and in literature. . . .

"What is important is (1) that controversy has not been shunned as much as is charged nor, perhaps, (2) risked as often as a nation like ours deserves.

"As to that, we need controversy to grow as a nation. We need controversy and airing of our troubles to help us live with ourselves as we really are. I think, speaking from a TV censor's point of view as well as

generally, the increase in controversy if attempted could be cushioned by an accompanying publicity and public relations campaign guiding viewers to the most effective uses of television. . . ."

Under his initials, Helffrich added: "Notice . . . vacation of sorts following this issue. Too many bonfires around right now. . . ."

Not for one solitary moment, though, are we defending NBC.

In a letter to Paar, NBC president Robert Kintner rationalized his network's picayune censorship action, explaining:

" . . . I am sure you recognize that we must be responsible for everything broadcast over our facilities,



whether it be programs or advertising. . . ."

But, the question is, responsible to whom?

This month, George Heimrich—of the Broadcasting and Film Commission of the National Council of Churches—said that NBC had canceled plans to televise a play about a Protestant minister who committed adultery. He said that he had told NBC that his committee—made up predominantly of clergymen—would "jump all over them" if the network produced the play.

He said that NBC had contacted him to seek approval for the script.

The network had no comment. A day later, an NBC spokesman denied that a script had been submitted to the committee for approval. This statement was issued:

"The network has no knowledge of the cancellation of any TV play on its facilities involving a Protestant minister who commits adultery."

The play concerns a missionary in Africa whose wife has leprosy—which, we suppose, is as good an excuse for adultery as any. Whether or not the drama will be televised, remains to be seen. But if it's true about all those Communists infiltrating the National Council of Churches, NBC had better be more careful about whom it consults for script approval.

Nor are we defending the Hearst Press, whose hypocrisy Paar publicly criticized.

Specifically, he had criticized the N.Y. *Journal-*

*American* for berating the bad taste of his program and then splashing the lurid, lascivious details of the Finch murder trial all over its own front pages.

The *Journal-American* gave more coverage to the Paar walk-out than any other newspaper, but there was not a word about his comments concerning the *Journal-American*.

And when Paar came back to his show, the *Journal-American* reported that he had gone on "to say incorrectly that this newspaper has some sort of plot to kill any story that deals favorably with Edward R. Murrow and that it otherwise suppresses stories or columns favorable to Paar himself."

But Paar's specific allegation that a favorable story about him by *Journal-American* columnist Jim Bishop had been suppressed—was itself suppressed by the *Journal-American*.

When NBC deleted a harmless bit of double entendre, their act of censorship—like any act of censorship—was arbitrary, and protected no one from "a clear and present danger" (as in the classic case of yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theatre).

Actually, anybody who has watched Paar's program knows that he has ventured into areas of far more questionable taste than the W.C. fields; The Jack Paar Show was indeed one of the "bonfires" mentioned in the above Helffrich memo.

And, say insiders, a hoary story involving scatology and religion finally provided an ideal excuse for NBC to clamp down on Paar without itself being weaned from public favor.

Or so they thought.

Only, they neglected (a) to take into consideration the fact that Paar had long been looking for an out, and (b) to estimate the power of a man whose Publicity Quotient was able to knock off the front pages such news stories as France testing its first nuclear bomb, a mystery satellite circling the earth, Caryl Chessman being denied a stay of execution, an unidentified submarine near Argentina, trouble between Israel and Syria, peace talks in Algeria and—the Khrushchev version of *Our Man in Havana*—Mikoyan making propaganda hay in Cuba.

Such is the impact of television—such is the degree of identification engendered by this paarticular inhabitant of the medium—that the network has, at last count, received some 25,000 pieces of mail.

The N. Y. *Post*—with tongue in editorial cheek—observed that "the furor over Jack Paar is a salutary event; if so many people can become so exercised over his right to tell a tasteless joke over TV, perhaps others will begin to ask questions about serious violations of civil liberties in which conscientious men have been sent to jail for defying witch-hunt committees."

*Time* magazine twisted this comment by reporting that "a New York *Post* editorial promoted Paar to a lonely maverick fighting for the Bill of Rights."

An advertising agency executive was scheduled to speak at a college in Pennsylvania last month. He thought the meeting was going to be a private one, and when he learned that his speech was to be publicized, he canceled the engagement. Here is an excerpt from this speech that was never delivered:

"As long as the object of the mass communications industry is to deliver a maximum audience at a minimum cost, cultural factors must take a back seat. Entertainment, art, culture and enlightenment are only means toward fulfilling the economic objectives of the mass media."

Jack Paar would have saved himself a torrent of self-pity if only he had realized that he is but a means to an end.

He is a commodity—something to be exploited, not loved.

He was no more liked by the manufacturer of the "Come Back Jack" buttons than the Nazis were liked by the concurrent manufacturers of swastika pennants. (In fact, some of the latter manufacturers are Jewish, and their activities would seem to reinforce the stereotype of the Jew which the Nazis built up in order to justify their genocide.)

Jack Paar is a living, breathing product—to be marketed as were Dwight Eisenhower, Elvis Presley, Jack Kerouac, Charles Van Doren—and now Caryl Chessman.

It may sound like a science-fiction tale based on the fall of Rome, but—even as disc jockeys were playing a new hillbilly record called *Let 'im Live, Let 'im Live, Let 'im Live*—bookmakers were accepting bets on Caryl Chessman's fate. You wager even money and you take your choice—either that he goes to the gas chamber at San Quentin or that he is granted a reprieve. The betting is brisk.

(Tragedy-betting is a common thing, especially by numbers players. Recent plane crashes enabled them to choose three numbers to bet on, since most flight designations have three digits. The numbers on the wings of wrecked planes also get tremendous play; likewise, the license plate in an automobile accident, when shown in the wire-service news photographs.

(Bookies had a bad day when the numbers on the license plate of ex-baseball player Roy Campanella's wrecked car happened to win.)

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The difference between Caryl Chessman and Jack Paar is that Chessman would rather be *right* than *liked*. He is opposed to the principle of capital punishment, and he isn't worried about being weaned from public favor. This, to the ultimate extent: he is willing to die so that the controversy over him personally will not blur the real issue.

Ironically, it was, on a national scale, our desire to be liked rather than our desire to be right—to avoid demonstrations against Ike in Uruguay—that resulted in a stay of execution for Caryl Chessman. (Since those demonstrations were held *anyway*, Chessman has obviously had his day.)

By the same ironic token, California legislators who would rather be liked than right were undoubtedly influenced to keep capital punishment in their state because there are so many vindictive voters who contend, in the words of that great humanitarian, Eddie Cantor, that:

"... it is a mockery of justice not to execute this man. I am the father of daughters. I know that if it were my daughter who was a victim of Chessman, I would go after him myself, or I would wait until he got to prison, and I would reach somebody and say,

The Realist is published monthly, except for January and July, by the Realist Association, a non-profit corporation founded by William and Helen McCarthy, to whom this magazine is dedicated.

PAUL KRASSNER, Editor

Publication office is at 225 Lafayette St., N.Y. 12, N.Y.

Subscription rates:

\$3 for 10 issues; \$5 for 20 issues

Ten copies of one issue: \$1

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"I will give you ten thousand dollars now, and twenty thousand more when you do the job."

"I cannot ask Steve Allen what he would do, because he doesn't have a growing daughter. I can't ask Marlon Brando because he doesn't have a daughter. Making pictures isn't Brando's business. It is chasing breads. He ought to stick to that. What do these people know?"

(At least one of the original jurors who convicted Chessman says, "I kept thinking, 'What if it had been my daughter?'"—although her duty was supposed to have been only to decide whether or not a man was guilty. That 'his' victim is still in a mental institution because of forced fellatio is as much the fault of her parents and of society as it was the fault of the "Red Light Bandit": she had, let's face it, had seventeen years of psychological pre-conditioning.)

"Chessman is a menace," Cantor continued canting. "But it is all in the Communist pattern. . . . You may be sure that the dissension in this country and in every country is largely Communist inspired and directed."

When, after Jack Paar walked out on his show, Orson Bean said that the network, like most large corporations, is a "dehumanized mass institution," Hearst TV critic Jack O'Brian wrote that "Bean had his little pink say."

If Eddie Cantor ever has a comeback, he can be reasonably certain of getting a favorable review from Jack O'Brian.

ψ

Most people have nothing to talk about—and The Jack Paar Show, does it for them. And, apparently, there's a way of 'entertaining' people *by* being constantly involved in some form of controversy . . . but there must be a better way of making a living than electronic megalomania.

Maybe it was just that he felt guilty about having upstaged the Saviour when, in Japan, musicians played *Silent Night* in his honor; at any rate, back once again on the show after a missile-type countdown instead of an introduction—he made amends by delivering a sermon to newspaper columnists, suggesting that they follow the precepts of Jesus Christ.

But this was more than Paar himself was able to do. He objected to Walter Winchell's reference to his virility, but—rather than turning the other cheek—Paar in turn made reference to Winchell's virility. The remark was edited out of the program. This time, Paar was consulted by the tape-worms.

Actually, Winchell—who wouldn't be above such innuendo—just happened *not* to have made any reference to Paar's virility in the first place. He had simply quoted Henry Morgan's comment—and where have you heard this before?—that "Jack Paar is the oldest little girl on television."

The manufacturer of campaign buttons had been quite resourceful: he had left a space on top for another line—namely “Wel-” —so that now the buttons read “Welcome Back Jack.”

The secret behind Paar's personal success is that, combined with a quick mind which is sensitive to humorous possibilities, he has the ability to manipulate his guests and audience alike so that the program maintains a constant air of expectancy on an adolescent level.

He admits that people watch “because they always expect it to be raided any minute.” While Paar was away, this flavor was gone. But he brought it back with him, seasoned with more spice than ever.

Yes, Jack, welcome back, for you provide a necessary sort of public service.

The Jack Paar Show is, after all, a daily *Waiting for Godot* of the masses.

### Big Brotherhood Is Watching You

There is something tragically funny about a country which finds it necessary—and simultaneously at that—to debate the civil rights of its citizens and to celebrate Brotherhood Week.

If there is one person who has ever been kinder to his fellow man because it was Brotherhood Week, we'd like to hear about it. You either have compassion or you don't. A slogan isn't going to do the trick—not even if National Slogan Week is declared.

But whoever is writing the United States' script has a delightfully sardonic touch. Last month, togetherness reigned supreme as independent Ku Klux Klan groups from 17 Southeastern and Southwestern states combined their memberships, totaling over 42,000, into “The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, Inc.”

Well, almost supreme. The consolidation doesn't include two other white supremacy organizations—now get these names—“The U. S. Klan” and “The Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.”

Elsewhere, in New York's Greenwich Village, there was a big fight over the selection of the recipient of the 1960 Village Brotherhood Award.

♣

The availability of such products as *Man-Tan*—an after-shave lotion which dyes your skin—somehow puts prejudice against pigmentation into a pretty ridiculous perspective.

Since conformity of color could be the solution to the whole problem, the makers of *Man-Tan* might well help to speed up integration by adding to their line the following after-shave lotions:

- For Negroes who want to “pass”—*Spade-Fade*
- For dark-skinned Syrian Jews—*Kike-White*
- For Orientals who would rather be Occidentals—

*Chink-Pink*

### Man, That's a Gas

It's really a shocking thing to wake up in the morning and have your radio tell you that a new nerve gas has been developed which could render an entire population unto lunacy.

But even more shocking is suddenly to come to the realization that maybe it's already happened!

In Georgia last month, a four-year-old boy who can't even read or write yet—but who, along with other children, works as a page at \$4 a day for the state legislature—had to take an oath that he isn't a Communist or sympathetic with its doctrines.

This parroting of loyalty points out most vividly the unreasonableness of requiring adults to take those vows. For if an actual Communist were ever to refuse to swear that he *wasn't* one, he would be destroying his usefulness to the Party.

Meanwhile, in Hollywood, Universal-International Studio heads were faced with the ludicrous problem of whether or not to give Dalton Trumbo screen credit as writer of the script for *Spartacus*—although it's a known fact that he did write it.

The movie is the most expensive (\$10,000,000) ever produced by U-I, and they are afraid that merely giving Trumbo screen credit will provoke a boycott and a strong campaign against the film by the American Legion.

Last month, incidentally, the commander of the Legion said, at the tomb of Abraham Lincoln, that the Civil War President had been a foe of coexistence with tyranny and injustice. The Legion commander, however, offered no alternative course for this age of nuclear bombs, nerve gas, and screen credits.

### A Stereophonic Hoax

A TV network executive recently told the *Realist* that the relationship between advertiser and broadcaster is such that “if a sponsor wanted to show a couple fornicating, the network wouldn't prevent it—and if the sponsor thought it would increase sales, he'd go right ahead and do it.”

But don't hold your breath.

There was this TV viewer down South, see, and he thought he saw a Negro man kissing a Caucasian woman on his 21-inch screen. So he wrote a nasty letter, threatening never to buy the sponsor's product again. Actually, the kinescope that had run on his local station was defective, and the leading man appeared to be colored. In truth, like so many leading men, he was colorless.

Now the sponsor was disturbed (in more ways than one). He sent an account executive down South with a projector and a non-defective kinescope, and a private screening was held for the complainant. He was satisfied. And he promised to use the product twice a day and even more often on weekends. And the sponsor lived neurotically ever after.

That, by the way, is a true story. The moral is simple: Every stinking customer counts.

Now, we've never asked subscribers to write to, say, their congressmen, because we figure that if you're going to write, you don't need us to tell you—and if you're not going to write, our telling you won't make any difference.

But, for a hoax—well, that's different. Out of a few thousand readers scattered across the country, there ought to be enough of you willing to join in to make this mission of mischief a success.

Let's take what, to us, is just about the worst program on television—a thing called *Masquerade Party*—on which a panel (wasting such talent as Sam Levenson and Audrey Meadows) has to guess what celebrity

## NEGATIVE THINKING:

# The Doctor With the Frightened Eyes

by Robert Anton Wilson

"Queegqueg no care what god made him shark . . .  
wedder Fejee god or Nantucket god; but de  
god what made shark must be one dam Ingin."

—Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*,  
Chapter 66, "The Shark Massacre"

Tennessee Williams' new movie, *Suddenly, Last Summer*, seems to have infuriated more wowers than any literary work since Joyce's *Ulysses*. From north, south, east and west the impassioned voices resound, declaring that Williams is "sick," "morbid," "unwholesome," and generally a sad blend of the *unheimlich* and the *mashugga*.

"Almost intolerably evil," fulminates *Parents* magazine. "Clinical, distasteful, morbid, extraordinarily shocking," howls *McCall's*. The weeping and gnashing of teeth from other sources is even more heart-rending. One would think that the wisdom of Christ or the immaculate conception of Eleanor Roosevelt had been challenged.

Actually, all that Williams has done is to confront some of the issues which great tragedy has always raised, from Sophocles through Shakespeare right up to Melville. *Suddenly, Last Summer*, far from being sick, is Williams' healthiest work—because it is his bravest.

It doesn't see human suffering as an illustration to a theory by Freud or Marx. It doesn't pretend that evil is always due to economics or Oedipus complexes. It will probably not be popular with people who think that Arthur Miller, or Maxwell Anderson, or William Inge, are important playwrights.

Like *King Lear*, this new Williams tragedy does not pretend to have all the answers; but, like *King Lear*, it is brave enough to ask all the questions.

The difference between a great writer and a minor one is fundamentally this: that the minor writer always has answers—glib answers, slick answers, memorably-worded answers, resounding and pretentious answers. The great writer dares to

stand before you naked, armed only with his questions.

Villon is great because he doesn't pretend to know what he doesn't know. What he does know he tells us in direct language—language so simple that stupid critics have debated several hundred years now on what makes his poetry so strong.

What he knows is that hunger makes the wolf devour sheep, and hunger makes the man kill another for his money, and that people who end up on the gallows are not much different from those who die quietly in bed. He knows these things, intimately, and he says them. He knows that most whores are not glamorous but ugly, and he says that.

Villon doesn't know a damned thing about Professor Luftkopf's essay on Dr. Kleindenken's commentary on what Marx wrote to Engels in 1872. Or, if he does know, he doesn't care—any more than he cares about Aquinas' commentaries on Aristotle.

Villon is not really much like Tennessee Williams, and I really shouldn't have dragged him into this ar-

ticle, but the two men do have this thing in common, that they are not running for President. Arthur Miller, for instance, is a writer who is always running for President.

*Death of a Salesman* is to drama what an Eisenhower speech is to rhetoric. There is in it none of the really frightening, terrible, unspeakable quality that makes a great tragedy. Everybody knows why Willy Loman suffered and died; they knew before they went into the theatre.

*Death of a Salesman* offers, really, nothing but a bland uplift. It tells the Broadway audience what they want to hear, that the liberal left-wing philosophy of the '30s was true after all. It has all of the answers, so it doesn't really ask any of the questions.

The great writer creates situations so true and so urgently significant that he himself often doesn't "understand" them. I mean that very seriously. When Achilles suddenly weeps, in the great interview with Priam at the end of the *Iliad*, Homer is probably as surprised as the rest of us.

Nobody knows why Achilles wept, but we all know that he *must* have wept; just as we know that *Leah must have prayed* for the "poor hungry wretches" that night on the moor. A Homer or a Shakespeare creates such scenes without knowing why they must be just as they are; and we weep over them without knowing how we are sure that they are true.

*Suddenly, Last Summer* is this kind of a story. It has no "message," no religious or economic or psychological theory to tell, no relaxing answer to the unbearable tensions it creates. All it has is mystery and horror and a lyric poetry that is shot through with pain and wonder. All it has is the pulsating life of the naked soul of a man who is the greatest dramatic artist since Ibsen.

The story is really quite simple. A psychiatrist with an unpronounceable

is dressed in an idiotic costume and mask. Presiding over this nothingness is Bert Parks, with his usual depressing effervescence.

We'll pick a specific date—Friday night, April 1st—NBC, 9:30 E.S.T.—but you don't even have to watch!

Your job, then: the next day, write a letter complaining about the offensive thing that was said on the program. Use your own wording. *But don't mention anything specific.*

The sponsors are: Hazel Bishop (cosmetics), 445 Park Ave., N.Y.; handled by the Raymond Spector ad agency, same address. And the Block Drug Co. (Nytol, Green Mint, Poligrip), 257 Cornelison Ave., Jersey City, N. J.; handled by the Grey ad agency, 430 Park Ave., N. Y.

NBC is at 30 Rockefeller Plaza in New York.

Address your letter to the network, or to the program, or to the sponsor, or to the agency—it's up to you—use your imagination. Admittedly, this isn't very constructive. If you want to be constructive *too*, then the next time you see a mediocre program, write to the sponsor and tell him you won't use his product again unless he presents a better show.

But—hoaxwise—doesn't it give you a nice warm feeling inside just to picture all these TV officials, sponsor representatives and advertising men sitting around this screening room in their gray flannel ulcers, watching a kinescope of *Masquerade Party* and trying to find something offensive. . . .

It'll be kind of like a special projective test, what with a whole bunch of harried executives inadvertently revealing their inner conflicts to each other. This is the *Realist's* contribution to Group Therapy.

### BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

The following back issues of the *Realist* are available at 25¢ each; 5 for \$1; all 10 for \$2.

- #1: Articles on interfaith marriage, germ warfare, censorship; satires on telethons, Trujillo-land, clean H-bombs.
- #7: The Contraceptive Conflict, The New Fascism of American Labor, The Poem That Caused a Campus Controversy, Let Us Declare War on Puerto Rico, Birth Control in Puerto Rico, Psychological Aspects of Discouraging Contraception.
- #8: Articles on the semantics of 'God,' the fallacy of the beat generation, a stag-party raid; satires on beatnik language, the American Medical Association.
- #9: The Birth Control Pill, In Defense of the Beat Generation, The Unknown Artist, Vim Without Vigoro, The Trial of the Contraceptive Case.
- #10: Articles on a phony psychologist, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Norman Vincent Peale; satires on Mr. Clean, veterans' groups, fallout shelters.
- #11: The Bombing of a Buddhist Mission, Hitler's Disciples, Negative Thinking on conservatives and phallic worship, Santa Claus and the Nuremberg trials.
- #12: Articles on George Jean Nathan's conversion, sex education for modern liberal adults; a column of unintentional satire, a satirical children's primer on birth control.
- #13: Space-Theology and Other Misguided Missiles, Are Congressional Hearings Rigged?, Notes of a Skeptical Mystic, From the Sublime to the Ridiculous.
- #14: Articles on Alan Watts, Jack Paar, John Kennedy; satires on religio-politics, Dear Abby, business ethics.
- #15: An Impolite Interview With Lenny Bruce, Confessions of a Reformed Anti-Gun Crank, The Fine Art of Healing — Faithwise.

Polish name that he translates as "sugar" is offered a fantastic sum of money to perform a lobotomy upon a psychotic young girl. The woman who offers the money is Violet Venable, a "southern lady," mother of a recently dead poet, Sebastian Venable.

Dr. Sugar interviews the psychotic young girl, Cathy. He decides that he can cure her without resorting to lobotomy. Through narco-analysis he gradually learns what has driven Cathy into the hiding place we call insanity. Cathy, it seems, has seen Sebastian's death, and it was a gruesome one.

Sebastian was a homosexual who had used Cathy as "bait" to attract young men. He did this once too often, the last time on a tropical island where most of the population is living in that state of starvation which is so common in the world today—and which we rich Americans try so hard to blot out of our consciousness.

Sebastian "caught" several of the ragged, ugly, filthy, starving adolescent boys on this island, using Cathy as "bait." But, with cool selfishness, he used these boys and then carelessly tossed them aside. They were of primitive and ignorant people. They finally united against Sebastian, came for him in a mob, took him, murdered him . . . and devoured his body.

When Cathy is able to remember this and tell it to "Dr. Sugar" she is cured.

This is the whole story. But, of course, to tell it this way is to obliterate its significance. The gruesome act of cannibalism which forms the climax is only the strongest of a series of disturbing images which are the real elements of the dark poem Williams has constructed.

The hospital in which Dr. Sugar works is called *Lion's View*, for example.

## How Many Coffee Breaks?

Pacifist Ken Putnam placed an ad last month in the Haverford (Pa.) College News. It was a satire on militarism, and asked for applicants seeking jobs at GLEE (General Lethal Engineering Enterprises).

The ad invited applications from engineers, mathematicians and scientists to do research on "how to achieve greater genocidal efficiency per defense dollar" and on the development of "a clean, radical-specific, bubonic plague organism."

GLEE would provide, for the practical family man, "comfortable housing, conveniently located near church-

The island where Sebastian dies is called *Cabezo de Lobo* — head of a wolf.

Violet Venable has an insectivorous plant, given to her by Sebastian, and we see it being fed in the course of the story.

The dinosaurs, one character remarks (inaccurately, but with artistic meaning), perished because they were vegetarians — "the earth belongs to the carnivores."

Violet's garden has in it a statue of a winged skeleton, and this comes between her and Dr. Sugar at a significant moment.

Finally, the place where Sebastian is killed is "the ruins of an old temple," that looked "horrible . . . as if it had been the scene of terrible sacrificial rites."

Sebastian is, indeed, a sacrificial victim, and the winged skeleton reappears briefly in a surrealistic half-image on the screen just before the murder is consummated. Sebastian, actually, is a self-elected sacrifice, like Christ, testifying to a very non-Christian vision of God.

That Sebastian had had a "vision of God" we learn very early in the story. Violet tells us about it, in the longest and most poetic speech Tennessee Williams has ever written. Sebastian saw God in the Galapagos Islands at the breeding-time of the turtles.

Every year at this time the female turtles crawl out of the sea, laboriously lay their eggs, and, hideously tired, crawl weakly back into the sea. In a while the eggs hatch and the young come out and begin their run toward the sea.

But the great birds of the Galapagos know all about the breeding-time of the turtles and they wait for this moment every year. As the young turtles race toward the sea, the birds descend from the sky, thousands of them, in a great black cloud. They attack the infant turtles, turn them over, tear

es, psychiatrists and the FBI." Anyone wishing to join "an integrated team" working on all "aspects of mass intimidation" could send a "request for brochure, together with loyalty oath, celibacy oath, and sobriety oath."

Inducements included quick advancement when "older men retire to monasteries or lose security clearance," and exciting work on "entirely new concepts of mass devitalization."

Readers took the ad seriously, however, and the editor said he "was swamped with letters calling [it] childish, impractical, and unrealistic."

## Writers on a Hot Tin Roof

The job of making 'difficult' themes into popular film fare, states an article in *Life* magazine this month, "sometimes . . . calls for so much legerdemain on the part of the writer and director that the audience almost needs footnotes.

"In *Suddenly, Last Summer*, writers Tennessee Williams and Gore Vidal circle so far around the subject of boy-procuring, which is the crux of the plot, that only a truly alert moviegoer knows what is going on, and the son's death by cannibalism is almost equally beclouded. . . ."

their bellies and devour them.

Of the hundreds of turtles that hatch each year, only about one-tenth of one percent ever reach the sea. The rest are eaten.

When Sebastian saw this natural process he knew in a poetic flash that "God is cruel and creation and destruction are the same." The God he worshipped, the God to whom his poems are henceforth written, was the God of Melville's "shark massacre," the Hangman God of Joyce's *Ulysses*, the sadistic Nobodaddy of Blake's prophetic poems, the God of Greek tragedy, the God who, in *King Lear*, kills men for sport.

That Sebastian's vision of God was a true one is the dark, hidden fear of every religious person. The non-dualistic Orient accepts such a thought with equanimity: when Ramakrishna saw the goddess Kali give birth and then devour her own child, he took the vision as a true revelation of the oneness of creation and destruction.

To Buddhist Tibet, this is the unity of *yab* and *yum*; to Taoist China, the unity of *yin* and *yang*. The Occident perennially seeks to repress this thought, and perennially is haunted by half-awareness of it.

It is the symbolic meaning of the scar that bisects Ahab in *Moby Dick*, and of the half-obliterated body of "the Runner" in Faulkner's *Fable*. It recurs again and again in Euripides, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Joyce and dozens of others.

With this clue in mind we can see that the world of *Suddenly, Last Summer* does, indeed, belong to the carnivores.

Shortly after Sebastian's death, two loathsome relatives turn up to attempt to scavenge as much of his clothing and other possessions as they can get their hands on. (This type of emotional cannibalism also appears in Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.)

Sebastian's homosexuality, we eventually learn, had resulted from his mother's attempts to enforce the neurotic condition she calls "chastity" upon him. (This type of cannibalism by parents upon children is, of course,

the chief feature of organized religion, and the principle theme of most of Williams' works.)

Cannibalism is even a characteristic of societies, as well as individuals—the deplorable conditions of the hospital where Dr. Sugar treats Cathy are depicted unblinkingly by Williams; and anybody at all aware of the treatment of the psychotic in this great, rich nation knows that the best that most states do for these unfortunates is precisely as inadequate and horrible as this movie indicates. Some state hospitals are even worse than *Lion's View*.

The only literary work to confront these issues as boldly as *Suddenly, Last Summer* is Melville's *Moby Dick*. The classic description of a sea-battle—"men cannibally carving each other's live meat on deck" while the sharks "carve the dead meat" of the bodies thrown overboard—would be just the same if you turned it upside down and put the men in the water and the sharks on deck, "a shockingly sharkish business enough for all parties." Ishmael, reflecting on this, considers "the propriety of devil-worship," just as Williams' Sebastian does.

While the sharks eat a whale in the water, Stubb eats steak off the same whale in his cabin. "Go to the meat-market," Melville tells the reader: "Cannibal! Who isn't a cannibal?"

The all-time classic in this chain of thought also occurs in *Moby Dick*, in the great scene where the "grandfather whale" is harpooned and killed. Melville writes:

"From the points where the whale's eyes had once been, now protruded blind bulbs, horribly pitiable to see. But pity there was none. For all his old age, and his one arm, and his blind eyes, he must die the death and be murdered . . . to light the gay bridals of men, and also to illuminate the solemn churches that preach unconditional inoffensiveness by all to all."

We begin to realize that, once these issues are raised, it doesn't really matter whether a man "believes in God" or not. "God," after all, is just a short-hand symbol for our attitude toward the nature of the universe.

Most *soi-disant* "freethinkers" and "atheists" can't accept the notion that Ultimate Reality is really this shark-fish, anymore than religionists can accept it!

The *Book of Job* dares to raise the question—that is its eternal glory—but then hastily buries it under a cloud of meaningless rhetoric. Only the greatest works of art have dared to stare unblinkingly at the question without attempting to smooth it over

## Volunteers Wanted

. . . to help occasionally with filing, proofreading and stuff.

## A Streetcar Named Suppression

The national Legion of Decency reviews and classifies motion pictures, giving "no consideration to artistic, technical or dramatic values—only to moral content and Catholic standards of decency." Their ratings serve as guides to many ostensibly secular, self-appointed censors.

*Suddenly, Last Summer* is one of four movies given a special "separate classification" reserved for "certain films which, while not morally offensive, require some analysis and explanation as a protection to the uninformed against wrong interpretations and false conclusions."

The other three: *Anatomy of a Murder*, *The Case of Dr. Laurent* and, of all people, *Adam and Eve*.

or bury it—works like *Medea*, *King Lear*, *Moby Dick*, Beethoven's *Fifth*, Goya's *Saturn Devouring His Children* and *The Disasters of War*.

The theological writings of Kierkegaard and Tillich make honest attempts to confront this question; and I respect these two men more than I respect the banal flow of bilge that issues forth from the "philosophers" of the American Humanist Association.

(If the Reverend Schaefer wants to write to the *Realist* again and renew his charge that I am a theologian in disguise, I will admit that he's not completely wrong—but I'm only a theologian in the sense that Antonin Artaud was.)

But, is everything completely black and sharkish in Williams' view of the universe? Well, it has to be granted that it is not. Dr. Sugar does, finally, cure Cathy, through that discipline of unmitigated psychological honesty which is the essence of psychotherapy; and a universe in which such honesty and such cures are possible cannot be all bad.

Indeed, the East which accepts the unity of good and evil, *yin* and *yang*, with such equanimity, has never forgotten that if the evil is omnipresent, why, then, so must be the good.

And even Melville's vision—at the climax of *Moby Dick*, when the great Whale Armada comes before us—includes the significant detail that, with slaughter rampant all around them, the young whales at the center of the school are copulating and the mother whales are suckling their young.

"And thus," Melville writes, "surrounded by circle upon circle of consternations and affrights . . . the creatures of the center fearlessly indulge in peaceful concerns . . . yea, in dalliance and delight."

A few sentences later, Melville boldly declares the Oriental doctrine of the undefiled essence: ". . . and

## ALBERT ELLIS

(Continued from Cover)

In psychoanalysis, the most important procedures involve free association, dream interpretation, analysis of the patient's past history in minute detail, and analysis of the transference relationship between the patient and the analyst. The assumption is that if one gets the patient to understand how he got the way he is, somehow his newly found insight will—rather magically, I would say—clear everything up for him and he will marvelously change.

Another assumption is that if he works out various difficulties in his relationship with the analyst, he will thereby learn to work out similar difficulties in his relationships with

while planets of woe revolve around me, deep down and deep inland I still bathe in eternal joy."

But Melville was no fatuous optimist, as we have seen. At the end, Ahab and whale destroy each other and, in ironic last testimony to the unity of the opposites, Ishmael returns to life floating on a coffin.

And, similarly, Williams' Dr. Sugar, though he can cure one girl, has obviously no illusions about himself or his science. *The doctor has frightened eyes.* Montgomery Clift's sensitive portrayal brings this home to us in scene after scene, and two of the characters remark upon it.

Nietzsche once wrote: "When you gaze into the abyss, the abyss also gazes into you." And the mystic Eckhart is even more direct: "The eye with which I see God is the eye with which God sees me."

Sebastian Venable spoke of the young boys he preyed upon as "tasty" and "delicious"; he used them selfishly, then cast them aside. He could only know the carnivorousness of the creative principle so well if it was within himself—in the depths of his own perverse and poetic heart.

That is how Dr. Sugar understands his patients, also; and that is why he, too, has frightened eyes.

"All these people who go around protesting against the nuclear tests," a friend of mine once said to me—"they never have the guts to face the problem in the only place where it can be handled—by facing the thing in themselves, in all men, that wants the Bomb to go off."

This is a far cry from the fatuous liberalism and optimism of the old-fashioned "humanist" and "freethinker," but perhaps the *Realist* is sufficiently aware of 20th Century history and 20th Century psychology to allow it to be expressed by one Negative Thinker.

others.

When I was practicing classical analysis, and later when I practiced psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy, I found that some of the major analytic assumptions simply do not work; and many other practicing therapists have independently made the same discovery.

I found, for example, that you can give patients loads of insight and they still often do not get better. You can show them exactly how they got to be emotionally disturbed in the first place and again they don't significantly improve their feelings or their behavior.

And you can work on and work out all kinds of involved love-hate relationships between the patient and the analyst and, perversely enough, many patients still do not generalize their analytic transference teachings and sagely apply them to their outside relationships.

Because it was found, after several years of my practicing classical analysis and analytically oriented therapy, that many of the Freudian and neo-Freudian assumptions simply do not work, I gradually evolved the system of rational psychotherapy which I now employ and which is being increasingly employed by many other therapists throughout this country.

In the course of rational therapy, the focus is largely on what is happening to the patient during the present, and particularly on what he is telling himself about what is happening to him. His past history is briefly considered, and some important aspects of it may be related to his present behavior. But this is only a small part of the therapy.

The main thing is to show the patient that any so-called feeling or emotion that he now experiences is invariably preceded—usually the instant before he experienced this feeling—by a simple declarative sentence which he tells himself. Not, mind you, a symbolic, vague, or hazy idea or representation, but a simple declarative—or perhaps I had better say exclamatory—sentence which he consciously or unconsciously tells himself. And it is this sentence which causes and in a sense is his "emotion."

In rational psychotherapy, a considerable portion of the time—which on the whole tends to be much briefer than the time spent in psychoanalytic therapy—during the therapeutic sessions is spent in showing the patient what his own internalized sentences specifically are, how irrational they are when they lead to negative feelings, and how they can be clearly observed, parsed, challenged, questioned, and changed.

Rational therapy is probably the main brand of therapy, therefore, which most directly and forcibly induces people not merely to see and understand their own basic assumptions and self-assertions but ruthlessly to question and challenge these assumptions—to beat these assumptions over their goddam heads, until they no longer are self-defeatingly repeated by the patient.

Q. You've written about "the A-B-C of rational psychotherapy" — namely: that "A" is what a person perceives, "B" is what he tells himself about what he perceives—this is the simple declarative or exclamatory sentence you just spoke of—and "C" is the reaction of the person, not to "A" but to "B."

Now then, isn't it possible that after a while, part "B" becomes eliminated and that—more or less like a Pavlovian-type reaction—a person will react to "A" directly with "C," leaving out "B," the internalized sentence?

A. Do you mean when the person is sick or when he's well?

Q. When he's sick.

A. Yes, when the person is sick this is what he seems to be doing—automatically reacting to the stimulus "A" (which may be someone's calling him a nasty name, for instance) with his "conditioned" reaction, "C" (which may be his getting angry or terribly fearful).

Actually, however, no such simple "conditioning" is going on; and I do not think that Pavlov himself thought that it was. He developed a theory about what he called the secondary signaling reaction which implies that even in the case of his famous "conditioned" dogs, more is going on than at first meets the eye.

Thus, the dog initially salivates when he sees and smells the food. Then, when a bell is rung just before the food is placed before him, he becomes "conditioned" to respond to the bell and salivates as soon as he hears it, even before the food is placed before him. This looks, on the surface, like automatic "conditioning" — a kind of psychological magic.

Actually, however, the dog must be signaling himself something when he learns to connect the bell with the food; and he is therefore—at what I call point "B"—telling himself, in his own way, something about the bell and its connection with the food. After this self-signaling takes place—even though it may occur within a fraction of a second after he perceives the food—he salivates. It may look like it is the sound of the bell alone—at point "A"—which causes his salivation; but actually it is his

self-signaling, or his interpretation of the bell and its connection with the food; and this self-signaling takes place at point "B."

Q. And is this fact—that the "B" is still there—is this what allows you to be successful in rational therapy? If the "B" were gone, wouldn't you have as much difficulty as a psychoanalyst who finds what the original trauma was, but still doesn't do the patient much good?

A. Yes, if people still, at the time they came for therapy, did not give themselves a hard time at point "B," still did not catastrophize about or childishly rebel against what was happening to them at point "A," rational therapy would not be able to help them very much. Because that is what is done in rational therapy: attacking the patient's false interpretations and conclusions at point "B."

In addition, however, in rational therapy we insist that the patient not only recognize his self-defeating sentences at point "B" and actively challenge them by logically analyzing them, but we also often insist that he get into some kind of specific action—do some of the things he is afraid of and that he falsely believes would destroy him. We kick the patient off his ass into direct action, so that he thereby helps decondition himself, from both an ideological and a behavioral standpoint.

Q. Could you give a specific example of how that works?

A. Certainly. In the case of an individual who is terribly afraid, let us say, to ride in subways, a rational therapist would first get him to see that his fears consist of some sentences such as "I will suffocate if I ride in subways," or "If I go into the subway I may feel faint, and people will stare at me and pity me and that will be awful." The patient would then be shown how to challenge and contradict his own sentences: to ask himself "Why would it be so terrible if I feel faint in the subway and people stare at me?" or "How will I really suffocate in a subway train?"

In addition to this analysis and challenging of his own inner verbalizations, the patient would then be induced, as part of his therapeutic "homework," actually to take some subway rides; and, in the course of these rides, to observe his specific feelings and the sentences behind these feelings.

If necessary, he would be encouraged, persuaded, and practically pushed into going on subway rides time after time, until he became most clear as to what he was "bugging" himself about on such rides and until he became habituated to doing what he had previously been afraid to do.

His negative self-sentences, at point "B," would thereby be contradicted both in theory and in practice.

Q. Isn't there a basic flash, sort of, which represents a person's set of assumptions at point "B"—a basic flash of what you say is an internalized sentence?

A. Yes, sort of. The individual has a basic belief system, or system of values, in which he consciously or unconsciously strongly believes. And this belief system instantaneously flashes, if you want to use that term, into his head every time he contemplates a certain feared activity.

Thus, in the illustration just given, the individual who fears subway rides may have the basic philosophy, or set of beliefs, that it is terrible if people stare at him in a pitying manner. And this philosophy, this series of fundamental assumptions that he holds at point "B," induces him, in any given case where he contemplates taking a subway ride, to "flash" to himself "Oh, no! I couldn't do that!"—which is a logical deduction from his perfectly illogical or irrational premise—namely, that it is terrible if people stare at him in a pitying manner.

It is this irrational premise which must be clearly brought to awareness and persistently and strongly attacked.

Q. What do you think of conditioned reflex therapy?

A. On theoretical grounds, it has some points in its favor, since Salter, who originated this form of therapy, induces his patients to go out and act, for example, extrovertedly even though they may feel introverted. If he can actually get them to do this, they help propagandize themselves against their fears of introversion—since action is one of the very best forms of self-propagandization—and thus tend to overcome their fears.

Unfortunately, however, most patients will not go out and act against their fears unless, coextensively with asking them to do so, the therapist also concretely shows them how to depropagandize themselves ideologically by perceiving, challenging, and contradicting their own self-suggested nonsense. Conditioned reflex therapy, as far as I can make out, does not properly emphasize this ideological self-analysis and restructuring of the patient's philosophy; hence, its results tend to be quite limited.

Q. Would you say the same limitation applies to the "positive thinking" panacea?

A. Definitely, yes. Many people think that rational therapy is closely related to Emile Coué's autosuggestion or Norman Vincent Peale's positive thinking, but it is actually just

the reverse of these techniques in many ways. It is true that patients become emotionally disturbed largely because of their own negative thinking or autosuggestion, and that is why they sometimes snap out of their depressions and anxieties quite quickly—if temporarily—when they are induced to do some kind of positive thinking or autosuggestion.

But, accentuating the positive is itself a false system of belief, since there is no scientific truth to the statements that "Day by day in every way I'm getting better and better"—which was Coué's creed—or that "Because God loves you, you need have no fear of anybody or anything," which appears to be Norman Vincent Peale's latterday version of autosuggestion.

In fact, this kind of pollyannaism can be as pernicious as the negative claptrap which the patient is telling himself to bring about his neurotic condition.

In rational therapy, there is no emphasis on positive thinking or autosuggestion, but merely a thoroughgoing revealing and uprooting of the negative nonsense which the patient is endlessly retelling himself. Scientifically, this negative nonsense can be analyzed and refuted, since it is merely definitional in nature, and has no empirical evidence behind it.

As I tell my patients in the vernacular, their continually repeated negative thoughts are invariably bullshit; and if I can get them objectively to look at this crap they are telling themselves (for example, "I can't possibly ride in the subway," or "How awful it would be if So-and-so did not like me")—then they have no need for any grandiose views to the effect that God is on their side or that everything will happen for the best.

Another way of putting this is to say that no matter how often a person tells himself "Every day in every way I'm getting better and better" or "Jesus loves me, therefore I am saved," if he keeps saying to himself, much louder and more often, "I'm really a shit; I'm no fucking good; I'll never possibly get better," all the positive thinking in the world is not going to help him. Unless he is forcefully led to challenge and undermine his own negative thinking, as he is led to do in effective rational psychotherapy, he is still a gone goose.

Q. Incidentally, you may recall, a couple of issues back in the Realist—this was in regard to my satirical thing on the birth control primer and Bob (Wilson's) piece about the reaction to it—the Tolerant Pagan in his column said something to the effect that you can express any thought without being boorish. Why—by his

standards—do you deliberately make yourself out to be a boor?

A. Why should I live up to his, or for that matter any other individual's, standards? My own standard is that certain modes of expression, including the use of many of the famous or infamous four-letter words, are unusually appropriate, understandable, and effective under certain conditions and at these times they should be unhesitatingly used. Words such as fuck and shit are most incisive and expressive when properly employed.

Take, for example, the campaign which I have been waging, with remarkable lack of success, for many years, in favor of the proper usage of the word fuck. My premise is that sexual intercourse, copulation, fucking, or whatever you wish to call it, is normally, under almost all circumstances, a damned good thing. Therefore, we should rarely use it in a negative, condemnatory manner. Instead of denouncing someone by calling him "a fucking bastard" we should say, of course, that he is "an unfucking villain" (since bastard, too, is not necessarily a negative state and should not only be used pejoratively).

Q. Isn't the apparently inconsistent use of the word fuck due to the fact that it actually has two meanings? One, it means intercourse. The other, it means screw—you know, like in business—"I fucked him."

A. You're right. But since the word screw has the same two meanings, and since screwing is (in my unjaundiced view) equally enjoyable to fucking, I would want the usage to be "I unscrewed him," when we mean that I outwitted him or gave him a rough time.

Q. How about the famous Army saying, "Fuck all of them but six and save them for pallbearers." There, fuck means kill.

A. Yes, and it is wrongly used. It should be "Unfuck all of them but six." Lots of times these words are used correctly, as when you say, "I had a fucking good time." That's quite accurate, since fucking, as I said before, is a good thing; and a good thing leads to a good time. But by the same token you should say "I had an unfucking bad time."

Q. I can see this, you know?—In the subways, two or three centuries from now: "Unfuck you!" on the Hunt's Tomato posters, say.

A. Why not? It's fucking more logical that way, isn't it?

Q. Speaking of being logical—at what age can you begin to teach a child to control negative emotions in a logical, rational way?

A. It is not a matter of teaching a child, or an adult for that matter, how to control his emotions. It is,

rather, a matter of teaching a person philosophies of living different from the negative philosophies which now produce his disordered emotions; and, through teaching him these different philosophies, to help him change rather than to control his feelings.

As far as children are concerned, I do not usually see them as patients; but I recently saw an eight-year-old child and decided to try some rational therapeutic techniques with him, just to see how effective they might be. This child, a bright but very disturbed boy, stuttered quite badly and was not only upset because of the stuttering but because his friends and relatives kept teasing him about it.

I was able to show the boy that it really wasn't very important if others teased him and that he need not—at point "B"—upset himself about their teasing by telling himself how awful it was that they were doing it. I quoted him the same nursery rhyme that I often quote my adult patients—Sticks and stones / Will break your bones / But names will never hurt you — and I insisted that he need not be hurt by the teasing of others and that he could stop upsetting himself if he recognized that these others had their own problems and that their words really didn't matter very much.

It was amazing some of the things that this boy said back to me after the third session I had with him — showing how he had really understood what I said and that he was beginning to see that no, he need not be upset by the words and gestures of others, and that it really didn't matter that much when he was teased.

By the end of the fourth session, he was not only much less disturbed about being teased, but actually was stuttering a lot less and he has continued to make remarkable improvement, even though I have seen him only occasionally. Apparently, bright eight-year-olds can also benefit from rational psychotherapy — sometimes, in fact, more than their more difficult and prejudiced elders.

I've also tried rational methods with young adolescents in several instances and I have frequently been able to show them that, whether they like it or not, their parents are disturbed crackpots, that they don't have to take these parents too seriously (particularly when the parents are highly negative toward the children), and that they don't have to get upset just because the parents are disturbed.

Here again, I show these adolescents that it is not what happens to them at point "A" (their parents' negativism) which really hurts them but their own catastrophizing and rebellious sentences ("How could they do that to me?" "How terribly unfair

they are to me!" etc.) which they tell themselves at point "B" that really do the damage. When I get them to change their own thoughts and internalized sentences, these youngsters are able to live more peacefully with some of the most crackpotty parents you ever saw.

Q. Would you call this a form of preventive therapy?

A. Yes — this is, in fact, one of the main reasons why I am in the process of founding, in collaboration with Dr. Robert A. Harper and several other professional associates, an Institute for Rational Living, which is to have, as part of the Institute, a regular grade school. In this school, we would start children in kindergarten and, in addition to the regular school subjects, keep teaching them rational philosophies of living in the course of the regular curriculum.

There would be group discussions with all the children, at least once a week and perhaps more often, in the course of which they would bring up their problems of everyday living — including, as they grew older, their sex-love problems — and these would be discussed in much the same way as the problems of adults are now discussed in the group therapy sessions which I hold every week with some of my regular patients.

My hypothesis is that such children, by the time they completed grade school, would be significantly less emotionally disturbed than a control group of children who had not had the benefit of rational education.

Similarly, when the Institute for Rational Living gets going full blast, a group of children who are now attending public or private grade schools will be seen once or twice a week for group sessions; and a study will be made to see if they turn out to be significantly less disturbed than a control group of children who are attending the same kinds of school but are not having the benefits of rational group psychotherapy.

My bet is that the rationally-helped children, including those who come from disturbed homes, will develop considerably saner and more efficient techniques of handling their reality problems than will those who are not benefiting from rational therapy.

In many respects I am more interested in working with children in these ways than I am with adults, since I feel that it is far better to raise individuals so that they do not become seriously disturbed in the first place rather than trying to get them over their already well developed disturbances in the second place.

Q. I think that, in many ways, rational therapy is similar to General Semantics. A lot of what you tell

your patients to do — to determine the irrational interpretations which they communicate to themselves — is what Korzybski told people to do when he said they should externalize what's actually happening in terms of actual physical events rather than high abstractions about what they feel about their situations. Do you think your system is close to that of General Semantics?

A. I think that in theory we're very close. I had very little knowledge of the General Semantics people until I started using rational therapy. Then I was informed of what they were doing and began to subscribe to their Journal, Etc.; and I find that their views are much to my liking.

I have read Wendell Johnson and other leading semanticists and I haven't as yet found any of them who has thought out and applied a thoroughgoing system of psychotherapy based on their own principles. In fact, I would say that my own system of rational psychotherapy is pretty much the answer to much of General Semantics theory — which their group still largely theorizes about and which I, for one, actually practice.

Q. Well, Wendell Johnson is just one of the General Semanticists. There are others with different approaches.

A. Yes, I am sure there are. And much of what I do is implicit in the ideas of Korzybski and some of the other General Semanticists. But whereas they are somewhat vague and general, I really do get at my patients' specific irrational, over-generalized, and vague thinking; I practically force these patients to look at, to parse their own internalized sentences; and, what is more important, to change them for more efficient, more logical internalized sentences.

When I spoke about what I do to a group of the General Semantics people here in New York a few months ago, they were very cordial on the whole—much more cordial, indeed, than a group of my fellow psychologists often are. The psychologists are sometimes hostile to my theories because they tend to have highly biased, unscientific Freudian views; and many of them could benefit considerably from General Semantics teachings.

Q. There were Humanists, too, at the meeting of the General Semantics society which you addressed, weren't there?

A. Yes, the Humanists are one of the main groups which overlap to some extent with the General Semanticists. The Existentialists, too, or at least some of them, overlap with this kind of thinking and with major parts of my own views. They see, for example, that it is clearly a person's

philosophy of life, and not just the things that happen to him in the course of his life, which importantly affect his personality development.

But the Existentialist therapists, while clearly revealing to and analyzing for the patient his world view, and showing him how it relates to his emotional disturbances, are very namby-pamby when it comes to helping him change this view and thus undo his neurosis. Like the classical psychoanalysts, they apparently believe in the magic power of insight—while the rational therapist believes that self-understanding must be applied before it can be expected to lead to behavioral change.

Existentialist therapists usually forbear from attacking and undermining the patient's childish, irrational assumptions; and in this respect they are relatively ineffective in helping him.

Q. Doesn't the Adlerian school of therapy also closely overlap with rational therapy?

A. Yes. Adler, too, pointed out, and in fact was one of the very first to point out, that it is the individual's mode of life, or irrational goals, which induce him to become and to stay emotionally ill. And the Adlerians are more vigorous than most other therapists in attacking the patient's poor life plan.

But many Adlerians still tend to be more analytical than persuasive in their approach; and they overemphasize, in my opinion, social interest rather than enlightened self-interest as a worthwhile goal. The human individual can only be effectively interested in others after he has, out of pronounced self-interest, rid himself of his superfluous negative thinking—of his needless anxieties and hostilities.

Q. Dr. Russell Meyers, the neurosurgeon, has a theory he calls attitudinal sets. He says that people respond to stimuli with complete attitudinal sets, by which he means they have a sentence — one of your internalized sentences — and they respond in a physical reaction to which the whole organism responds, according to a pattern of attitudinal sets that they've learned as they've grown up.

You don't emphasize the bodily aspects as much as he does, I gather. You're just after the verbalization that people make inside themselves?

A. Yes, I mainly emphasize the individual's seeing and attacking his own self-verbalizations, because you never really change his bodily reactions unless you help him rid himself of these internalized verbalizations. But I also admit that bodily reactions, or motor behavior patterns, do not automatically disappear when one

faces and changes the internalized sentences, or philosophies of living, which cause and sustain these reactions. One still has to force oneself into physical counteractivity.

Thus, if one tends to become nauseated because one is telling oneself that a certain kind of food is disgusting, one will not automatically begin to like this food if one merely depropagandizes oneself in regard to its "disgusting" quality. One must also, on several occasions, while attacking one's own negative internalized sentences about the disgustingness of the food, force oneself to eat this "disgusting" food. As a result of both processes, self-depropagandization and motor counter-activity, one finally ceases to be nauseated.

In rational therapy, in other words, the main emphasis is often on counterattacking one's own self-verbalized attitudinal sets; but there is a strong subsidiary or concomitant emphasis on counterattacking motor behavior as well. I am not sure what Dr. Russell Meyers' position is in this connection.

Q. A psychiatrist told me once that the reason the Freudian method often doesn't work is because no abreaction occurs — the patient remembers, but he doesn't relive the experience—and he said that this type of emotional abreaction has to go along with the remembering.

A. I vigorously disagree. I think that what is normally called abreaction is often one of the greatest wastes of time in therapy, because merely reliving an original traumatic event may help the patient see better, get more significant insight in a sense, into his problems; but it still will not necessarily help him to attack his basic irrational philosophies of life which are actually causing his disturbance.

It must be remembered in this connection that it never was, in the first place, an original traumatic experience that made an individual disturbed, but his attitude toward this experience — at what I call point "B." Thus, if someone makes a public laughing stock of you when you are a child, it is not the experience itself, but your idea that it is horrible to be laughed at, which really upsets you at this time; and most of your so-called traumatic experience is really this idea.

Therefore, abreacting this experience many years later will hardly help you to change this idea, unless in the course of reliving the experience you also see that it is not horrible to be laughed at, and that neither originally nor in the present need you have got upset about this experience.

It must also be noted that many patients, when they relive past experiences, get so much satisfaction out of their abreacting — have such a dramatically good time in the process — that they actually get distracted from their real problem, which is to change their still existing irrational philosophies of life.

In a few cases, the patient not only abreacts but, in the course of doing so, somehow says to himself: "Jesus Christ, now I see clearly how I got upset about things in the past. But I don't have to be similarly upset now about the same kind of thing. Who the hell wants to go on acting in this childish way? I had damned well better stop this crap."

Under these circumstances, the patient may well get better—not because of his abreaction, but because of what he tells himself about his abreacting experience, and because of how he changes the ideas (with or without his therapist's help) that originally produced most of his trauma.

Q. I'd like to get your opinions on some other schools of therapy. What do you think of the Jungians?

A. On theoretical grounds, I would be opposed to much of Jung's writings, since he is quite mystical, believes in a racial unconscious, and often recommends religious observance to his patients. On the other hand, in his book on *The Practice of Psychotherapy* he frankly states that his own technique is a combination of the Freudian and Adlerian methods; and I get the impression that he is actually more Adlerian than Freudian when working with patients.

My main criticism of the Jungians is that when they do what I would call effective psychotherapy — which some of them certainly do — their practice does not really stem from their theory and they are being pragmatic rather than theoretical. Similarly, many so-called Freudians do effective therapy; but they invariably do so because, consciously or unconsciously, they are ignoring Freud's views on technique and are empirically discovering for themselves what the patient needs in order to help himself.

Whenever I address a group of psychotherapists, someone in the audience invariably arises to state that what I call rational therapy is pretty much what he does in his own practice. Yes, I reply; but I do it on the basis of my theory of rational therapy, while you do what you are doing on the basis of your own common sense and in spite of the therapeutic theory in which you say you believe.

To get back to the Jungians, Carl Jung should be given due credit for emphasizing the idea of individuation. And where Jungians attempt to get

their patients to be true individuals in their own rights, and not to give too much of a damn what others think of them and their individual tastes and preferences—there, I and the Jungians compatibly overlap.

Q. What do you think of Wilhelm Reich?

A. Do you mean as a sexual theorist or as a therapist?

Q. Well, Reich felt that if you had a so-called perfect orgasm, you could meet any problem—you could withstand any difficulty that arose during the day.

A. This particular Reichian theory, I am afraid, consists of some of the worst bullshit ever written, since no orgasm, perfect or otherwise, is really going to solve an individual's major personality difficulties. In fact, as I have said on several occasions, so-called sex problems are almost invariably the result rather than the cause of basic problems of thinking and emoting—of personality disorders.

Let me hasten to add, however, that Reich wrote an excellent book, called *The Sexual Revolution*, which is very liberal and enlightened and

REPORT OBSCENE  
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YOUR POSTMASTER  
(he thrives on it)

contains some good material. Unfortunately, he also wrote an incredibly bad book, *The Function of the Orgasm*, which has highly perfectionist notions of what a "normal" orgasm should be, and which has helped thousands of males and females to be more sexually and generally disturbed than they otherwise would be.

Reich's original idea of the individual's acquiring a character armor, and consequently also developing muscular and visceral tensions and armorings, has a certain measure of truth in it. He took this idea, however, to ridiculous extremes; and ended up by believing that if the therapist massages and manipulates the patient's bodily zones, he will break up the patient's armoring and thereby loosen his neurotic traits. More bullshit, I am afraid.

What the Reichians do not seem to understand is that if one massages and masturbates a patient — which is essentially what Reichian therapists will do if they strictly adhere to their own theory — even though one's physical manipulations are largely worthless, one is unwittingly depropagandizing the patient of some of his sexual puritanism while doing one's poking and massaging.

Thus, if John Jones irrationally thinks that sexual participation is a wicked business, and his Reichian

therapist (particularly if she is a female therapist) keeps pleasingly poking him often enough, Jones is quite likely to start saying to himself: "Well, what do you know! Sex can't be so wicked after all." And he may actually lose some of his inhibitions and unhinge some of his character armoring.

The question is, however: Is it really the Reichian pokings that are helping the patient or is it the new ideas that these pokings are giving him?

Q. But don't you do much of the same thing in your rational therapy, though without the aspect of positive transference which the Reichians or Freudians may employ? In other words, don't you induce your patients to get their sex relations outside of therapy, instead of during the therapeutic process?

A. Right. Quite honestly and openly, I frequently (though not always) will work with a sexually inhibited individual and will frankly induce him to try masturbating or having intercourse—outside the therapeutic relationship. And I induce him to have these relationships not because he loves or hates me, but because it is better for him to engage in such relationships, and because I am able to beat his negative, puritanical ideas over the head, so that he then has the freedom to enjoy himself sexually.

Reichians and other therapists often do the same thing as I do—but quite indirectly and inefficiently, I would say, and with a certain amount of attached hypocrisy. And hypocrisy, or lying to oneself, I need hardly remind you, is one of the very main cores of emotional disturbance.

Q. I can just see a patient of yours saying, in the afterglow, "Dr. Ellis would be so proud of me for doing this."

A. Yes, this actually happens at times — but in spite of, and not because of, what I do — because I am not at all interested in patients doing anything for me, but only for themselves; and I teach them that even when they do things to please me, they still haven't solved their own problems.

Once, for example, I saw a patient who had had five years of analytic therapy before I saw him and who wasn't getting far with his current analyst because when he went out with girls he never had the guts to put his arm around them, let alone make any other sexual passes. He came to me, after his analyst had thrown in the sponge, and said: "What shall I do?"

"Very simple," I replied. "You make a regular date with the girl you have been interested in for some time and take her to a movie. In the movie, you sit next to her—say,

on her right. Now, if necessary, you take your left hand in your right and you push—yes, push—it over to her.”

Said he: “You really mean that?”

“Absolutely. You’ve just got to stop your shilly-shalling and make some physical move toward her.”

“O.K.,” he rather reluctantly said. “I’ll try.”

So he called up his girlfriend, took her to a movie, and sat next to her for a half hour, debating as to whether or not he was going to make a move toward her.

Q. There was more drama going on in the audience than on the screen.

A. Yes, there certainly was. Finally, the patient said to himself—just as you predicted in your question—“Hell, I can’t go face Dr. Ellis if I don’t make some move here.” So he literally did what I had told him to do: took his left hand in his right hand and pushed it over to the girl. Whereupon she practically grabbed his hand off; and from that time on they got along physically as well as mentally.

Often, my patients tell me that when they are trying to do something that they are afraid of, and are having great difficulty doing it, they literally hear my voice saying, forcibly repeating: “Now what are you afraid of? What the fuck difference does it really make if you get rejected? What’s really going to happen to you that’s so terrible?” And so on. And they then go and do the things they’ve been terribly frightened of doing.

But this is only the beginning. Unless I can get these same patients, a little later on, to do things because they want to do them, and not because they want to please me or anyone else by doing them, and unless I can get them to heed their own internalized sentences, instead of responding to those I have given them, they will still go on believing the same hogwash that originally caused them to be emotionally disturbed, and they will not really get better.

Q. To go on with some of the other schools of therapy — what do you think of Erich Fromm?

A. Until recently, I have always been an enthusiastic reader of Fromm, since he has said some most intelligent things and has, for the most part, a similar attitude to loving and being loved that I have worked out in my own theorizing. In his latest works, however, particularly *The Art of Loving*, he goes a little too far and tends to help make people guilty if they’re not among the very loving.

Fromm especially exaggerates because he sees, truly, that intelligent human beings must do something or have some long-range, devoted interests outside themselves; but he seems

also to assume that this outside interest must consist of loving others. As I explain to my patients on many occasions, anyone with reasonably good grain cells is not likely to be very happy in life if he does not have some definite vital absorption. But absorption may mean being distinctly concerned about (a) people, or (b) things, or (c) ideas, or (d) any combination of (a), (b), or (c).

An outstanding creative artist or inventor may well go through his entire life never caring much for other human beings and may still be reasonably sane and emotionally healthy—as long as he is sufficiently devoted to whatever major field or project he enjoys.

Fromm, in recent years, seems to think that you must be devoted to another person to be a full person yourself, and this to me is a narrow view. It has a grain of solid truth in it, but it’s much too narrow.

Q. Well, Fromm also thinks that if you’re in love with just one person, there’s something wrong with you.

A. Yes, in love. In-lovedness he considers to be, as do I also to some extent, an obsessive-compulsive attachment which can often (though not always) be sick. But he has no objection, nor do I, to loving another.

Q. What distinction do you make between “loving” and being “in love”—and can they be simultaneous?

A. In some respects loving and being in love are aspects of the same basic emotion; but in other respects they are almost opposites. Being in love is often little more than a genteel term for having an obsessive-compulsive fixation on a member of the opposite sex; and this, of course, is something of a sickness.

Being in love, however, is statistically normal, since most of us are in the state one or more times during our lives; and it is a state that has distinct advantages, in that it is highly absorbing, often pleasurable, and sometimes positively ecstatic.

In-lovedness, moreover, usually lasts for only a relatively short period of time, rarely for more than a few years; while loving may go on indefinitely.

Loving, as Erich Fromm was one of the first clearly to point out, means being interested in another human being for his own sake and from his own frame of reference. Whereas the man who is violently in love usually demands return love, and often falls madly in love as a thinly veiled excuse for being able to demand reciprocation, the loving individual is not that interested in reciprocation.

Loving, in fact, often stems from personal strength—meaning, that the loving person doesn’t really care that much whether others love him and is therefore strong enough to be

truly interested in them. It is altruistic but not particularly self-sacrificing: since, at bottom, the loving individual enjoys and likes himself and has no need to sacrifice his own major interests to win the approval of others.

Q. Would you agree or disagree with the proposition that altruism is the highest form of selfishness?

A. I would agree if by altruism you mean interest in another person that basically stems from one’s own self-interest — which we often mistakenly label as “selfishness.” I usually put it this way: People who are truly self-interested, who live their lives on the supposition that the 70-odd years that they have on this earth is it, and they then are going to be dead as a duck for all eternity, and who therefore try to get as much of the things they want and as little of the things they don’t want during this relatively brief existence—these people are rational and sane.

As a result of their rationality, they will tend to have two corollaries to their existence:

First, they will normally avoid needlessly and deliberately harming others, since in so doing they would tend to invite recrimination and to create the kind of a world in which they themselves cannot fully flourish.

Secondly, they will be so unanxious and unhostile toward others that they will have little to do in life but to become vitally absorbed in some kind of major outside interests—and these interests may well include loving or being devoted to helping those who are younger or weaker or whom they find lovable.

In other words, the more one is determinedly self-interested in an intelligent and enlightened way, the more altruistic one will usually (though not always) tend to be. Self-interest, especially if it includes, as it logically must, a dearth of over-concern about what others think of one, logically leads to sincere interest in selected other persons, things, and ideas. At bottom, it is pro-altruistic.

(Continued next month)

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### The Canvas Caper

Shaving sandpaper is not the only use to which Rapid-Shave can be put.

Last month, in Salt Lake City, Utah, KSL-TV teamed up with an advertiser to present “the world’s cleanest wrestling match.”

They covered the ring of the Salt Lake Coliseum with 18 inches of Rapid-Shave, using up 360 spray cans.

Seven wrestlers had a slippery, sudsy free-for-all, splattering spectators despite a protective shield—borrowed, we assume, from Colgate-Palmolive’s Gardol commercials.

## ... ad nauseam

"Who knows? Your next promotion may well be due to the kind of shirts you buy now. . . ."

—from a Macy's Men's Store ad

"The women in Richard Nixon's life are quite a trio: One wants him to get a new job (but not the job you think), one wishes he were a baseball player, one overrules him on a vital domestic matter—who's to press his trousers!

"... an article called 'The Nixons at Home' is as full of surprises as anything you're likely to come across on the Republican's leading candidate. [We've] printed it because the personal lives of such public figures are of particular interest to women who may (as has been predicted) outnumber men at the polls in November. . . ."

—ad by the *Ladies' Home Journal*

Parliament boasts of "the world's most experienced filter people." And, of course, the filter people smoke cigarettes that think for themselves.

The Federal Trade Commission is experimenting this month with a form of bribery. In order to persuade firms to refrain from misleading advertising and other improper practices, the FTC is eliminating two-thirds of its press releases.

Formerly, a company charged with an FTC violation had to contend with three releases to the press: when a formal complaint was made; when the charges were answered; and when the firm consented not to engage in the activity.

Under the new method, the first two press releases will be dropped, in the hope that business concerns will discontinue "questionable practices" immediately.

Ads for Ballantine's English Gin feature an ink-blot illustration. Copy reads, "Imagine this splotch is blue . . . it represents the mood of the man who does not 'martini-it' with . . ." etc. The 'artist' actually signs the splotch, though. It is one in a series of splotches.

Newark, N. J. radio station WNTA's manager says: "One thing that the 'payola probe' has proved beyond

a doubt is that radio sells records. . . ." Accordingly, honest payola is now on the agenda. The station will sell the 4 to 5 p.m. time period, Monday thru Saturday, to record companies and distributors, and their records will be played for a price.

"Some birds eat 25% of their own weight every day, but Who Ever Heard of a Constipated Bird? No One! Constipation is unknown among birds outside of captivity. . . ."

—ad for Natulax laxative tablets

"Wonderful"—Darwin

"Miraculous"—Lineus

"Amazing"—Richards

"... Instructive for Children! Youngsters especially will enjoy growing these exotic plants. And if, somehow, you can convey the thought that many of life's most alluring enticements can prove to be traps, you will have made a truly priceless investment! . . ."

—ad for Venus Fly Trap

"Rock 'N' Roll Singers wanted. Experience & training not necessary. Call. . . ."

—ad in the *Village Voice*

Photograph of man in deep, worried thought. Ponders the text: "Who knows what goes on inside the soul of a man. . . ." Ad is for Fred Astaire Dance Studios. "Why," it asks, "hadn't he learned to dance?"

Radio station now gives its call letters thusly: "W.I.N.S.—loves you!"

If making capital out of dishonest advertising becomes a trend, we can soon expect the following TV commercial:

Announcer holding up two glasses of beer, one with sturdy head, other with weak head. "Notice how the head on Brand X is weakening, yet the head on Brand Y is still sturdy. Of course, the head on Brand Y is not really beer foam, it's soap suds. Yes, ladies, Panacea Detergent gives you sturdier soap suds than any other detergent. So, for a cleaner, whiter wash. . . ."

The Willows Maternity Sanitarium in Kansas City, Mo. caters, according to its stationery, to "the better class of unwed mother."

### SANDPAPER TEST

(Continued from Page 16)

an adjoining section of sandpaper, this time omitting the Rapid-Shave. It, too, was definitely smoother, although not as damp.

Next I attacked the coarse sandpaper. After twelve strokes, my razor was still jumping over the sandpaper like a bicycle over trolley tracks.

The results this time were less happy. There were bits of loosened sand on the paper, but not even Ted Pates & Company could call that sandpaper "shaved." Conclusion: Ra-

pid-Shave could do the job—if a power-grinder were substituted for a razor. (The blades I used, incidentally, are now worthless.)

Even though I was up to my ears in shaving cream by this time, I added one more control to the test: shaving with plain old-fashioned bar soap.

In both cases—fine and coarse sandpaper—soap worked just as well as Rapid-Shave.

A footnote to the Rapid-Shave Sandpaper Test:

The Colgate-Palmolive Co., which

might have thought it had nothing to gain from this inquiry, nevertheless *did* gain a customer. The writer's wife, who watched the Sandpaper Test, now uses Rapid-Shave. "It's like shaving with whipped cream," she said.

Which would seem to have completed the cycle, since the F.T.C. has also revealed that a certain TV commercial had used shaving cream on cake because it photographed prettier and held up better than the actual product.

Will the real Cake Frosting stand up, please. . . .

A Realist Exclusive:

## I Tried the Rapid-Shave Sandpaper Test

by Marvin Kitman

Some 7,000 teletype machines, property of United Press International, started clacking simultaneously in newspaper offices, radio and TV stations, and two or three pool halls across the nation one morning in January. Letter by letter, a message was spelled out:

THE COLGATE PALMOLIVE COMPANY TODAY INSISTED  
THAT ITS SHAVING CREAM CAN SHAVE SANDPAPER AS  
ADVERTISED. . . .

What once might have been a bald plug for a shaving cream had metamorphosed into solid news because a day earlier the Colgate-Palmolive (you'll wonder where the Peet went) Company had been hit in the face by a wet towel thrown by the Federal Trade Commission.

These soap-toothpaste-and-shave-accessories people were guilty of using a piece of plexiglass sprinkled with sand to simulate sandpaper in the company's ubiquitous—at the time—"Rapid-Shave Sandpaper Test" television commercial, it was revealed.

Although the F.T.C. did not recommend jail sentences—only that offenders cut that kind of stuff out—the principals worked themselves into a lather.

Said Colgate-Palmolive: "Sufficient research was conducted to prove beyond any doubt to the company and the advertising agency which created this commercial that sandpaper can be shaved as demonstrated."

Said the advertising agency, Ted Bates & Co., limiting itself to a \$23,574 full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*, as well as the *Wall Street Journal*: "We used an artifice no more deceptive than make-up...."

The ad blamed sandpaper's unphotogenic surface for the substitution. The sandpaper industry—for the moment looking like a cuckold in the shaving cream mess—has reportedly assigned its researchers to perfect a sandpaper that *can't* be shaved.

While big business and its spear-carriers were desperately trying to save face—that is, to regain cor-

porate image—what were consumers doing? For the most part, they either didn't know what all the fuss was about (telev viewers are notorious for not watching commercials), or else they were muttering into their beards that all advertising was crooked.

But, so weakened is the spirit of inquiry in the U. S. today, few went to the trouble of finding out where truth lay. As far as is known, I was the first kid on my block—if not the only one in the entire country—actually to *try* the Rapid-Shave Sandpaper Test.

Anarchus once said, "The market is the place set aside where men may deceive each other." A conviction that this need not be so if consumers would take commercials more seriously has frequently driven me to answer challenges like the Sandpaper Test.

My Luckies, for example, habitually fell apart in the "Tear and Compare Test" several seasons back. A grave little note to the American Tobacco Company always brought a carton of cigarettes as balm.

I ruined my first ball point pen, too, writing underwater in the bathtub. No restitution there, however.

On the face of it, the Sandpaper Test figured to be the easiest of all my laboratory tests. All I had to do, as the TV commercial said, was put shaving cream on sandpaper, and shave.

"What kind of sandpaper do you want?" my hardware salesman, a woman, asked. This was the first indica-

tion that there might be rough going ahead.

"The kind you use when you shave sandpaper," I replied.

She called the manager (and, for all I knew, the police). He, too, seemed to think I was pulling his beard. Without bothering to single out the precise kind of sandpaper Colgate-Palmolive used when it proved the test worked "beyond any doubt," I paid for two pieces and fled.

For the pubescent, or peachfuzz-type beard, I found that I had bought a standard-sized 9"x10" sheet of Imperial Flint Paper (fine), manufactured by Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co., whose slogan, recorded on the back of the sandpaper, is "Where Research Is the Key to Tomorrow"—a comforting thought when one's wife is shrieking, "You're out of your mind!"

For the man with heavy growth, or blackbeard, I had a similar sized sheet of Indian Head Flint Paper (coarse), made by the Carborundum Company. No slogan.

Various procedural questions arose as soon as I sat down with my can of Rapid-Shave, razor, blades and sandpaper. How much shaving cream does one put on sandpaper before shaving it? How long does he let it soak in? Does he rub it in? How many strokes of the razor are cricket in a sandpaper test?

Frequent screenings of the Rapid-Shave Sandpaper Test on TV over the months had left me ill-prepared, scientifically speaking. So I used my common sense and shaved the sandpaper as I would my face.

After I lathered up the *fine* sandpaper, held my breath, twisted my neck a little—and *shaved sandpaper* for the first time, ever—nothing significant seemed to be happening on the sandpaper. So I shaved it again. And again.

By the twelfth stroke (there didn't seem to be any point to quitting *earlier* in the game) I was ready to study the sandpaper: the shaved sandpaper was definitely milder—I mean smoother.

As a control, however, I also shaved  
(Continued on Page 15)

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