

P E A C E P L A N S No. 1279

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WHY I AM A RIGHT-WING ANARCHIST



by Ronald Weston (Robert Shea)

Recent events in France and elsewhere have brought anarchism into the forefront of public consciousness for the first time in several decades. To the radical young, anarchism is a serious alternative to Marxism; to professional demagogues like George Wallace, "anarchism" is a word that has even more power to frighten boobs than "communism", which is beginning to sound as quaint as Technocracy or the Single Tax panacea of yesteryear.

Nevertheless, as a Right-wing anarchist, I am sourly amused by the ignorance of anarchist history and theory shown by almost all commentators these days, both pro and con.

Most contemporary writers either think communist anarchism (Bakuninism) is the only form of anarchism; or, if they have heard of Right-wing (individualist) anarchism at all, they have the impression it is a freaky offshoot from the main stream.

Actually, individualist anarchism is the oldest form of anarchism, and, if there were such a thing as proprietorship in words, this school would have the clearest title to possession of the word "anarchy". Communist anarchism only arose after Bakunin attempted to synthesize the individualist anarchism of Proudhon with the socialism of Karl Marx.

Leaving aside forerunners and semi-anarchists—people like Gerald Winstanley, founder of the Digger movement in Seventeenth Century England, which had some anarchist ideas mixed in with non-anarchist ideas—the history of anarchism begins with the failure of a socialist experiment.

Robert Owen (who enunciated the labor theory of value and much else of socialist theory long before Karl Marx) founded a communist colony in Indiana in 1830. It was called, optimistically, New Harmony. It went the way of most communist experiments back in those innocent days before the doctrine that "the end justifies the means" was introduced into socialist theory. It collapsed in only a few months.

(The same happened in over one thousand communist colonies started in America in the Nineteenth Century—communism is an old American

tradition, although nobody has told that to HUAC yet. Communism only lasts for more than a few months when a band of fanatics at the top, armed with "persuasion per blunt instruments", force the rest of the group to continue the experiment after it has proven unsatisfactory.)

One of the idealists who participated in the New Harmony debacle was a manufacturer, musician, inventor, printer, teacher, et cetera from Massachusetts named Josiah Warren.

In 1832, Warren began publishing "The Peaceful Revolutionist"—the first X anarchist newspaper in the world. In it, he analyzed the causes of the failure of American democracy and predicted that the failure would grow steadily worse, as more and more wealth and power became centralized in fewer and fewer hands. He also analyzed the failure of New Harmony, and foresaw the totalitarian tendency that future socialist experiments would necessarily develop. And he offered, as an alternative, the system which has become known as Right-wing, or individualistic, or Jeffersonian, or Warrenite anarchism, sometimes also called voluntary socialism or mutualism.

In the next decade, two other original thinkers, independent of Warren and of each other, came to the same conclusions in Europe—P. J. Proudhon, author of "What Is Property?" and Max Stirner, author of "The Ego and His Own".

In the more-than-a-century since then, we Right-wing anarchists have watched, bemused and wry, as every form of coercive, and violent, and totalitarian, and paranoid type of regimentation has been tried, under the banner of "socialism" and "the welfare of the people", and we are more convinced than ever that the Socialist State is a worse menace to mankind than even the Capitalist State. A system that produces Stalins and Berias is even more perverted than a system that produces Nelson Rockefeller and LBJs. Socialism is the counter-revolution.

What is the Right-wing anarchist alternative to Socialism and Capitalism? In a sentence, you could say it's the position of the Hopi Indians, who have a proverb that says: "No man

should be compelled to do that which goes against his heart." Benjamin Tucker, the most gifted writer in the individualist-anarchist tradition, put it this way: "Will you allow any form of coercion of the non-coercive individual? If so, you are an anarchist; if not, you are an anarchist."

The principle form of coercion in history is slavery or selective service as we call it today: seizing the body of another human being outright, and compelling him, through threats against his life, to obey you. We Right-wing anarchists delight the Left, and annoy the Right, by opposing this form of aggression.

Next in order in our catalog of evils is taxation, or seizing part of the labor-product of another. Taxation is slavery on the installment plan. When the labor-product was seized directly—for example as recently as the last Depression, Government agents took crops and livestock when farmers didn't have the cash for taxes—it was physically obvious that taxation is modified slavery, taking part rather than all of what the victim has labored to produce. We Right-wing anarchists delight the Far Left and Far Right, and drive the Liberals to fury, by opposing this form of aggression, or highway robbery, also.

Next comes rent. The landlord, or lord-of-the-land, was originally a Feudal prince, a cousin or nephew of the king. Rent is the daughter of taxation. Since neither kings nor landlords can produce a valid Land Deed from God showing that He sold, or gave, the planet Earth to them, we Right-wing anarchists hold that the planet obviously belongs to everybody born on it. You don't have to buy your right to live on this planet from landlords any more than you have to buy it from kings, fuhrers, or presidents. Since the landlords' alleged "ownership" is a State-created fiction, backed up only by the guns of the State police, we Right-wing anarchists reject this form of aggression also, and our growing list of negatives now reads: no slavery (selective or otherwise); no taxation; no rent.

A more subtle form of aggression is hidden in State monetary policy, which places a ten-per-cent tax on auxiliary

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currencies. This is little-known, because the tax makes such currencies economically unfeasible, and nobody bothers to issue them. However, since we reject all taxes, we reject this tax, with interesting results. Proudhon and Warren both calculated that, in a system of competing currencies, issued by various consumer co-ops or workingman's credit unions, the interest rate would drop to less than half of one per cent.

Of course, you would rather borrow at approximately zero per cent than at the ten per cent and higher (sometimes much higher) which all but a few loans are financed at these days. But there is more to our rejection of government money than this. You pay interest every day even if you are not personally in debt. Every businessman adds his interest charges onto his sales price, in addition to his rent charge (if he has one) and his personal profit.

In a very real sense, the consumers of the country are paying all the rent and all the interest charges of the country. The businessmen are paying none.

So the total individualist-anarchist position is no slavery, no taxation, no rent, and no monopoly of the issue of currency.

In place of slavery, freedom.

In place of taxation and the monster State it creates, voluntary associations supported by dues. If the association gets sassy and starts acting like a State—fuck it. Stop paying your dues, join another voluntary association, and let the first one wither away from lack of support.

In place of rent, a voluntary covenant that he who occupies and uses a piece of earth is steward of that piece. ("He" can be a group if this is desirable; sometimes, we admit, it is.) If he does not occupy and use it, he cannot extort money from another person or group who will occupy and use it. He surrenders stewardship when he abandons occupancy and use.

In place of usury, credit unions which are also banks of issue for their membership.

Will people work for wages under such a system? Occasionally, perhaps—but in the dignified and pugnacious position of a sub-contractor not in the present demeaning and eunuchoid position of an employee.

Will huge fortunes like those of the Rockefellers or Morgans be possible? Not in the absence of interest and rent, which together make up the total mechanism of what Marx mystified and confused under the label "surplus value".

Will absolute equality between men be achieved? No, only relative equality. But absolute equality is obtainable only

at the end of a gun, which is a price we Right-wing anarchists don't care to pay.

Is there no place for the collectivist dream in this scheme of things? Sure—all can collectivize who will. In any society, some will have the child-like personality which flourishes best in a group together. As enemies of coercion, we would not contradict our own principles and force these people to become individualists. We merely ask the same civilized courtesy in return.

There are many other aspects to the Right-wing anarchist position—no censorship, no rules controlling what a man may eat or smoke or drink, no rules about who may mate with who or for how long, and, of course, no laws in the sense of decrees from above (contract into a voluntary association implying that the rules of that association will be obeyed while you are in it, but you retain the right to quit and join another association, or become a hermit, at any time)—but I have given the essence.

No literate person can claim that Right-wing anarchism is unworkable in principle; the American Indians have made it work for centuries. The anarchist, be he socialist or capitalist, is driven back to the argument that this kind of libertarianism can't work UNDER MODERN INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS.

Sorry: that refutation has become threadbare. Cybernetics is replacing the old mechanical technology and opening up the possibility of an industrial system that is self-regulating both in each part and as a whole. Such a decentralized technology is obviously more compatible with a cyber-biological self-regulating social system than it is with any authoritarian Socialist or Capitalist social system.

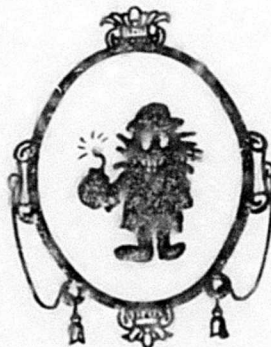
The whole science of cybernetics is a sophisticated mathematical theory of self-organizing and self-regulating systems.

Anarchism is not a revival of yesterday's romanticism, as Marxists charge; it is the shadow of tomorrow falling on our lives today.

Not all individualists share the errors remaining in this exposition on interest, rent & land reform. Monetary freedom can directly reduce interest only on turn-over credits. Many different land tenure systems have been proposed. Not all require the State. And all can peacefully & tolerantly compete with each other, based on respect for existing property rights & free contracts.

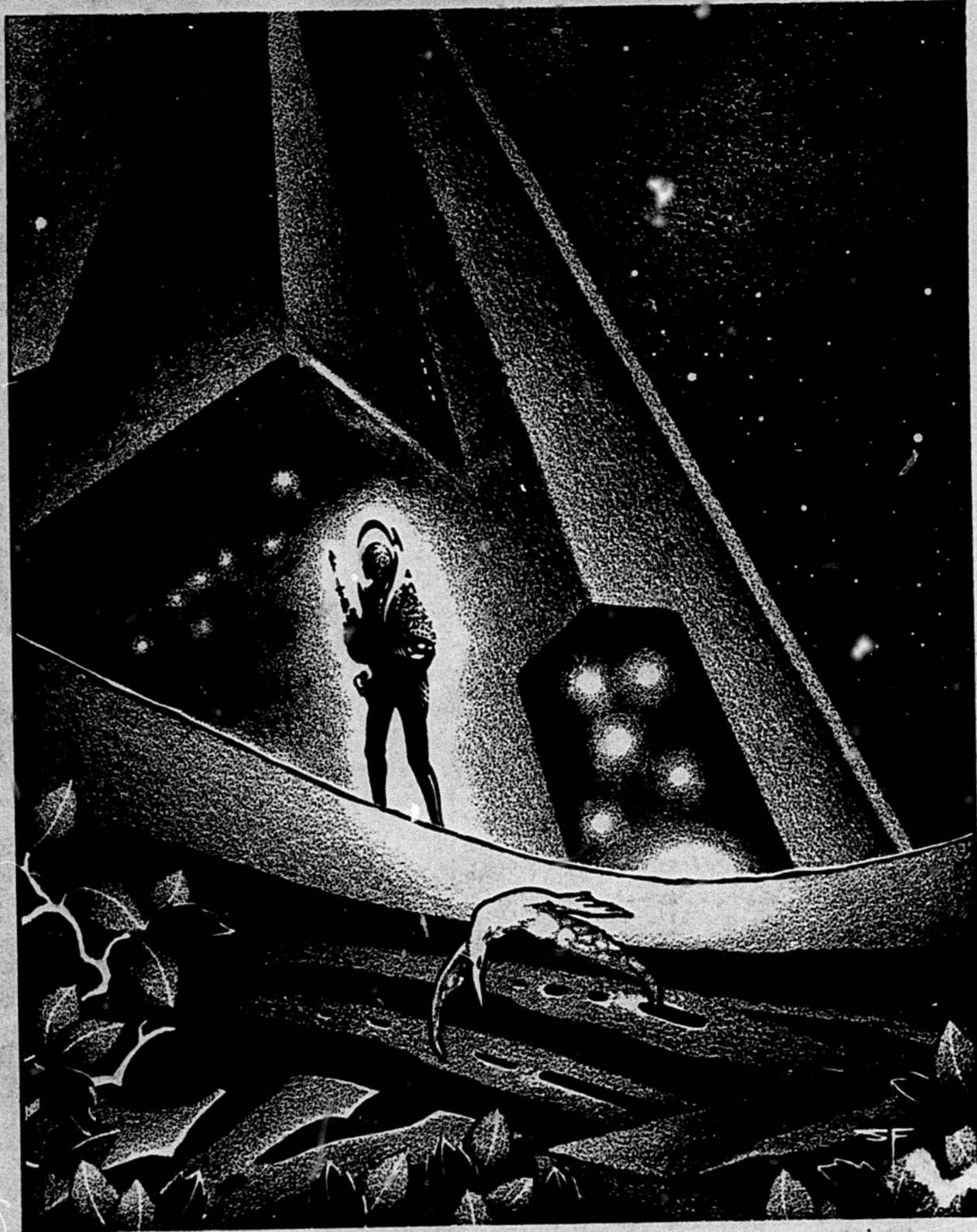
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Neal Wilgus

Interview with ROBERT SHEA



ONE: I know you're co-author with Robert Anton Wilson of ILLUMINATUS! and are presently a senior editor at Playboy and editor of your own anarchist journal, No Government--could you fill in some details on your life and present activities?

SHEA I lead an almost eerily quiet life in a small suburb of Chicago. We are not far from Waukegan, which produced Ray Bradbury and Jack Benny, and Chicago, of course, is where Buck Rogers originated, so it's not an alien place for me. I was born and brought up in New York, though, and as Nelson Algren wrote, nobody ever moves to Chicago except to make money. The day I was born--Valentine's Day, 1933--Herbert Hoover told Congress that gold was still a sound base for currency. This may have influenced some of the favorable references to gold in ILLUMINATUS! I remember the day the Hindenburg blew up and crashed--it was raining and I was riding a Fifth Avenue bus with my mother when

we heard the news. I also saw the world's first commercial television broadcast, the opening of the New York World's Fair. But this only gets us up to 1939, so maybe we better move on to the next question.

TWO: All right. Could you tell us something about the authors and ideas that have influenced you? Are you a long-time science fiction/fantasy fan? An HPL fan? A Neo-Pagan or occultist?

SHEA I am not now, nor have I ever been, a member of the Communist Party. Jesus, yes, I've been a science fiction fan as long as I can remember. I was reading Buck Rogers before I could read. At the age of 11 I graduated to magazine science fiction when my uncle Ernie bought me a copy of Captain Future. Soon I was reading all the science fiction mags. The first story in Astounding I read was Isaac Asimov's Dead Hand, part of the Foundation series, and it was a thrill to meet Isaac Asimov when I grew up and became a magazine editor. For some reason I've never cared as much for fantasy as I have for science fiction. I have a basically materialistic point of view that also seems to go back to my childhood, although I was raised as a Catholic (as was Wilson, by the way--I don't know if he mentioned that in your interview with him--but I think it's significant). I ceased to believe in magic while I was still a child, and I really don't enjoy a story--or I should say I enjoy a story less--when the basic premise seems, to me, impossible. There are exceptions, of course. I liked THE LORD OF THE RINGS, and I do accept stories about telepathy and teleportation and telekinesis and whatnot as long as these psionic powers are presented by the author as somehow "natural".

I've read very little H.P. Lovecraft. The use made in ILLUMINATUS! of Lovecraft's material is largely Wilson's contribution. I do like what I know of Lovecraft, but for some reason he's not one of those authors who has turned me on and made me want to read everything he's written.

I've pretty much ceased to believe in the supernatural and so am not into Neo-Paganism or the occult. I am very interested in Zen Buddhism. That isn't very fashionable any more, but I think most of the Americans who took up Zen in the 50s and 60s barely scratched the surface. Zen, as I understand it, doesn't involve any belief in the supernatural. It's more like a kind of psychotherapy. All religion is psychotherapy, I think. Human beings have been on this earth for four million years. During that time the human mind has developed into a very sensitive instrument. However, as life has been lived on this planet, that sensitive instrument has constantly been subjected to shock and pain. Something to stabilize and comfort the mind is a necessity. Thus, religion. But most religion is psychotherapy gone astray and instead of easing human misery has caused more of it. Mysticism as practiced in Zen seems to me to offer the benefits of a religion without the drawbacks. So I have been meditating every day for the past two years--the *zazen* method of meditation--counting exhalations up to ten and then starting over again. This has been a profound experience for me and one that has greatly enriched my life.

I am also an adherent of Discordianism, the worship of the goddess Discordia--known in Greek as Eris. We believe that the fundamental principle in the universe is chaos, and that there is so much chaos around somebody must have put it here. Trying to impose order on chaos is a disastrous error--it's one of the fundamental errors of the Illuminati. My chief duty as a Discordian, other than to praise the Goddess and her doings, is to partake of no hot dog buns.

THREE: Dell's marketing of ILLUMINATUS! as a trilogy rather than a one-volume novel and its hard-sell advertising of the books seem designed to make it a cult book like STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND and DUNE. Do you think the book should be promoted this way? Do you think it will succeed?

SHEA Actually, Dell didn't start advertising the book until it began to look like the first printing--without the help of advertising--was selling out. Anyway, promotion can only do so much for a book. It has to succeed, finally, because enough people read it and like it.

FOUR: I understand that 500 pages--close to 40 percent of the original manuscript--was cut from ILLUMINATUS! before it was published. Do you think this helped or hurt the novel?

SHEA The original manuscript was about 1200 typewritten pages, and we were asked to cut about 200 pages, which we did, screaming in agony all the while. This didn't do any mortal, structural damage to the novel. It did cost us some good writing and some funny bits. A lot of what was cut was occult in-

formation in the appendices. Also *When Atlantis Ruled the Earth* was originally a complete screenplay-within-a-novel. Now it's down to a summary.

FIVE: Any chance that the uncensored version will ever see print?

SHEA If the book catches on enough so that a hardcover or quality paperback publisher wants to produce the uncensored version as a service to literature. But printing and paper cost so much nowadays, it's doubtful anyone will want to take a chance. No, the more I think about it, the less likely it seems. X

SIX: Does it seem strange to you that Dell cut as much material as it did and then used larger print in THE GOLDEN APPLE (volume II) to fill it out to book length?

SHEA I didn't notice that till you called my attention to it. According to my calculations, they get 44 lines on a page in volumes I and III, but only 40 a page in volume II. If they had used the same type in that volume as they did in the other two, THE GOLDEN APPLE would have been about 250 pages long, instead of 272. But LEVIATHAN is only 253 pages, so it would seem to me that a 250-page volume would have been viable. Sure, it seems strange to me, but publishing is a strange business. It is almost impossible to be logical in publishing. It's been my observation that the more logical a publisher's decisions are, the more likely he or she is to succeed. Publishers who fail are logical only five percent of the time. The average publisher is logical 15 percent of the time and manages--just barely--to survive. The successful publisher manages to get the logic quotient up to around 25 percent. The other 75 percent is spent acting like a witch doctor or just ignoring the business altogether.

SEVEN: Since you and Wilson were both editors at Playboy at the time ILLUMINATUS! was written, I'm wondering why Playboy Press didn't publish it. Or was that too close to home?

SHEA At the time we got the idea for ILLUMINATUS! Playboy Press wasn't publishing original novels, and a very good friend of mine, Bob Abel, was an editor at Dell. I was looking for an opportunity to write paperback fiction, so I wrote Bob a letter briefly sketching about half a dozen ideas for books, of which a book about the Bavarian Illuminati was one. He thought that one had the most possibilities, so Wilson and I did three sample chapters and an outline and sent it in. On the strength of that we got a contract and began writing the book.

EIGHT: ILLUMINATUS! touches frequently on anarchism and you edit an anarchist magazine. I'm curious about your ideas on the subject. Does the right-libertarian vs. left-anarchist spectrum seem important to you?

SHEA The anarchist philosopher with whose views I most agree is Max Stirner. He said that the individual is all there is, and any claim that anything is bigger or more important than the individual is sheer bullshit. I believe that the cause of most human misery is people's efforts to impose the rule of state and organized religion on one another. A society without coercion, in which individuals were guided by their own conception of their own best interests, would be a happy, harmonious society. I would like to abolish government, and I define government as any attempt to use force to impose the will of one person or group of people on others. When an armed robber takes your watch, he is doing the same thing a government does when it collects taxes. The fact that the government claims to be doing the will of the majority doesn't give it any special rights in my book.

I'm not a pacifist, but I think that anarchists should not talk about armed revolutions, because such a revolution would be in effect, a government--imposing its will on others by force--regardless of whether it called itself anarchist. So anarchists should work toward a society without government by means of non-violent resistance and education.

As for the right vs. left split in anarchism, I think those people are wasting too much time arguing about economic arrangements. After the state is abolished, people will operate as capitalists or collectivists, whatever suits them best. The important thing, though, is to get rid of government. First things first.

NINE: ILLUMINATUS! is dedicated to Gregory Hill and Kerry Thornley, and we learn in Appendix Two (volume III) that Thornley was a friend of Lee Harvey Oswald and author of an epic poem titled Illuminati Lady. Would you tell us more about Hill and Thornley? Has Illuminati Lady ever been published?

SHEA They are two of the most creative people I know. They invented the religion of Discordianism after having undergone a visionary experience in a bowling alley in Whittier, California, which also happens to be the birthplace of Richard M. Nixon. Subsequently, or shortly thereafter, they discovered the existence of the Bavarian Illuminati and what they had to say about Discordianism got all mixed up with what they said about the Illuminati. They were in correspondence with Wilson and me and turned us on to all these ideas. Because they introduced us to the subject of the book, is why we dedicated Volume I, THE GOLDEN APPLE, to them. The golden apple refers to the apple with the word *Kallisti*--"to the prettiest one"--engraved on it, which Eris tossed in among the gods and goddesses while they were partying on Mount Olympus. This led to the Trojan War.

Anyway, Kerry Thornley was in the Marines--I don't have the exact dates in front of me--and met and conversed with Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald was a Communist and Thornley was an Objectivist. By the time they parted company, Oswald wasn't speaking to Thornley. Kerry was quite shocked when his old barracks buddy was arrested for the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He testified before the Warren Commission and wrote a book and some articles about Oswald. Subsequently he went to New Orleans to try to help the Garrison investigation, but when he wouldn't say what Garrison's people wanted him to say--that is, help them nail the people they had already decided to nail--he found himself named one of the assassination conspirators. It was a real nightmare and he's very fortunate that Garrison's efforts came to nothing. Kerry continues to write a bit, and his long epic poem *Illuminati Lady* was published in installments in *The St. John's Bread Wednesday Messenger*, a literary magazine out of Venice, California. Kerry is still deeply concerned about the Kennedy assassination and has a new theory about the mastermind behind it.

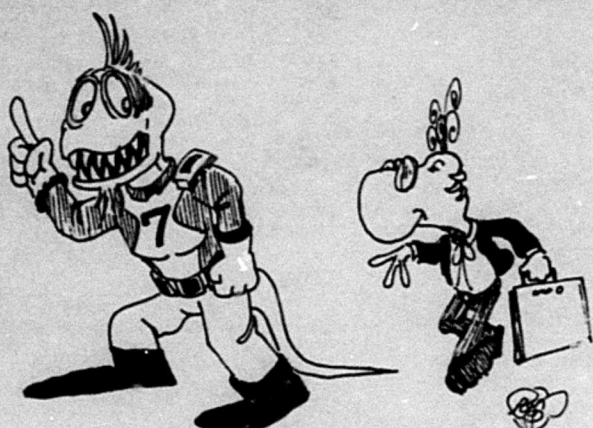
Gregory Hill and Kerry were high school friends. Greg is by vocation an artist, and one of his works of art is the Paratheoanemetamystikhod of Eris Esoteric--P.O.E.E., which is his personal movement within the Discordian Society. The Discordian Society is for everybody, but P.O.E.E. is--or was--Greg's personal voice. Greg has lived in California most of his life. He recently spent a couple of years in New York, where he experimented with various new forms of conceptual art. Conceptual art is where the real creation is the idea or the process it generates rather than anything concrete or technical. A religion like P.O.E.E. is conceptual art; a correspondence or a newsletter can be conceptual art; a character can be conceptual art. As examples of the latter, Greg has created a number of personae for himself who sign his various writings and bulletins--Malaclypse the Younger, Doctor Ignotum P. Ignotus, Reverend Doctor Occupant and Mad Malik. Greg has now returned to California. He stopped off at my place for a couple of days and we developed a new Discordian Society information leaflet, for those who find the address of Green and Pleasant Press in Volume III of ILLUMINATUS! and write for information.

TEN: Bob Wilson said that the *When-Atlantis-Ruled-the-Earth* sections of ILLUMINATUS! were 80 percent Shea--are you a long-time Atlantis buff? Do you think an Atlantis-type civilization in prehistory very likely?

SHEA For a while, as a kid, I was fascinated by the idea of Atlantis. I even kind of liked the Shaver Mystery stories in the old *Amazing*, edited by Ray Palmer. Atlantis is one of those mythological entities like the Illuminati--it's a kind of esoteric, colorful, dramatic explanation for how things got to be the way they are today. Actually, the archeological and geological evidence, as far as I know, indicates that no such place ever existed. I used it in ILLUMINATUS! to present my own pet version of the *Genesis* story. The Atlanteans are a kind of mythical golden age of humanity, living in peace, prosperity, freedom and happiness. They have a highly developed technology, no morality and no government. Then Grad introduces the idea of good and evil and that leads to people using force on one another, and the whole Atlantean society collapses. The original sin, you see, was the invention of the idea of sin.

ELEVEN: How about the theories Erich Von Daniken has made popular in recent years? Do you think extraterrestrial "ancient astronauts" might have once colonized earth?

SHEA Von Daniken's notions only satisfy people who have a very low opinion of humanity. He takes a primitive carving which distorts human features for artistic purposes and says, "Look, there are no people like this on Earth; therefore this must be a portrait of an extraterrestrial who landed here." This denies that the primitive artist had the capacity to invent forms; he must have copied exactly what he saw. And Von Daniken takes some marvelous piece of ancient architecture and says, "Man



couldn't have done this by himself. Ancient astronauts must have done it." Finally, he gets to the point where he no longer believes that any of human civilization was created by people like ourselves. All the basic inventions were given to us by higher intelligences. Von Daniken is just catering to the wish some people have to grovel before imagined higher powers. ILLUMINATUS! was written, in part, to make fun of such wishes.

TWELVE: *While reading ILLUMINATUS! I checked a map and was surprised to find there really is an island name Fernando Poo--was there really an historic explorer who discovered it in 1472 as Simon Moon implied?*

SHEA Yep, and his name was Fernando Poo. You can find him in the ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANICA, along with the Illuminati. When he discovered the island he called it Formosa, which means "beautiful" in Portuguese. Later the Portuguese named it after him. His last name is often spelled Po, rather than Poo, but we like Poo better, and it is an acceptable alternative. The incorporation of Fernando Poo into ILLUMINATUS! is a good example of how we worked. A friend of mine, Marlon Shea, no relation, told me one of her kids had found an island called Fernando Poo in his geography studies. I said, "Hey we can use that"--we'd already started work on ILLUMINATUS! Soon Fernando Poo had become an integral part of the structure of the novel. We were always keeping ourselves open to vagrant, random discoveries like that. Art is stumbled over, as much as it is created. The recent international crisis over Angola just shows you how dumb governments are--they can't come up with a script any better than what a couple of nutty satirists did years before in a science fiction novel.

THIRTEEN: *Do you have an strong an interest as Wilson does in such things as immortality, colonization of space or Timothy Leary's mind-expanding Neurologic and Hedonic Engineering?*

SHEA In 1960 Eisenhower and Nixon were saying that space exploration was crazy Buck Rogers stuff. Then Kennedy made it a national goal to put a man on the moon, and nine years later we put a man on the moon. What this proves is that technology doesn't just happen. It has to be imagined--perhaps by people who have no idea how to do it--and promoted, and the particular form it takes has to be foreseen and shaped. Unquestionably our society is developing the means to send ever-larger numbers of human beings into space, it's finding ways to extend human life expectancy, and it's developing a technology for controlling the human mind. Wilson and Leary are putting forward a particularly sane, humane, libertarian vision of how to develop these things so that they will enhance human life rather than become new ways of oppressing us. I think this is necessary and I take a friendly interest in it. But my personal priorities are such that I'm not actively involved.

FOURTEEN: *Are you really a time-traveler from the 23rd century as Wilson has implied?*

SHEA Yes--the 23rd century B.C.

FIFTEEN: *What's your view of the Bavarian Illuminati and of conspiracies in general?*

SHEA I thought you'd never ask. Since the publication of the

book Wilson and I have been billed as experts on conspiracy and ILLUMINATUS! as a conspiracy book. Actually, ILLUMINATUS! began with the idea of satirizing conspiracy mania. We were amused by the way the John Birch Society and other anti-Communists were finding Reds behind every tree, and we were even more amused when we learned--through Gregory and Kerry--that the right wingers of this country were scaring themselves with the notion of a super-conspiracy behind all the other conspiracies. Our thought was, "We'll write a book about it and blow their minds." There is also, of course, a conspiratorial mania on the left which is not quite as grandiose. There's a man in Chicago who keeps charging that the Chicago Seven were agent provocateurs sent in 1968 by the CIA to disrupt the Democratic convention in Chicago. There are other left-wingers who believe that Nelson Rockefeller really runs the country.

From time to time it turns out that somebody's conspiracy theory is true. I used to laugh at left-wingers who claimed the CIA and the FBI were spying on all of us. If somebody in the early 60s told me the CIA and the Mafia were conspiring to have Castro assassinated with the tacit approval of the President of the U.S., I would have hooted. But there's a qualitative difference between investigating allegations of individual conspiracies and conspiracy theory. The true paranoid conspiracy theory ties things together until everything happens as a result of one gigantic conspiracy. This is the state of mind we were trying to satirize in ILLUMINATUS! Even the bad weather in Chicago is the work of the Bavarian Illuminati. Our entire civilization is the product of a conspiracy.

The thing is, of course, that conspiracy mythology is a cop-out. It's a way of evading our responsibility for history. We, all of us, the people, if you will, have made our world the way it is. If we don't like it but don't do anything about it, it will stay that way and we're responsible for that, too. A conspiracy didn't get us into World War II. The people of the U.S., most of them, wanted to fight the Germans and the Japanese. Most people supported American intervention in Vietnam. When they stopped supporting, the U.S. got out. To realize that you can affect historical events and that you, as an individual, are responsible for what happens is the opposite of conspiracy mythologizing. The big historical events are the result of countless individual decisions, and it is those individuals, not some conspiracy, who are responsible for the course of history.

SIXTEEN: *Do you think the frank sex and the unconventional shifting of viewpoints in ILLUMINATUS! will alienate a significant part of your audience--or is this where readers' heads are presently at?*

SHEA Of all the reviews I've seen--and there have been over a dozen at this point--not one has complained about all the sex scenes in ILLUMINATUS! Most haven't even mentioned that there is a lot of explicit sex. This leads me to conclude that people who read books regularly--that is, book reviewers--tend to take such things for granted. On the other hand, many people have mentioned the shifts in time, space and viewpoint--some admiringly, some to complain. The structure and texture of the book certainly makes it more difficult to read. But they also will help the conscientious reader to get a gut-level realization of the ultimate truth behind space, time and the human personality. Readers who have kept up with--and experienced--the discoveries of the last decade or so in psychology, philosophy and religion will enjoy the way the book is put together.

SEVENTEEN: *How is ILLUMINATUS! doing so far? Are you satisfied with its critical reception and sales?*

SHEA Delighted. There was always the possibility that it might sink without a trace. I knew we had written a good book, but would anybody pay attention? Original paperback fiction gets virtually no reviews, as a rule. But ILLUMINATUS! has had at least a dozen reviews, all of them excellent. One of the things that still amazes me has been the positive enthusiasm of everybody who reads this book. The one thing I'm sorry about is that none of the professional science fiction magazines such as *Galaxy*, *Analog* or *F&SF* has vouchsafed to review ILLUMINATUS! Granted, the novel isn't simply science fiction. Still, it is science fiction among other things and I'm sure it will have enormous appeal to people who read science fiction. There is a certain insularity in the professional science fiction world which is detrimental to the genre. As for sales, Dell tells me they've gone back to a second printing, which means it's doing pretty good. Yes, I'm happy.

EIGHTEEN: *Have you ever seen a snord?*

SHEA One just won the Republican primary in New Hampshire.

NINETEEN: *Wilson says ILLUMINATUS! was communicated to you telepathically by intelligent beings from Sirius, the Dog Star. What's your story?*

SHEA It frequently helps an artist to imagine that the work he is creating has a separate life of its own and is being transmitted to him. I found over and over again that a certain alert passivity, a receptiveness, was valuable in writing ILLUMINATUS! Much of the effort of creation should take place unconsciously. Nabokov says he sees his novels as already existing in another universe, and he has to reconstruct them in his universe by putting together the fragments that come into his mind. Stravinsky said, "I am the vessel through which *The Rite of Spring* passed." Keats said that an imaginative writer needs "negative capability," which is the ability to remain comfortably in a state of "uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason." Charles Rycroft, a British psychoanalyst, wrote an essay on the imagination in which he says:

I must, however, state my impression, my conviction, that people who possess negative capability to a high degree seem not to conceive of themselves as opposed to an environment which they have to master by "irritable reaching after fact and reason," but rather as a part of the universe which is capable of absorbing the whole into itself and then re-creating it by distillation in imaginative works; in other and psychoanalytical words, their relationship to "external reality" remains identificatory, without any drawing of impermeable ego boundaries between themselves and other people and other things.

TWENTY: *Are you a party to or supporter of Wilson's suit against the Neo-American Church for \$1,000,000? What's your reaction to Art Klep's accusation in a recent High Times that ILLUMINATUS! was really written by Tim Leary and only credited to you and Wilson in order to avoid Leary's contractual obligations?*

SHEA Whenever I am attacked--verbally at least--I always remember three things: The Buddha's maxim that nothing bounces back faster than hostility. King Charles II's saying, "The more you stir a turd, the more it stinks." And the sad fact that Alfred Kinsey wasted years and shortened his life by taking seriously and attempting to respond to all the vicious attacks on him that followed publication of the Kinsey reports. Nevertheless, Wilson and I devoted years of our lives to ILLUMINATUS! and are rather proud of the result, and it hurts to have some asshole come along and fabricate--out of an old grudge against Timothy Leary--the charge that we didn't write it. Wilson's reaction, treating the accusation as if it were worthy of attention, is most kindly. My own reaction is to be less kind, and ignore the whole business.

TWENTY-ONE: *What are your own publishing plans? Any new books coming up?*

SHEA I'm working, very slowly, on a novel. It's not like ILLUMINATUS! It's about a young man who slowly goes crazy in a typical American big city and commits acts of violence. In other words, the archetypal story of our times. I'm also trying to do a non-fiction book which will be a kind of general statement of the philosophy I've arrived at after 43 years of knocking around on this planet. The novel is about twenty percent finished. The other exists in the form of enough notes to fill a book, but they have to be pulled together. I'm also doing articles, essays, book reviews, things like that. If you'd like to know what I'd like to be when I grow up, I'll tell you. I'd like to be an old-fashioned man of letters, the sort of writer who was common in the Nineteenth Century but who has all but disappeared in our own age of excessive specialization. The man of letters felt comfortable turning his hand to anything--fiction or non-fiction--articles, essays, poetry, short stories, novels, plays, pamphlets. Just a master of the craft of writing George Orwell and Aldous Huxley are examples. I think you could call Wilson a man of letters.

TWENTY-TWO: *Will 1976 be the year we finally immanentize the Eschaton?*

SHEA It could be, if everybody reads ILLUMINATUS! and takes it to heart. The Eschaton is always immanent. It's just a matter of seeing it.

TWENTY-THREE: *Who really did kill JFK?*

SHEA We all did.

--- Neal Wilgus

THE RILL BECOMES A RIVER

The burning sun arises: the cloudy east
Is drenched with red, and now the outlines grow
Of evergreens upon this mountain's side.
Above, upon the crest, the mount's snow peaked,
And melted snow there forms a gliding stream
Which lightning runs and drops its course 'round rock,
O'er stony ground.

The shallow stream is soon
Descended to a mountain valley, and slows
To meandering across a woodland meadow.
Westward flowing, westward drifting, and next
It disappears beneath some trees, which throw
Dark morning shadows on the crystal surface;
And here it is the does and antlered stags
Come oft to drink, the shaggy bear to fish.
And in these wilds, by Indian hunted once,
The stream is joined by several streams, some clear,
Some stained with the various soils they've rippled o'er--
Then in this one they mix their varied hues,
Losing their separate names.

But now the wood
Is ended, and now the stream runs down a slope
Into a shady pond, whence come in spring
And fall the mallards in their yearly flights,
And hunters too at times have come. But now
Is not the season: the air is not so crisp
As fall, and not so full of youth as spring.
Beyond the pond the stream again renews
And jumps its way adown a sharp incline
In lesser falls and minor cataracts,
Until the final plain is reached. And here
It spreads and smooths its easeful course, it flows
In quiet ripples through the fruitful land
Of fields and farms, of orchards growing strong
And fair beneath the sun. No more the tracks
Of forest beasts are on its banks, no more
The bear and deer, but brown-faced cattle come
To drink, and children sail their home-made boats
Or race along its sides. It's morning yet,
The men are out at work, the women wash,
Or sit upon their steps and mend. The sun
Is but a quarter risen across the sky.

This minor river--for into this it's grown--
Is next asunder split to pass around
A little, single isle of roses tossed
Into its midst--an isle o'ergrown with briars,
Which, like the sun arising behind the hill,
Reddens the eye; but this is quickly passed,
Forgotten, as beyond the isle rejoins
The river into one, and drifts its course
For many miles; it passes through some towns
With high old elms and dusty streets, through fields
Of wheat and corn, murmuring with the sound
Of insects flitting above the seldom splash
Of fish or frog, and with the quiet lisp
Of rustling grasses on its banks. At times
Railroad or highway bridges cross on piles;
A factory or two pollute with wastes
The waters, no longer pure as once they were,
But greater, joined by many streams.

At last
The coast is reached, and here a city stands:
Broad, fair, and high the buildings rise in rank
And tier of brick and glass into the clouds;
A city darkened once with factory smoke
And soot, now partially cleansed and purified;
A harbor city, with cabled bridges slung
Across the river, now pouring its mighty force
Unto the mightier sea: and now the docks
Where ocean tankers port and wait, and now
The sea, the sun-flecked sea, the mighty sea:
The river's found its goal, is lost within
These tidal waters: behind it now the hum
Of insects and of towns, behind it too
The alabaster city; in front, all lands
Await its washing on their distant shores.
The sun looks down from high above: it's noon.

--- J. R. Christopher

0081

Abolish obscenity laws

By Robert Shea*

"The fundamental freedoms of speech and press have contributed greatly to the development and well-being of our free society and are indispensable to its continued growth. Ceaseless vigilance is the watchword to prevent their erosion by Congress or by the States." This well states the widely-held view that freedom of expression is the single value most vital to this free democratic society. Ironically, the statement comes from Justice William J. Brennan's opinion in *Roth v. United States*, upholding the right of federal and state governments to exercise censorship in the area of so-called obscenity.

Roth, decided in 1957, is the Supreme Court's Original Sin. It is the fork in the road at which the Court had to choose between rational treatment of erotic literature and giving in to the power of blind bigotry. The Court chose the irrational course. It chose to fly in the face of the meaning of simple English words: it stated that speech that is obscene is not speech and that the First Amendment's provision that Congress shall make "no law" limiting freedom of speech means that Congress can make "some law" limiting freedom of speech. Only the most powerful pressures, doubtless personal and internal as well as political and social, could make learned men claim that words mean the opposite of what they do mean, in order to defend an irrational conclusion. And the pressures connected with sex in this country have always been among the strongest, the taboos the most inviolable.

I believe that the free exchange of communications should be unrestricted, unless there is evidence that a particular communication will cause immediate, tangible injury to an individual or society. I am a relative absolutist on the First Amendment. I accept the need for military censorship in wartime, for regulation of advertising, for libel laws. But these are instances where there is no doubt, no question about the injury that will be done. I am absolute in my conviction that unless clearcut, tangible harm can be proven, there is no justification for limitations on freedom of expression.

When it comes to material dealing with sex, the government, courts and a powerful segment of the populace takes a different position. Sexual materials don't ruin anyone's reputation; they don't cheat people out of money; they don't cost lives on a battlefield. But sexual materials are condemned without a trial. They are condemned even though there is not one shred of scientific evidence that they cause any harm.

There is no evidence of a cause-and-effect relationship between erotic materials and behavior seen as socially disruptive. Frequently the behavior judged antisocial is merely something pro-censorship people see as sinful, such as masturbation or non-marital intercourse.

Another alleged reason for suppressing erotic materials is the belief that it is proper and necessary for the law to uphold certain standards of what is called public morality. Apparently upholding public morality means that the law should take a stand against sin, even when it is not possible or desirable to enforce the law effectively, even when the behavior in question is harmless or trivial, and even when a large sector of the populace does not consider the activity a sin. According to one widely-held religious tradition, permitting oneself to be sexually aroused by viewing erotica is a serious sin. According to this same tradition, most of the conduct portrayed in erotic films, magazines and books is itself sinful. What censorship boils down to, then, is an effort to impose this morality, religious rather than political or scientific in origin, on our reading and viewing. Obviously, this is a violation of the principle of separation of church and state.

It is true that, in some sense, all laws are based on some moral or ethical values. But when we are trying to create a free, yet unified, society out of peoples adhering to many different beliefs, it is

necessary for laws to be based on practical considerations that can be factually demonstrated. We know that murder and stealing injure people and threaten our social and economic order. We know that sexual and racial discrimination injure individuals and deprive society of human resources. Laws dealing with these matters have some basis in pragmatic social utility. The fact that we may consider such laws to be also morally worthwhile should be secondary and subject to a great deal of disagreement. Hundreds of years of bloody religious wars and persecutions should have taught us the unwisdom of trying to establish a state religion or an official moral code.

The narrow moralism underlying censorship was revealed in a courtroom scene made by a Nashville district attorney in the case of a bookstore owner charged with selling obscenity. A defense witness, a married school librarian, testified that she did not believe an erotic magazine was in violation of community standards. The prosecutor asked the lady at what age she had begun sexual intercourse and whether she practiced oral sex. In response to the defense objection to this line of questioning he declared:

"She has testified that this filthy thing right here is community standards in this community. She has testified that her understanding of community standards is based on her personal experience. I want to know what she has experienced. I want to know if she is a prostitute. I want to know if she has experienced oral sex."

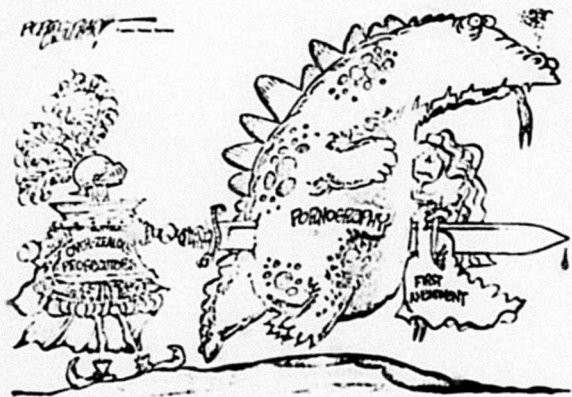
Doubtless there are those for whom a witness's admission that she engaged in oral sex, even in the sanctity of the marriage bed, would be enough to discredit her. She made no such admission, but sadly the prosecution won the case.

Each group of believers or unbelievers has every right to adhere to moral rules of their own choosing. People even have every right to abstain from oral sex, as long as they do so in private, have the consent of their partners and do not injure others.

But the only guarantee that each of us will be free to follow morality of our choice is for practitioners of all moral codes to be equally free. And this, in turn, requires that the law attempt as far as possible to be morally neutral. A religious organization has every right to condemn oral sex as a perversion and a sin, but for the law to condemn oral sex—or any other harmless sexual activity—is a perversion of justice.

I'm confident that time and history are on the side of freedom in this controversy, and I expect obscenity laws will be abolished when enough of us realize that there is no rational or factual basis for them.

*A portion of a speech delivered to the Individual Rights and Responsibilities section at the ABA meeting in Chicago. Shea is senior editor of *Playboy*.



I find SELF-censorship on OTHER important subjects much more wrong & harmful!

PLOT, J.Z.
7.11.95.

0082

I didn't reproduce his long
PLAYBOY article on pornography
because I don't want to get into copyrights hassles about it.
See "Women at War", Playboy FEB. 1980. J.Z.

Anarchist Stickers sold by
Byington - See LIBERTY, No 382

Some harsh words by Page 7

Libertarians on Government.

Pierre Joseph Proudhon

Whatever form it takes — Monarchic, Oligarchic or Democratic — the government of man by man is illegitimate and absurd. . . As man seeks justice in equity, so society seeks order in Anarchy.

George Washington

Government is not reason, it is not eloquence — it is force! Like fire it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master; never for a moment should be left to irresponsible action.

Wendell Phillips

Law has always been wrong. Government is the fundamentalism of the soldier, bigot, and priest.

Robert Ingersoll (1)

In all ages, hypocrites, called priests, have put crowns upon the heads of thieves, called kings.

Frederich Nietzsche

The State! Whatever the State saith is a lie; whatever it hath is theft: all is counterfeit in it, the gnawing sanguinary, insatiate monster. It even bites with stolen teeth. Its very bowels are counterfeit.

Whosoever will be free, must make himself free; freedom is no fairy's gift to fall into any man's lap.

Thomas Paine

The trade of governing has always been monopolized by the most ignorant and the most rascally individuals of mankind.

Voltaire

In general, the art of government consists in taking as much money as possible from one part of the citizens to give it to another.

It is difficult to free fools from the chains they revere.

* **Stephen T. Byington**

It can never be unpatriotic for a man to take his country's side against his government; it must always be unpatriotic for a man to take his government's side against his country.

Junius

It is not the disease, but the physician; it is the pernicious hand of government alone which can reduce a whole people to despair.

Edmund Burke

In vain you tell me that artificial government is good, but that I fall out only with the abuse; the thing — the thing itself is the abuse.

Albert Jay Nock

Taking the State wherever found, striking into its history at any point, one sees no way to differentiate the activities of its founders, administrators, and beneficiaries from those of a professional criminal class.

* See LIBERTY, Vol. XIV, No. 19

MARCH 1904, Whole No. 381

Page 4

Compare: "Slogans for Liberty"
vols. 1-4.

From Robert Shea's collection.

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