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**“Sometimes Flying, Sometimes Falling”** by Harry Bell

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[The study of anthropology] confirmed my atheism, which was the faith of my fathers anyway. Religions were exhibited and studied as the Rube Goldberg inventions I’d always thought they were.

—Kurt Vonnegut

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**THIS ISSUE OF *eI*** is in memory of—and with a great deal of love for—Mack and Jeanette Reynolds.

**Perhaps we could** have taken the hint from another notorious expatriate, Dr. David Reuben who fled the USA for Costa Rica, and called this *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Mack Reynolds But Were Afraid to Ask*.

In the strictly science fiction world, it is also in memory of my dear old friend Philip José Farmer.

**It is also of interest** to point out that this issue of *eI* crosses a number of generational boundaries. Within it are contributions made by Mack Reynolds' son and granddaughter, Earl Kemp's son, Ted Cogswell's daughter, and Jerry Murray's nephew/son, as well as a few pieces of input from *de facto* children of other contributors. Surely this is a new record in fanzine publication, one that it will take quite a lot of work to surpass in the future.

**The cover of this issue** is by the great Harry Bell, genial proprietor of InTheBar, whose artwork at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/52756069@N00/> is well worth spending time to examine and enjoy.

### **FAAn Awards**

At Corflu Zed in Seattle in March the 2009 FAAn Awards were announced. Using the editorial we, Bill Burns and I are extremely proud to have received awards in two categories. First, our combined effort, *eI*, now in its eighth year of continuous publication, won the award for Best Fanzine. In addition, eFanzines.com won the award for Best Online Fanac Site, its second such win.

The Best Fan Writer was Bruce Gillespie, the Best Fan Artist Dan Steffan, the Best Letterhack Lloyd Penney, and the Best New Fanzine Fan was a tie between Jean Martin and Kat Templeton.

Rejoice and sing praise for all the winners.

#

As always, everything in this issue of *eI* beneath my byline is part of my in-progress rough-draft memoirs. As such, I would appreciate any corrections, revisions, extensions, anecdotes, photographs, jpegs, or what have you sent to me at [earlkemp@citlink.net](mailto:earlkemp@citlink.net) and thank you in advance for all your help.

Bill Burns is *jefe* around here. If it wasn't for him, nothing would get done. He inspires activity. He deserves some really great rewards. It is a privilege and a pleasure to have him working with me to make *eI* whatever it is.

Other than Bill Burns, Dave Locke, and Robert Lichtman, these are the people who made this issue of *eI* possible: Bruce Burn, Bruce Brenner, Megan Cogswell, Ted Cogswell, Richard Curtis, Mike Deckinger, Jacques Hamon, Elizabeth Hull, Jane Jewell, Earl Terry Kemp, Ross LaDue, Jim Linwood, Barry Malzberg, Jerry Murray, Fred Pohl, Andrew Porter, George Price, Dallas "Mack" Reynolds, Emil Reynolds, Jeanette Reynolds, Ursula Sharp, Robert Silverberg, Gary Sohler, Dwight V. Swain, and Peter Weston.

**ARTWORK:** This issue of *eI* features original artwork by Harry Bell, Ditmar, and Brad Foster, and recycled artwork by William Rotsler.

**Of his back cover** on this issue of *eI*, Ditmar says: "There is a (slight) background to this graphic, 'Lotus in Space.' The lower left tangle of alien vegetation is meant to represent Stanley Weinbaum's sentient floral beings from his story *The Lotus Eaters* - which is a favorite of mine. Everything else is the result of what some people refer to as my imagination. They always seem to stifle a laugh, though...."

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Did you ever admire an empty-headed writer for his or her mastery of the language? No.  
*Palm Sunday*

— Kurt Vonnegut,

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# ...Return to sender, address unknown.... 33

## The Official *eI* Letters to the Editor Column

Artwork recycled William Rotsler

By Earl Kemp

We get letters. Some parts of some of them are printable. Your letter of comment is most wanted via email to [earlkemp@citlink.net](mailto:earlkemp@citlink.net) or by snail mail to P.O. Box 6642, Kingman, AZ 86402-6642 and thank you.

Also, please note, I observe DNQs and make arbitrary and capricious deletions from these letters in order to remain on topic.

This is the official Letter Column of *eI*, and following are a few quotes from a few of those letters concerning the last issue of *eI*. All this in an effort to get you to write letters of comment to *eI* so you can look for them when they appear here.

**Thursday February 5, 2009:**

**Gerald W. Page:** Just took a quick scroll down memory lane—er, your ezine, and was impressed. I did pause and read Michael Moorcock's fine review of Disch, because I couldn't help myself, and enjoyed it.



The layout and appearance are very good; the way my article on Lin Carter is laid out leaves me no room for complaint; and if you recall reading many of my LoCs in fandom in the past, you know I have far more capacity for complaint than average, even the average fan. All in all you've done a fine job and I thank you especially for how you set up my article; and also for what all this readability will mean for me when I go back and take the time to more than scan the rest of the zine.

I intend to proudly run around waving the link above my head and shouting "*eI, eI, eI*," like a crazed Lovecraftian acolyte until my friends all go either crazy or check it out. And since it too late for most of them to go crazy, I guess they'll just have to check it out.

#

**Chris Garcia:** So, I come back from a climbing expedition at our warehouse in Milpitas and discover that there's a new *eI* for my reading pleasure. And pleasure is exactly what I took from it from the start. The article from Les Wiley was absolutely breathtaking. There's no other way to think about it. I know I've read "Clipper Ships of Space," I made my way through all the *Astoundings* of the 1950s ages back, but I can't quite place it. The article was great, the kind of stuff you can find in many of the great articles that are popping up in fanzines all over the place, but the YouTube videos are the stars. I love them and one of the great strengths of eZines is the ability to direct link to content like that. It's a big win.

In fact, it was a Ditmar piece, one featuring a solar sail that I believe showed up in a Bruce Gillespie zine, that got me interested and I investigated solar sails for a while a couple of years ago. Which reminds me, I'm a big fan of that Ditmar piece you used at the end. A Stiles cover and a Ditmar closer make a good, completely opposite sides of the same coin sort of presentation.

I have to read *Word of God*. It sounds like exactly the kind of thing I'd love. I'm not the biggest fan of Disch, though there was a story recently in an old anthology The Lovely and Talented Linda had around, that I thought was very well done. I don't remember enjoying "The Genocides," though I must say that "Painting Eggplants" is a fine piece of work that I read while I was studying art history at Emerson. It's the kind of story that can make one very unpopular with professors. Then again, I was often unpopular because of my fondness of considering art to be play to begin with. "In Xanadu" was another one I enjoyed.

Always fantastic to get to read Victor Banis' words. I still have a copy of his autobiography and pick it up every now and again when I'm not face first into the latest Hard Case Crime. I might have to buy *Angel Land*. And is that a color (or should I say colour?) Harry Bell? I don't remember ever seeing such a thing!

The best advice I was ever given about writing a novel was from a prof I had how hated the way I wrote. He said to me: "There's nothing positive about sitting down and writing until you're finished. You need to THINK about the things that happen." Sadly, thinking makes me hate writing, so I stopped doing that ages ago. Though I've written a half-dozen or so novels, I've never published any, and I doubt I ever will. I think it's the writing that I enjoy and anything else is actual work!

More wonderful photos of folks I've never managed to meet!

Good stuff, as always!

#

**Brad Foster:** I just finished reading Dan Steffan's wonderful article "A Labor of Love" on the work of Ronald Clyne, and had to add my voice to those in the next issue, and which led me to go back to find this article. This was a wonderfully written and researched piece, and I agree that the title seems to work well both for the subject, and the author of the piece.

I usually have a hard time doing a lot of extended reading off the web, and thus tend to skim quickly through e-zines rather than read every word, as I usually do with their print ancestors. That didn't happen here, I just kept adjusting my glasses and moving back and forth from the screen to keep going with this one. I also love how I was able to click on the small images to get larger versions for a clearer view of the work. So, okay, I admit it, on-line zines do have *some* good points over print!

The highest praise I think you can give to any piece of writing is that it will move you in some way, and I have to say I am definitely inspired by this to redouble my own artistic efforts at improving my craft. So thanks to: Dan for writing it. You for printing it. And your loc writers for making me go back to find it!

#

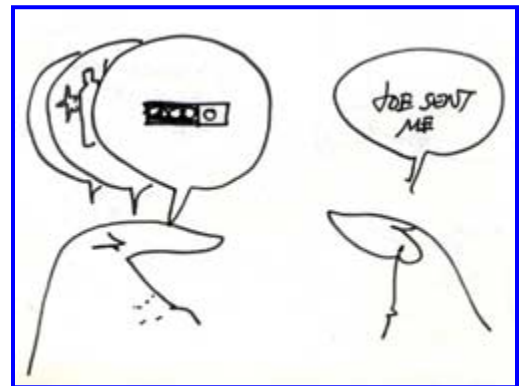
**Michael Moorcock:** Particularly enjoyed the piece on Lin Carter. A friendly guy but a lousy scholar. The Sam Moskowitz of his generation!

**Monday February 9, 2009:**

**Ian Williams:** Just speed-read through the latest *eI*. As always, you pile so much into it.

I liked Lori Lake's story of how she got published and how she writes, but I would think that there are as many different ways to write as there are writers, though inevitably with some overlap. I found myself nodding with recognition at several points. I know why she'd say keep on writing scenes irrespective of where they fit. I often have a kind of mental map in that I know roughly where I'm going and certain key scenes but I'm never tempted to write out of order. I start at the beginning and finish at the end and explore the territory in between. If the story has legs, that is.

I'd like to know why and how Tom Disch thinks that Dick "conned the public" to quote Moorcock. I can understand him not liking PKD but that doesn't alter the fact of Dick's talent. I hope it wasn't jealousy on the part of Disch whose own talent should have made him rise above that.



The piece on Lin Carter (someone I haven't thought about for years) confirms my old impression—lousy writer, historically important editor for bringing classic fantasy to people's attention—back in the day I had loads of those Ballantine books he edited.

#

**Bruce Burn:** I always read *eI* when Bill puts it on efanazines. I am usually breathless with admiration of it. At your energy in producing it. At the breadth of your experience. Really. Breathless. Delight that you share the glory of it by thanking Bill for the electronic distribution. Great stuff!

Bruce, there is no way I could thank Bill Burns enough for all the things he does for me. He makes me look real good, and that takes some doing. In fact, he works as hard on every issue of *eI* as I do, that's why it's an equal-share project. He makes me what I am today and that's hard work.

—Earl Kemp

**Sunday March 29, 2009:**

**Robert Lichtman:** Once again Steve Stiles turns in a magnificent cover for your fanzine. His color work using Photoshop is advancing by leaps and bounds. Another nice back cover by Ditmar, too.

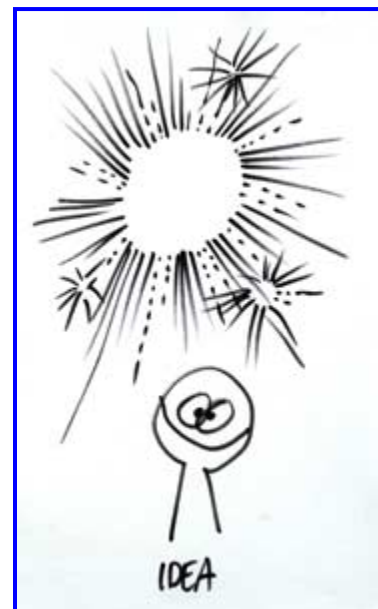
In the letter column Lloyd Penney writes, "I keep hoping that Richard Lynch's book on fandom in the '60s will see the light of day soon. I wonder if Rich found the whole project a little too much, or if because he had to travel extensively for work, if he ran out of available time for research." His Webpage with links to the various chapters of the project has been up for years at <http://jophan.org/1960s/>, but judging from reactions at the time I suspect he's had little response to his call, "Comments on this outline-in-progress are requested!!!" There's an immense amount of additional work needed for this outline to become a book, and some questioned whether Rich was the right person to do it.

Randy Byers was certainly prophetic, as it turns out, in his writing, "It's long past time that *eI* got a FAAn Award, isn't it?" Congratulations on your win!

More than some of the recent issues, this one had a higher percentage of contributions that were read and enjoyed but engendered no additional comment. The ones by Les Wiley, Mike Moorcock, Victor Banis and Lori Lake were in that category.

It was nice to see Wrai's photographs comprising *Outsiders* No. 128 reproduced here, although I'm puzzling over your intention in reprinting them. As you note, this was done for SAPS, of which Wrai is a senior member. Of those pictured, both Wrai and Carol, Bill Austin, Rocky Willson, Mark Manning, Gordon Eklund, Burnett Toskey and Wally Weber are still active members (as I am). (I also see F.M. Busby in one picture, but not Elinor, who's also still a member.) There are openings in the membership for anyone interested in the leisurely pace of a quarterly apa. Contact OE Toskey at brtoskey (at) comcast.net for more information.

Jerry Page's article on Lin Carter filled in a lot about the man I didn't know in any organized way. I was aware that he'd been a fan going way back, but I was unclear on his professional career—which seems distinguished, if that's the word, for a steady ratcheting downward of his writing talent—and I had no idea at all that he was considered by some to be "the founder of modern Cthulhuvian scholarship." By the time I read his articles in *Inside*, I had already learned a lot about HPL through sources such as Joshi and Derleth (to name but two). And as I wrote in Rich Coad's *Sense of Wonder Stories* No. 1 (available at <http://www.cosmicminds.net/sows1-3r.pdf>) my primary interest in Lovecraft is via his non-fiction writing, in particular his amateur journalism. Still, I appreciate Page's feeling that Carter "will always be a hero to me," and don't intend by my comments to denigrate him in any way.



I enjoyed Stephen Gertz's article for introducing me to a sub-genre of sleaze paperback fiction of which I wasn't previously aware, and suspect I might enjoy his book, *Dope Menace: The Sensational World of Drug Paperbacks 1900-1975*. Accordingly, I've added it to my Amazon wish list (which I keep as a reference to current interests, although I may get the book from another source) and Gertz has gained another sale.

Finally, I continue to enjoy Earl Terry Kemp's Anthem Series—and wonder why Part IV was published before Part III.

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The telling of jokes is an art of its own, and it always rises from some emotional threat. The best jokes are dangerous, and dangerous because they are in some way truthful.

— Kurt Vonnegut

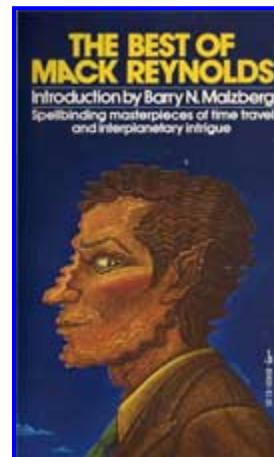
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# Showing off Reynolds\*

by Barry Malzberg

Introductions should have the aspect of the real-estate agent carefully leading prospective buyers through the temporarily empty old estate. While the occupants huddle in an alcove, giggling nervously and trying to overhear the spiel without calling attention to themselves, the spiel goes on: lovely old walls over here; there, a perfect mantelpiece circa 1927; foundations of solid rock; beautiful construction here, there, everywhere; house has open frontage; cool in summers, warm in winters; economical to support; just look at that work in the fireplace. It is all that the owners can do to suppress their groans at memories of what the winter of '68 did to that foundation; but all is fair. The real-estate agent does not have to dwell in the house—he merely has to sell it. As far as the buyers, they know or should know to discount in advance.

So here is this short-story collection by Mack Reynolds; beautiful filigree work in “Compounded Interest”; solid foundation in “Second Advent”; note without touching the strong buttressing and delicate moldings surrounding “Pacifist.” The owner of this property comes from the 1940s—a difficult time, maybe a little better time in our nation’s history when there was a respect for work, a respect for the workman and when there was pride in construction...won’t hardly find that kind of craftsmanship nowadays, no sir. Here, try this: run your hands over “Good Indian.” Do they put them together in the magazines that way now? Go on, help yourself; kick it a few times. Hear the sound. There’s nothing hollow in there—none of this modern flash and filigree. *The Best of Mack Reynolds* is solid and decent work. There are partitions here, not touched for many years, which have indeed appreciated in worth.



Nevertheless, if the real-estate agent would prosper and if the introducer would hold credibility, a fair overview of this construction must be given; and, certainly, Reynolds, as the owner, deserves no less. The fact stands that this man is a gifted writer whose work holds up and ranks him among some of the best of his generation. Honor the house of Reynolds. Time has only served to make this home stronger.

“Compounded Interest” is, in my opinion, one of the most important and terrible (in the archaic sense) short stories ever published within science fiction. Why not start off with it before exploring the rooms upstairs? No rush. Take your time. We have all day here. Do not feel the need to hurry and don’t be surprised when you finish it if you are not willing to bid right there on the spot.

- - -

\*Introduction to *The Best of Mack Reynolds*, reprinted from same with the permission of Barry Malzberg. Special thanks to Emil Reynolds for supplying the text of this article.

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As for literary criticism in general: I have long felt that any reviewer who expresses rage and loathing for a novel or a play or a poem is preposterous. He or she is like a person who has put on full armor and attacked a hot fudge sundae or a banana split.

— Kurt Vonnegut, *Palm Sunday*

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# Burnt Toast\*

Artwork by Harry Bell

by Mack Reynolds

"We have here a table bearing thirteen cocktails," the demon said. "And now into one I add a touch from this vial."

"What zat?"

"Poison. Now I switch the glasses about. Truly, you couldn't member into which glass I emptied the vial, could you?"

"What's the gag, buddy?"

"The proposition," the demon said, "is quite simple. You take your pick and drink it. For your first choice I give you exactly one hundred dollars."

Alan Sheriff shook his head in an attempt to clear away the fog. "You said, minute ago, you put poison...."

"In just one. There are thirteen in all. You choose a glass, you drink it, and I award you with a hundred dollars. If you wish to try again, you receive two hundred, next award is four hundred, and so on. If you lose, the forfeit is your life and your...soul."

It took a long moment to assimilate that. "Let's see the century," Sheriff muttered.

The demon brought forth a wallet and selected a bill, which he laid on the table, then looked at the other in anticipation.

Sheriff said thickly, "Nothing to lose anyway." He took up the nearest glass, fished the olive out and threw it aside.

The demon smiled politely.

"*Bottoms up!*" Sheriff said, tossing it off with the practiced stiff-wristed motion of the drinker. He put the glass down, stood swaying in silence.

"Not bad liquor," he said finally. "I needed that."

"The hundred dollars is yours. Would you like to try for two hundred?"

Sheriff looked at the bill. "This is good, eh?"

The demon shifted his shoulders in impatience. "Of course."

Sheriff said, "Suppose I could ask you what this is all about, but the hell with it. So long, sucker."

"I'll still be here tomorrow, Alan Sheriff."

#

There was a knock and the demon said, "Come in."

Sheriff closed the door behind him. His blood-veined eyes went about the barren hotel room; magnet-drawn, they came to the small table. Twelve cocktail glasses, sweated with cold, sat upon it.

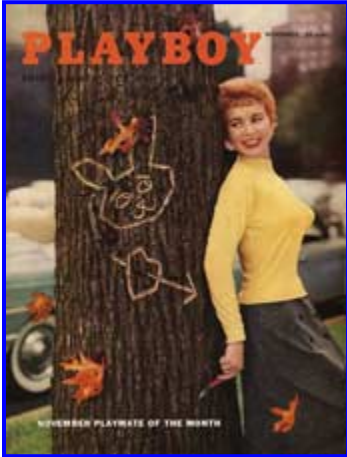
He said tentatively, "I was tight last night...."

“The night before last,” the demon corrected.

“...but I wasn't *that* tight. I couldn't have dreamed it, especially the hundred bucks.”

“Already gone, I assume,” the demon said. “You came to try again?”

“Why'd you give me that hundred? Listen, you haven't got a drink around the place, have you?”



The other seated himself in the room's sole chair, put the tips of his fingers together. “You won the hundred dollars on a wager. As far as a drink is concerned, I am afraid all I have is there.” He indicated the table with its burden of twelve glasses.

Sheriff's eyes went from him to the table, back again. He hadn't shaved since last he had been here and the pallor and odor of long weeks of alcohol were on him. He wavered. “I don't remember too well.”

“Briefly,” the demon said, “I represent interests that desire your immortal soul.” He made again the proposition of the previous evening while Sheriff stared at him. When he was finished, his visitor's eyes went again to the table with its twelve glasses.

“Let's see your money,” Sheriff said, shaky and unbelieving.

The demon brought forth his wallet, extracted two bills.

Sheriff stepped to the table, reached for a drink. “*Prosit!*” he grunted, bolting it. He waited, then with satisfaction, “Wrong one.”

The demon shrugged. .

Sheriff said, “If I take another one, how much do I get?”

“Four hundred dollars. You wish to try again?”

“There's eleven glasses left. One poison, eh?”

“That is correct. The odds are with you.”

Sheriff grinned sourly, two broken front teeth becoming evident. “Best odds I ever had.” He reached out quickly, took up another glass, held it in his hand for a moment then drank it as he had the other one with one motion. “Four hundred more,” he demanded, and received it.

“And now for eight?” the demon prodded.

“Not till I get this spent,” Sheriff chortled. “Then I'll be back, sucker.” He held up the \$600 he had won, stared at it unbelievably, clenched it in his fist and stumbled from the room.

The demon looked after him.

#

“Eight hundred this time,” the demon said, the sum in his hand, “and the odds are one in ten.”

“*Here's to glory!*” Sheriff toasted.

#

When Alan Sheriff returned, four days later, he was shaven, bathed, attired in gray flannel, his teeth had a dentist's attention and the shaking of his hands was all but imperceptible.

"You're sober," the demon said.

Sheriff looked at him. The other was medium sized, dressed conservatively, Sheriff said, "You don't look like the devil."

"How am I supposed to look?"

Sheriff scowled at him. "Listen, I sobered myself up, but it's temporary. Just long enough to find out what the hell's going on. What'd you give me that money for?"

The demon explained, still again, the wagers they had made.

Afterward Sheriff said, wonderingly, "My soul, eh? Tell the truth, I didn't think there was any such thing."

"It has been greatly debated," the demon agreed.

"What I can't understand," Sheriff said, "is all this trouble you're going to. You picked me out of the gutter. You would've got my...soul...anyway."

"You underestimate the efforts of our opposition," the demon sighed. "And you must realize victory is never absolutely assured until the last second of life. Ten minutes after I approached you, you might have decided upon reform." He twisted his mouth sardonically.

Sheriff shook his head while saying, "I still don't get this...this system of trying to get my ...soul."

The demon had seated himself in the armchair, now he shrugged. "Each person in his time is confronted with his decision. Most, admittedly, not quite so directly as this."

"But all that dough for a down and out bum. Already I've got fifteen hundred, and the next chance more than doubles it."

The demon nodded. "Your next try is for one thousand, six hundred. But the amount is meaningless. The, ah, commodity cannot be evaluated in terms of money. One of our most prized specimens cost but thirty pieces of silver." He added absently, "In that particular case he didn't know it was his soul he was selling."

Alan Sheriff looked down at the table. There were nine glasses remaining. He said, "For sixteen hundred bucks, eh?"

The demon nodded, his eyes shining.

Sheriff's hand snaked out, took up a glass and brought it halfway to his lips. His eyes went to the demons.

The other smiled.

Alan Sheriff put the glass down quickly, took up another. He held it for a moment. The demon still smiled.

Sheriff's mouth tightened. "*Salud!*" he said, bolting the cocktail. He closed his eyes and waited. When he opened them, the other was extending a sheaf of bills.

Sheriff said, "You'll still be here later in the week?"

“For you I shall always be here, night or day. There are eight glasses left. Your next wager will involve three thousand, two hundred.”

Sheriff said flatly, “I gave up two weeks ago. Lots of dough for liquor, good food, gambling, makes the going easier but I’m not changing my mind about calling life quits. I’ll be back when I’ve spent this.”

“Very sound judgment,” the demon nodded. “Until then.”

#

“So soon?” the demon said. “However, the wager is now three thousand, two hundred.”

Sheriff said, “This is the last time.”

“Ah?”

“This time I’m using the dough for a new start. I’m getting a job.”

“Admirable motive, I understand—from the human viewpoint. However, we shall see.” The demon changed the subject. “If I understand correctly the laws of chance, this is your crucial test.”

“How’s, that?” Sheriff’s eyes came up from the glasses to the other’s face.

“When we began, there were thirteen glasses, one of which was poisoned. However, we are nearly half through now and your good luck cannot last forever. Taking the averages, you should miss this time.”

Sheriff shook his head. “Each time is a separate time. You don’t use up your luck, there is no such thing. The odds aren’t as good as they were, but they’re still seven to one in my favor.”

“Very well, let us see.”

Alan Sheriff, sweat on his forehead, reached out slowly for one of the martinis. “*Here’s looking at you,*” he said.

#

The demon answered the door and smiled to see his visitor. “Alan Sheriff! But I thought your last visit was to be just that.”

Sheriff’s face was tight. “I’m not here for myself, damn you. It’s for somebody else.”

“Somebody else?” the demon said. “I don’t understand.”

“A girl,” Sheriff snapped. “It’s none of your business. You wouldn’t ever have seen me again except for Muriel. She needs five thousand; medical bills for her old lady, sanitarium. Never mind. The thing is I’ll take another one of those drinks.”

The demon pinched his lip thoughtfully. “I don’t know.”

“Damn it, what difference does it make what I want the dough for?”

“Ummm. Your motive for taking the wager disturbs me. Some centuries ago a somewhat similar case precipitated a *cause celebre*. Chap named Johann Faust. Matter had to be taken to the, ah, higher authorities. However, let us see what develops. There are seven glasses and your odds are six to one with the prize amounting to exactly six thousand, four hundred dollars.”

Sheriff took up a glass at random, toasted defiantly, "*Here's to the ladies!*"

"Very sentimental," the demon nodded.

#

Sheriff banged on the door heavily, and, before it could be answered, banged again.

The demon opened it, his face quizzical. "Ah, our Alan Sheriff."

Sheriff lurched to the table. The martini glasses stood as before, six of them remaining. They appeared chill and as fresh as the first time he had seen them, months ago.

"What's the bet now?" he slurred.

"The wager is twelve thousand, eight hundred against your life and soul." The demon's voice was soft.

"OK. *Here's how!*"

The demon nodded pleasantly.

"Beat you again," Sheriff sneered. "Give me the dough. I'm on my way to show up a wise guy. Show him what a real spender can do for a girl." The alcohol was heavy on his breath. "What'd be a classy present for Muriel? Show her what a real guy does for a dame...."

The demon ran a thoughtful thumbnail along his trimmed mustache. "I understand mink is highly thought of," he murmured.

#

"Ah," the demon said. "Here we are, once again."

Sheriff looked about the room, unchanged from the last time he had been here except there were but five glasses on the small table. He wondered vaguely what happened to the eight glasses he had emptied in turn.

"You know," he said, "each time I come here I have to be convinced all over again that it's true."

"Indeed? As I recall, on your last visit you were in the midst of a somewhat feverish romantic situation. Did you take my advice as to the desirability of mink?"

Sheriff was gazing in fascination at the glasses. He said, "What? Oh, yeah. This here wise guy boyfriend of hers, old high school sweetheart kind of crap, was trying to beat my time." He chuckled thickly. "But I gave her the old rush job, wound up in Miami Beach for a week. Quite a town."

"Isn't it though? And where is Muriel these days?"

Sheriff was tired of the subject. "She's around somewhere. Got on my nerves finally. What's the bet now? I'm thinking of going into the restaurant business—with my kid brother, he needs the dough to get started."

"Twenty-five thousand, six hundred," the demon said briefly.

"Well, *here's mud in your eye,*" Sheriff said.

#



“Fifty-one thousand, two hundred,” the demon said. “The new business doesn’t seem to prosper?”

“The kid doesn’t realize there’s angles to every business. He’s too slow for me. We need this dough to put in a bar and maybe a few tables and some slots in the back, maybe some rooms upstairs where a guy can take a dame or maybe throw a little reefer party.”

“There are now four glasses,” the demon said.

“*Skoal!*”

#

The demon opened the door at the knock and admitted the burly, heavy-faced man. “It’s been a long time,” he said simply.

“Yeah,” Sheriff said. He looked about the small room. “But you haven’t changed much. Neither has this room. I wasn’t sure it’d still be here.”

“Some things are changeless,” the demon said.

“Three glasses left, eh? My luck’s really been with me so far. You know, it’s been so long since I been here. What’s the bet now?”

“You would win one hundred and two thousand, four hundred dollars, my friend.”

“Two chances out of three. It’s still a good percentage and I’m branching out into new territory and need the dough.” He stared down at the identical glasses, still retaining their appearance of chill freshness.

“And how is your brother these days?”

“Bill? The hell with him. I had to bounce him out. Too square for the business I’m in. You know,” he bragged, “I’m a pretty big shot in some of the rackets these days.”

“Ah. I see.”

Sheriff took up one of the glasses, looked over its edge at his opponent. “Well, *first one today with this hand*,” he muttered, downing it. He waited for a moment then took up the money, stuffed it into his overcoat pocket and left without a backward glance.

#

The knock at the door was hurried, anxious. The demon opened it and said, “Yes?”

Sheriff hastened in, looked about quickly. “I’m safe here?”

The demon chuckled. “Really, Alan Sheriff!”

“They’re after me. The cops....”

“Ah?”

#

Sheriff’s eyes went to the small table. “Two glasses left,” he muttered. “I could hire Liber for a lawyer, grease a few

palms. With more than two hundred grand I could beat this rap, or, for that matter, I could go on down to Mexico, live there the rest of my life.”

“It’s been done,” the demon agreed.

“Fifty-fifty chance,” Sheriff hissed in sudden decision. He lifted one of the glasses from the table, said “*Cheers*,” downed it and stood back to wait, his face empty and white. Nothing happened.

He turned to the other. “Give me the money,” he said triumphantly. “You know what, sucker? It’s like you once said. It’s never too late to change. I beat you all the way down the line, but I know when I’ve pushed my luck as far as it’ll go. After I’ve got myself out of this jam, I’m going to straighten up, see?”

“I doubt it,” the demon murmured.

“Yes I am, buster. You’ve lost this boy.”

The demon said, “I suggest you drink the other martini.”

The other stared at him. “That’s the one with the poison.”

The demon shook his head gently. “I suggest you take thirteenth glass, Alan Sheriff. It might help you somewhat in the tribulations that lie ahead. After all, it *is* the very best of gin and vermouth.”

Sheriff chuckled his contempt. “Give me my dough, sucker. I’m getting out.”

The demon said, “What gave you the impression that the poison was a quick acting one, Alan Sheriff?”

Sheriff blinked at him. “Huh?”

“I don’t remember informing you that death was to be instantaneous following your choice of the wrong glass.”

“I...I don’t get it....”

“But of course you got it,” the demon said smoothly. “The poison was odorless and tasteless and you got it on your eighth try. Since then your life and soul have been mine to collect at will. The fact that I haven’t done so sooner was my own whim—and excellent business, as it developed. Surely in the past few years you have done more for the, ah, *cause* I serve than you would have had I collected my wager immediately.”

After a long moment Sheriff picked up the last glass. “Maybe you’re right. I might be needing this, and they *are* good martinis.

“*One for the road*,” he toasted with attempted bravado.

“*Down the hatch*,” the demon corrected.

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\*This story originally appeared in *Playboy*, November 1955 and is reprinted with the permission of Emil Reynolds, who furnished the text, and of Barry Malzberg, agent.

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Maturity is a bitter disappointment for which no remedy exists, unless laughter can be said to remedy anything.  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *Cat’s Cradle*

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# Introducing the Author\*

by Mack Reynolds

One or two wars ago I found myself hanging around New Orleans waiting to be assigned to a ship. As you know, killing time isn't murder, it's suicide, but we all, at one time or another, find ourselves doing it.

All right. So I spent a lot of time in the New Orleans library and one day reached my hand up and plucked from its shelf a copy of *Writing and Selling* by Jack Woodford.

The first sentence that hit my eye went: "Anybody who can read without moving their lips, can write stories that will sell to the American magazines."

Now, my lips had moved only slightly in the reading, so I said to myself, *He must mean me.*

I went home and blew the dust off the portable and took a crack at writing a short-short detective yarn.

I know, you think I'm a liar, but that first story sold to *Esquire*. You'll start believing me again when I tell you that I've never sold a slick since. Worse luck.

The war stepped in then and I wasn't able to pursue my newfound ambitions for some years.

Eventually, however, I acquired the three necessities for becoming a writer—a pipe, a tweed coat, and a wife who works. I wrote for six months, full time, before making my first science fiction sale to *Planet*. The story, by the way, has not as yet appeared in print....

About then the New Orleans heat drove us up to the mountains of Taos, New Mexico, where we met Fredric Brown and Walt Sheldon who immediately took me under their literary wings.

Among other things they introduced me to Harry Altshuler their agent and a considerably better one than a tyro like myself could ordinarily hope for. Sales began rolling in. The Ziff-Davis magazines, the Standard magazines, *Other Worlds*, and then, when she started up, *Imagination*. Fifty or sixty stories in the past two or three years to almost every magazine in the field.

Not so many shorts these last months since I've been concentrating on novel lengths for hard covers, but I still turn out an occasional one when I get an idea I particularly like. One of the novels, *The Case of the Little Green Men* (Phoenix, \$2—advt.) was really meant to be somewhat of a ruse on both the detective and the science fiction fields, but nobody seemed to recognize the fact. Maybe *I* was wrong.

Also managed to compile *The Science-Fiction Carnival*, an anthology of science-fiction fun, along with Fredric Brown, for Shasta. Should appear this fall. I couldn't resist including one of my own, of course, and picked "The Martians and the Coys" which appeared originally in *Imagination*.

"What am I doing now? Writing a serious science fiction novel, which should take at least two years to complete. No wars of the future, no ray guns, extra-terrestrials, nor even time machines. It's going to be entitled *Tomorrow*—and I wish it could be finished by then! In the meantime I hope you like my story ("The Cosmic Bluff") in this issue of *Madge*.



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\*Reprinted from *Imagination*, October 1952. Special thanks to Mike Deckinger for supplying the text for this piece.

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All time is all time. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It simply is. Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber.

— Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*

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## Revisiting *The Expatriates*

### A Capricious Chronology

by Earl Kemp

When his parents named Verne Reynolds after the author Jules Verne, it was an ironic portent of science fiction things to come, only that presaged omen skipped a generation.

Verne and Pauline Reynolds had their first child, a son, Dallas McCord Reynolds, on November 12, 1917, one of three children (with one brother and one sister to follow). The whole world was in quite an uproar at the time, with war and threats of war breaking out frequently. The USA, in fact, declared itself into the World War and sent troops first to France. In Russia a separate revolution was well underway that forced the czar to abdicate his position in favor of the liberal government that replaced him. Then, in October, one month before Dallas' birth, the Bolsheviks, headed by Trotsky and Lenin, overthrew that liberal government by force of arms and executed the czar and his entire family.

Into this world, Dallas McCord Reynolds was born a Socialist...neither a Marxist nor a Communist. It was his father's, Verne's, overwhelming belief that he could personally help overcome many of the wrongs of the world and better the lives of every single working person alive...a huge, obsessive social consciousness that Verne found inescapable. And all of it was passed along directly to Dallas, if not in his very genes and DNA itself.

Throughout all of Dallas' childhood he knew every person he met as "comrade"...every contemporary, every one of the many adults constantly surrounding his father, his classmates, his toys, his every thought. It was only as he grew older that he began to notice that his contemporaries had no "comrades" in their language and didn't even know what the word meant...then Dallas began, internally, questioning his own reactions to the people he met and knew as his comrades.

By 1924, when Dallas was only seven, he found himself already working for the Socialist Labor Party. In that year, Verne ran for Vice President of the USA on the SLP ticket. As a candidate, he took Dallas with him on speaking tours to most major cities and already, at that very young age, Dallas was actively working to help his father achieve his major goals. Dallas had always been an early and heavy reader, an early talker...and one who spoke with fire and conviction far in advance of other children his age.

He was 11 in 1928 when Verne had his first turn at the political polls for President on the SLP ticket, and Dallas again made those tours with him and spoke loudly and clearly to anyone who would listen about how his father was The Person who could help improve the lot of working man.

Then, in 1929, just before my birth, the stock market crashed, losing billions of dollars and heralding the great Depression that eventually claimed the whole world. No business; no jobs, no money, no nothing. Long lines after long lines of hungry people waiting for the handout of a piece of bread or something...anything to eat, to help them through the endless nights and even longer days of absolute deprivation.

Dallas was 15 and about to start high school when Verne's second try for President took place in 1932, and again he was right by his father's side, touring all over the USA and pounding home the Socialist doctrine...a taste of the honey for the worker bees, *Something For The Common Man*...the Workers of the World...the neglected masses who were routinely abused and harassed by the power elite and money grabbers in total control of the nation, of the whole world.

By 1935, while in high school, when Dallas turned 18, he actually joined the Socialist Labor Party and became a very active advocate of the party's goals. By the following year, he was still touring the country giving encouraging lectures and rousing speeches, along with this father, and becoming recognized as a major force for advocating the SLP itself. By this time Verne had recognized that he would never become President of the United States and had abandoned any attempt to be elected to that position, but that didn't deter him, or his son, from championing the SLP with their every thought and deed.

By 1936, at 19 years of age, still touring with his father, they traveled coast-to-coast trying to increase membership in the SLP.

When Dallas turned 20, he met and fell in love with Evelyn Sandell. At that young age, they were married in 1937 and, in short order, produced three children, Emil, LaVerne, and Dallas Jr.



Dallas Reynolds holding his first son, Emil. Circa 1940. Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.



Dallas and Evelyn Reynolds holding baby Emil. Circa 1940. Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.

From 1940 through 1943 Dallas and Verne kept touring the USA from coast to coast as the major spokesperson team for the SLP. Dallas' ease of talking...his enthusiastic lectures...brought him a certain measure of fame...along with clashes with local police and the annoying attention of the ever-present FBI.

By 1944, World War II was fully engaged and there was a huge drain on the USA for troops to fight in Europe and elsewhere. Dallas felt it was not only his obligation, but also his duty to do his personal bit for the nation that he had, for all of his life, worked so diligently to support and to improve. He joined the U.S. Army Transportation Corps and was stationed in the Philippines.



Dallas Reynolds in his service uniform in the Philippines. Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.

When he was released from this service and returned home, he was shocked to discover that, in his absence, Evelyn had met and fallen in love with another man. She wanted a divorce and she wanted it quickly...and the children as well. Dallas, realizing that the life he would have with her was definitely not the life he knew he really needed to claim as his own, agreed to her wishes and granted the divorce, and the separation from his children that was quite difficult for him to do at that time.

#

Because Dallas McCord Reynolds had no infancy, no childhood, no youth, no teenage experience, he was clearly alienated from everyone his own age. In fact, he had never even paused long enough to realize the amount of experiences and routine learning that he had somehow bypassed as his father's son...his father's spokesman...his father's shadow. In those mid-1940s, nagging twitches within his awareness hammered away at him. There was clearly something...someone he had no knowledge of or had never expected to exist...working away at him, trying to force him to allow that inner being to break free from confinement and emerge as a viable entity. An inner science fiction monster, perhaps, or an evil identical twin....

Whatever it was, as time passed, it slowly took shape and shouted for recognition. And it was a word monster. All Dallas' speeches and lectures, all the lexicon that he had acquired and carried around inside of him, was feeding that inner being like a muse demanding recognition.

Dallas McCann Reynolds was a writer in the making. The urge to put fingers to the keyboard and let that beast free became almost undeniable, slowly, as the months passed, taking time and energy away from Dallas' SLP efforts and turning that time and energy inward, where he was beginning to suspect it really belonged.



Dallas Reynolds with his mother Pauline.  
Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.



With a recognized measure of fear and trepidation, Dallas did just that, took typewriter in hand and let his imagination have a go at whatever it wanted to do in 1946. As a first effort, he wrote the short piece "What is Courage?" and, much to his shock and awe, actually sold it to *Esquire*. It appeared in the December issue.

Dallas McCord Reynolds, at that auspicious moment in time, became Mack Reynolds the author.

Even though the muse was taking over and demanding more and more of Dallas' time, he still managed to work as a national organizer for the SLP from 1946 through 1952, but his heart was growing less and less enchanted with the prospects for the party's future and more and more interested in his own personal goals.

Then, like an angel of salvation, confirming within Dallas everything he suspected and hoped for himself, Jeanette Wooley appeared just in time. She was the most dynamic, influential, supportive, and enabling person Dallas had ever known; she exceeded his expectations in every direction. And she loved him as much as he loved her. Perfection took over and began running on automatic as they were married in September 1947.

Jeanette, who was part Amerind (native American Indian) had been raised in a collective, a sort of pre-commune commune way ahead of the 1960s, that accounted for much of her aggressive capabilities. She quickly assumed the role of enabler and assured Dallas that he was free to pursue his goal of making a living for them through his writing efforts and that she would carry the load until he could take over the burdens of financing their togetherness. They immediately began looking for a place to live frugally while Dallas wrote full time.

Their first choice was Woodstock, NY, years before it became famous for an incredible rock fest, only living there didn't work out too well for them. New Orleans followed as their next living trial, and it also was unsuccessful.

Jeanette, calling on her Amerind background, suggested that they next try Taos, New Mexico, where they found a small farm adjacent to the Taos Indian Reservation and settled in for a while with other writers and artists struggling to make their own futures secure. Among them were Walt Sheldon and Fredric Brown, who became fast friends and encouragers. Especially Fredric Brown who spent much time with Dallas, drinking and talking shop, encouraging Dallas to work at his writing in a professional manner.

It was then that Mack began writing seriously, forcing himself to write at least six pages of manuscript every day. Ten pages would have placed him among current professional writers, but Mack wanted to be slow and sure, so he took his time with his own prose. There was no upper limit on the amount of pages he could turn out, but he forced himself to produce those six manuscript pages each day, writing in the early mornings. Writing what he thought he should be writing, mystery fiction.

When Fredric Brown pointed out to him that it was obvious that Dallas was a reader of science fiction, therefore he should be writing science fiction, and not detective fiction, the ghost of Jules Verne finally claimed his projected victim.

In 1949 Mack Reynolds wrote "Last Warning," his first science fiction story and, much to his surprise, sold it right away to *Planet Stories*. And then *Planet* folded just before the story was supposed to have been published. Dallas was crushed and mortified.

Also in 1949 Fredric Brown's *What Mad Universe* was published. It was an instant classic of science-fiction-fan related fiction, and one that inspired Mack Reynolds, because of his close friendship with fellow Taosian Brown, to emulate his work. It took him two years to write his counter to Brown's novel, and Mack's *The Case of the Little Green Men* was published in 1951, also becoming an instant classic of science-fiction-fan related fiction. And neither of those novels was sf; both belonged solidly to the genre of mystery fiction. (See Robert Lichtman's review of *The Case of the Little Green Men* elsewhere in this issue of *eI*.)

In 1950, before Mack's novel *The Case of the Little Green Men* was published, he finally sold his first published science fiction short story, "Isolationist." It appeared in *Fantastic Adventures* for June. After his disappointment with "Last Warning," Mack finally felt as if he was about to hit his stride in the field of science fiction.

#

In *The Expatriates*, Mack Reynolds wrote:

"It was in Paris that Garry Davis originally hit his stride, proclaiming himself to be the first 'Citizen of the World.' He renounced his American citizenship and called for those of good will to do likewise. Art Buchwald, in one of his amusing *Herald-Tribune* columns, recounts the early days of the Gary Davis 'movement' when Buchwald, among other veterans of the war living on a G.I. student income, set to work to turn out circulars on a mimeograph machine and to help distribute them, mail them and answer letters of inquiry. By Buchwald's account, it must have been fun at the time....



"When we met Garry Davis, it was at a science fiction convention in Chicago in 1952. An actor by profession, he put on a skit involving an absent-minded professor splitting an atom, and was quite the success of the evening."

And I was there as well, hiding in the crowds watching Garry Davis perform on stage. It was my first science fiction WorldCon, but not my last. I had already met numbers of the professionals and fans before that convention but it was there at ChiCon II when Mack Reynolds and I first met. It was altogether an insignificant happening and one that would have been easily forgotten by both of us had it not, fortunately, signaled the beginning of a true friendship that would, in time, span decades.

By 1953 Dallas and Jeanette Reynolds had decided that if they were ever to find the right place for them to live, they should be going about the search for it. Together they had declared to each other that they would never be content living in the USA because there was far too much double-think going on, too much repression and brain washing, that neither of them could endure without seriously damaging themselves. Their search for Nirvana began then.

San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico was their first serious attempt at living outside the USA. They went there, fell in love with the place, finding the freedom that didn't exist in the USA as well as an intellectual paradise for thinkers, doers, artists, and writers. They lived there for 18 months before deciding to see if they could find any place comparable where they would feel more at home, and headed out for Europe, the Far East, Israel, Russia, North Africa, and other siren-calling enchanted places.

#

Writing about living in San Miguel de Allende in the 1950s, in *The Expatriates*, Mack Reynolds wrote:

"Possibly as classic an example of the art colony abroad as can be found is San Miguel de Allende, in the State of Guanajuato, 6,400 feet high in the mountains and with a population, including expatriates, of approximately 15,000. The climate is such that it is never so hot but that a man can wear a sport jacket, never so cold that he needs more. During the short rainy season, in the winter, it rains daily, between the hours of two and four in the afternoon, almost as though by clockwork.

"San Miguel de Allende...is an old Spanish Colonial city which has been declared a national monument by the government. In somewhat similar fashion to Williamsburg in Virginia and the Vieux Carre of New Orleans...the streets are still cobblestoned and narrow....

"...this writer gave a party at his house on New Year's Eve of 1953, for approximately seventy-five persons. There was a small, three-piece *Mariachi* band for entertainment and dancing. Besides our usual two servant girls, we hired two more and a bartender. Food included 250 tamales, huge bowls of *guacamole* (avocado salad), tacos, enchiladas, and Fritos, as well as sandwiches and cakes for those who disliked Mexican food. The drinks included two gallons of Bacardi rum, a gallon of tequila, a gallon of gin, cases of Coca-Cola and beer, and the various minor amounts of other spirits and cordials.

"The total cost, including band and extra servants, came to just a bit more than twenty-five dollars."

At the same time Dallas, now thoroughly Mack Reynolds, became "travel editor" for William Hamling's men's magazine *Rogue*, frequently writing of their travels, where and how they lived, what routine necessities of life cost there, how they were treated, what was repressed and what was allowed, and other things of interest to people who thought they were living in "the home of the free and the land of the brave" but weren't.

They visited, and lived for increasingly long periods of time, in such places as Rhodes, Greece, Yugoslavia, Madrid, Torremolinos, various USSR countries, Gibraltar, and Algiers and Tangier in North Africa.

By 1956, those countries having failed to yield the ideal place for them to live, Mack and Jeanette Reynolds took off again, still looking for paradise, and went across the Sahara desert to Timbuktu via bus, visiting the Sudan and Dakar. Then, by boat down the Niger River from Algiers to Gao...still not finding their ultimate home. During those North African journeys, however, Mack gained quite a knowledge of how the black races lived in their own environments that would serve him well in years to come as inspiration for some of his novels.

And all this time Mack continued to write science fiction. By 1958 he had somehow become the favorite writer of John W. Campbell, Jr., iconic editor of *Astounding Science Fiction*. Campbell would feed Mack ideas for stories and Mack would write them to Campbell's exact satisfaction. In short order Mack became the favorite son/ignored infidel of John Campbell and they would have an on-again-off-again relationship for many years, during which Mack produced some of his very best fiction for *Astounding*.

“Compound Interest” and “The Business As Usual” are memorable short stories, which showed what Mack Reynolds could have done. Unfortunately as his *je ne sais quoi* began to fade he elected to climb from the bedroom window and run off with John W. Campbell. Well, at least the offspring were legal.

—Barry Malzberg, email, February 2009

It was also in 1958 that Mack wrote one of his nonfiction books, *How to Retire Without Money*, by “Bob Belmont.”

During those hectic, travel-filled '50s, while Mack was doing the two things he loved most, wandering and writing, he had somehow still managed to continue working long distance as a major recruiter for the Socialist Labor Party. But the travels and commercial success as a fiction writer that so added to Mack's personal self-satisfaction only annoyed the SLP. After many complaints and “suggestions” that Dallas should stop his foolish wanderlust and devote full time to his SLP duties, Dallas finally responded.

From his residence in Tangier, Morocco, on October 25, 1958, he formally resigned and renounced any future relationship with the Socialist Labor Party. Free at last...from then on all his time would belong exclusively to Mack and Jeanette Reynolds.

#

In the late 1950s, Theodore R. Cogswell created a mythical place called The Institute for Twenty-First Century Studies. It was in reality a snail mail forum open to all science fiction professionals, much like later years' Internet discussion groups, to provide a place for those personalities to vent, to plot, to scheme, and to exchange ideas about the world they had chosen to claim as their own and the things they all did within that world. Because Ted and Mack Reynolds had been best of friends for a number of years already, it was natural that Mack would become one of the first members of that Institute, even though his snail mail would have to travel much further and a great deal slower than that of the other Institute members.

I was fortunate enough to be one of those members, along with fellow Advent Publisher partners Sidney Coleman and George Price. The list of Institute members grew to be quite extensive, containing most of the better-known writers within the sf genre and such literary luminaries as Basil Davenport at one extreme and the icon Kurt Vonnegut, who had transcended science fiction itself, at the other. It was a proud and noble group, to say the least, and their contributions to the Institute were extremely significant and noteworthy.

Periodically Ted Cogswell would publish issues of *The Proceedings* of the Institute, disguised as scholarly texts, very academic in presentation, under the title of *PITFCS (Proceedings of the Institute for Twenty-First Century Studies)* ...pronounced as “pitfucks” by all hands onboard. The Institute existed throughout the 1950s before being disbanded.

In actuality it was a sort of precursor to the Science Fiction Writers of America and with the advent of that organization there was no more reason for the Institute to exist so, reluctantly, Ted Cogswell closed it and ceased publication of the *Proceedings*.

Fortunately for all concerned, they were gathered up and, in 1992, published in one huge omnibus volume by Advent Publishers. In a manner of looking at it, PITFCS lives on forever.

As a science fiction writer, Mack Reynolds was a tangent to most of his contemporaries. Mack didn't write gadget or technical fiction; he wrote humanist, social conscious science fiction. Curtis C. Smith, in his *Mack Reynolds Starmont Reader's Guide* (1988), wrote: “Reynolds' significance, though, comes also from reasons that lie beyond his ability to extrapolate or his popularity. Reynolds is that rarest of breed, an American science fiction writer interested in socioeconomic speculation—in the possibility that the dominant economic system in the future might not be capitalism (or socialism either). Although neither a Marxist nor a socialist, Reynolds identified himself as a radical, although he was quick to add that he had no ideological axe to grind; rather, Reynolds stressed, his aim was to educate the reader as to future possibilities and to defamiliarize him or her with the present. Reynolds' main complaint about American science fiction was that so few writers develop new economic systems to fit the future

worlds they have created.”

In 1959 Mack and Jeanette Reynolds were living at 18 Loma de San Fernando, Torremolinos (Malaga), Spain. And it was in 1959 when Mack’s father, Verne Reynolds died. By August, they had moved to Tangier, Morocco. Writing in *PITFCS 131*, Mack said:

“Spreading malicious rumors about our living in Spain is uncalled for. We’ve settled in Tangier, with the ragheads. (Box 2035, Tangier, Morocco.) Tangier is currently in the way of being a bargain paradise these days. Cheaper than Spain and more of the products of civilization...in a couple of days I’m off on a lengthy tour for *Rogue*. First to England where I take a fishing trawler for Arctic waters, a three-week trip. Then through Iceland and Scotland, then over to Amsterdam, up to Hamburg, over to Berlin, up to Warsaw, down to Budapest, over to Sofia, back through Yugoslavia, down through Italy to Sicily, ferry over to Tunis, train to Algiers, back to Tangier. Don’t believe me, do you...?”

“Listen, Cogswell, I’ve been reading a lot in such publications as *Reporter* about the lousy job you people are doing educating our American youth. Why don’t you get out of that cheap racket and come over here and make an honest living writing for the men’s magazines? Do you realize that French cognac sells in this town for \$1.25 a bottle? Hashish goes for about 25 cents for a supply that will last a month? Dancing boys available in all the nightclubs? Face reality, man! Long live the Class Struggle!”

#

In *The Expatriates*, Mack Reynolds wrote:

“We were living in Tangier when William Burroughs spent a couple of years there in the mid-fifties. At that time he had already written various articles for such publications as the British *Journal of Addiction* and had brought out a book on the use of narcotics through one of the borderline publishers in Paris. In fact, he was considerably worried about this, thinking he’d possibly been cheated on his contract....

“At one time or another, by his own admission, William Burroughs has been addicted to, or had at least tried, just about every known narcotic. As he put it: ‘I have used junk in many forms...I have smoked junk, eaten it, sniffed it, injected it in vein-skin-muscle, inserted it in rectal suppositories...the result is the same: addiction.’

“During the Tangier period, he was on heroin, which he referred to either as H or horse, and had been on it for some time....”

By April 1960, in *PITFCS 135*, Mack wrote:

“...once when we were driving from Florida to California, Jeanette and I, and Story the Dalmatian, went over the border to take a look at Mexico. And stayed for almost two years. At that time it was quite possible to live in places like San Miguel de Allende for a hundred bucks a month complete with servant, complete with lots of drinkin’ likker and such necessities.

“It was a beginning. Since then I’ve been in some fifty countries ranging as far north as the U.S.S.R., as far east as Iraq, and as far south as French Sudan. I usually pick one of the cheap countries with good climate such as Morocco, Greece, or Spain in which to live and make trips from my home base....

“I’m living in Tangier just now. Here are some examples. I live in an ultra-modern, ultra-swank apartment house, one of the best in the city. We have two bedrooms (one of which I’ve converted into a study), two baths, large living room, balcony with a tremendous view overlooking the Straits of Gibraltar. Spain and Gib are in the far background and the Riff Mountains to the other side. I estimate that such an apartment would go something like \$250 a month in New York, possibly more. I pay \$37. Our Moorish servant costs us about \$8 a month, and for that she’s willing to work all day and seven days a week—if we wanted her that much of the time.

“Most freelancers at home can’t afford to be alcoholics, but I can. My table wine, both red and white, costs me about 18 cents a quart. I could cut that price almost in half, but none of this cheap crap for me. I buy French cognac for a bit less than \$1 a bottle, Cuban rum for about 45 cents a bottle, Ballantine Scotch for about \$1.50, beer for about 8

cents a bottle, absinthe about \$1.50. Hashish sells for about 25 cents an ounce. An ounce is one helluva lot of hashish....

Do you think if I sent Mack Reynolds a quarter, he'd send me some hashish? I want to make fudge.

—Evelyn E. Smith, *PITFCS 136*

“...Compatible people? Hell yes. Artists, writers, remittance men, nymphomaniacs, queers, fugitives from justice (no extradition laws), smugglers, and a lot of just plain people....”

By June 1960, in *PITFCS 136*, Mack wrote:

“I submit the following recipe for the Home Economics department of the Institute. Please note that this is the Fez method of whipping up a batch of *El Majoun* and somewhat different than those of Meknes and Rabat:

### ***El Majoun***

Almonds: 2 lbs., 4 ozs. Browned in butter

Walnuts: 1 lb., 2 ozs.

Acorns: a handful shelled

Raisins: 2 lbs. seeded

Cantharides: three or four

A pinch each of black pepper, nutmeg, all spice, cinnamon

In a mortar pound together all of these until they are well blended and then add:

Honey: 1 lb., 2 ozs.

Butter: 9 ozs.

Cook over a slow fire until it becomes of a thick jam-like consistency. At this point you add an ounce or two of *Cannabis Sativa* and stir it in well. Make the mixture into little balls about the size of a pecan and roll them in sesame.

“Moroccans buy *El Majoun* in the spice shops in the souks and eat it both for its aphrodisiac and narcotic effects. However, fiction writers seeking new plots will also find it effective. I am somewhat worried about members being able to locate Cantharides, better known as Spanish Fly, in your part of the world. However, I imagine art will find a way. *Cannabis Sativa* can be grown in your own garden or in a window flower pot....”

#

In *The Expatriates*, Mack Reynolds treated *El Majoun* a little differently. To begin with, he said the recipe came from Alice B. Toklas' *Cook Book* and continued with:

### ***Haschich Fudge***

(which anyone could whip up on a rainy day)

“This is the food of Paradise—of Baudelaire's Artificial Paradises: it might provide an entertaining refreshment for a Ladies' Bridge Club or a chapter meeting of the DAR. In Morocco it is thought to be good for warding off the common cold in damp winter weather and is indeed, more effective if taken with large quantities of hot mint tea. Euphoria and brilliant storms of laughter, ecstatic reveries and extensions of one's personality on several simultaneous planes are to be complacently expected. Almost anything Saint Teresa did, you can do better if you can bear to be ravished by an *evanouissement reveille*.

“Take 1 teaspoon black peppercorns, 1 whole nutmeg, 4 average sticks of cinnamon, 1 teaspoon coriander. These should all be pulverized in a mortar. About a handful each of stoned dates, dried figs, shelled almonds, and peanuts: chop these and mix them together. A bunch of *cannabis sativa* can then be pulverized. This along with the spices

should be dusted over the mixed fruit and nuts, kneaded together. About a cup of sugar dissolved in a pat of butter are added. Roll into a cake and cut into pieces or made into balls about the size of a walnut, it should be eaten with care. Two pieces are quite sufficient.

“Obtaining the *cannabis* may present certain difficulties, but the variety known as *cannabis sativa* grows as a common weed, often unrecognized, everywhere in Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa; besides being cultivated as a crop for the manufacture of rope. In the Americas, while often discouraged, its cousin, called *cannabis indica*, has been observed even in city window boxes. It should be picked and dried as soon as it has gone to seed and while the plant is still green.

“In the native versions of *El Majoun*, three or four Cantharides are added to the recipe, which adds an aphrodisiac effect to that of the narcotic. Cantharides, illegal in the West, are the small bugs found in Spain and Northern Africa, known widely as Spanish Fly and used since ancient times as a sexual stimulant. They are openly sold in Morocco markets.”

By December 1960, in *PITFCS 138*, Mack Reynolds wrote:

“...the wanderlust has hit me and I’m not sure where I’m going after January 1st. Possibly Southern Spain or Portugal until the weather warms up. If possible, I’d like to get into Russia in the summer, coming around through Norway and Finland, and then emerging into Rumania along in fall. I wasn’t able to get into Rumania last year, but I hear they’ve loosened up tourist requirements considerably. I was in Russia a couple of years ago and I am anxious to go back to see if there is any noticeable difference....”

By December 1962, in *PITFCS 143*, Mack Reynolds wrote:

“For the first time in about two years the Mack Reynolds have a permanent address: 33 Blvd. Mortier, Paris 20, France. I’m so out of touch that I don’t know whether the Institute is still flourishing or not. I certainly hope so....

“We spent the summer in the Balkans, especially Yugoslavia, but wound up in Carlsbad, Czechoslovakia ‘taking the waters.’ Quite a joint. In its time half the historic Europeans you’ve ever heard of seem to have taken the water cure there. From Napoleon to Hitler and from Peter the Great to Karl Marx (who was on the lam at the time)....



Jeanette Reynolds with goats and Story the Dalmatian, at home on the farm. Mack is out of the frame.

Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.

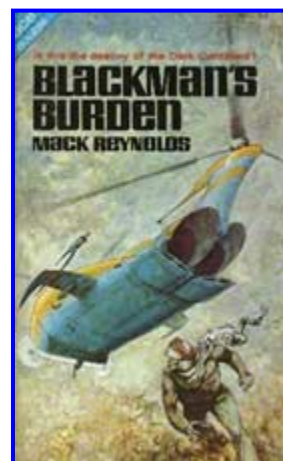
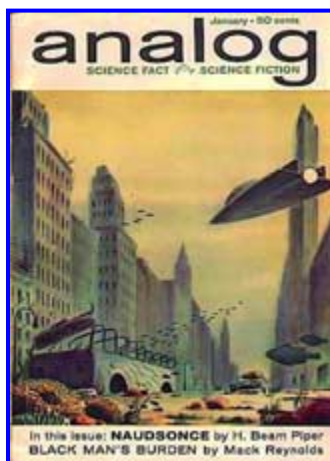
“Our Dalmatian, Story, whom various Institute members met before we left the States, died last year in Spain. He fell in line of duty, from a heart attack while chasing a cat. So this summer, in Yugoslavia, we sought a new Dalmatian and finally found one. His father won the national championship of Yugoslavia last year, and Marshal Tito was so impressed that he requested some of his puppies. When the litter came, two sisters and one brother of our dog went to Marshal Tito’s ownership, and we’ve got one of the remaining. Does this, however distantly, relate us to Tito Broz?

“Now that we’re safely out of the country, we’ve named our Dalmatian Tito. We tell everybody, of course, that he’s

defected to the west.”

#

Late in 1961 John Campbell thought up one of his schemes and passed the concept along to Mack Reynolds, as he did on numerous occasions. Only this time, things were quite a bit different. The world wasn't really ready for the concept but that had nothing to do with its creation...the trilogy upon which Mack Reynolds' very reputation rests... his North African Series.



It was Campbell's contention that not-up-to-grade black nations in Africa needed a leader or at least a goal to strive toward. Therefore it was up to American born blacks—thereby not being African-Americans but Americans—to dedicate their knowledge, skills, and know-how to leading black Africans into the technological world and beyond. Sort of “the black leading the black...”

Mack's first book of the North African series, “Black Man's Burden,” appeared in *Analog* for December '61 and January '62. As *Blackman's Burden* it appeared in book form from Ace in 1972.

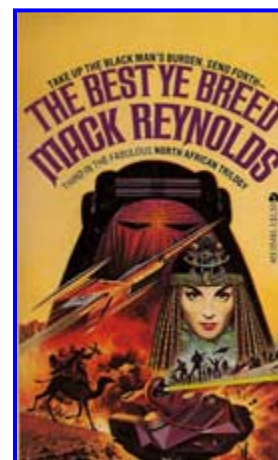
The second book, “Border, Breed Nor Birth,” appeared in *Analog* for July-August 1962. As *Border, Breed Nor Birth* it appeared in book form from Ace in 1972.

The third book in the trilogy, *The Best Ye Breed*, was published by Ace in 1978. The novel was original with this publication and had not appeared as a magazine serial.

These three novels are generally praised as being the very best of Mack Reynolds' writings in the sf genre.

#

From 1961 to '64, at his agent Scott Meredith's insistence, Mack took a tangent in his writing. For years, since 1957, Scott Meredith Literary Agency, and Scott personally, had been the single largest supplier of pornography in the USA, and it was all done secretly from a Post Office Box in Grand Central Station that mailed plain black manuscript boxes to porno publishers all over the USA. It was known as the Black Box operation and Meredith's ownership was kept as a very deep secret.



This Black Box operation began with the near death of science fiction in 1960, after the failure of American News Company, the single largest periodicals distributor in the USA. For science fiction magazines particularly, the ANC collapse was a death wail. If you couldn't get distributed you couldn't sell magazines, and if you couldn't sell magazines you were dead. Science fiction writers, by the droves, rushed to fill in the gap in Meredith's Black Box porno division.

Part of this collapse of the American News Company and the premature death of sf magazines resulted in my own *Who Killed Science Fiction?* (See [e129, December 2006](#)) which was awarded a Hugo at the 1961 World Science Fiction Convention in Seattle, Washington.

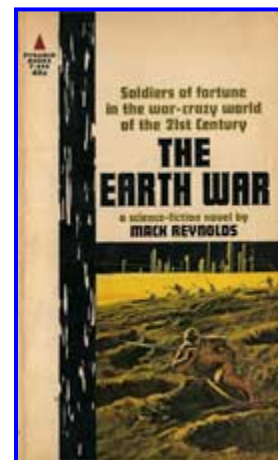
From his list of regular writers, Meredith had some of the best-known and -selling writers in the business, under pseudonym, secretly pounding out hack porn novels in their spare time. Such luminaries as Evan Hunter, Lawrence Sanders, Donald E. Westlake, William Kynes, Robert Silverberg, and their caliber were producing, each, from one to five novels a month for that proverbial black box.

And somehow, through all the years of representing Mack Reynolds as one of Meredith's best-selling authors, he had never been "turned" to the pornography section. That ended in 1961 when Meredith persuaded Mack to write a series of "dirty books" for Monarch Publishers in New York City. From '61 through '64, Mack, under his own byline—a real novelty in the porn world in those days—he wrote five novels for Monarch:

- |      |                               |
|------|-------------------------------|
| 1961 | <i>Episode on the Riviera</i> |
|      | <i>A Kiss Before Loving</i>   |
| 1962 | <i>This Time We Love</i>      |
| 1963 | <i>The Kept Woman</i>         |
| 1964 | <i>The Jet Set</i>            |

*This Time We Love* was later "slightly revised, retitled, pseudonymed" and published by Greenleaf Classics as *Four Letter World* in 1972.

#



In 1963, following yet another break away from John W. Campbell, Jr. and *Astounding* (by then renamed *Analog*), Mack again determined to make it a final break, and switched his allegiance to Donald A. Wollheim at Ace Books. However, his first science fiction novel, *The Earth War*, was published that year by Pyramid Books. A serial version under the title "Frigid Fracas" appeared in the March and April 1963 issues of *Analog*.

In 1963 I had been working as an editor for William Hamling's Blake Pharmaceuticals front for his pornography novels for two years and was, by attrition, about to become editor in chief of those books. As part of the front, under the name of Regency Books, we occasionally published "clean" books and it was my pleasure and delight to edit Mack Reynolds' *The Expatriates*. I wrote about this extensively in [e111, December 2006](#) under the title of "Remembering Regency" and told how very much Mack Reynolds and his wanderlust had influenced my life and how Mack, personally and directly, had added to my own desires to travel and experience things beyond my imagination.

*The Expatriates* was partly a collection of Mack's memories of traveling all around the world looking for the perfect

place for him and Jeanette to live. It was also a list of the negatives associated with living in the USA that Mack found impossible to tolerate, as did many of the countless thousands of US expatriates living in far-flung countries everywhere.

In this book Mack poured out his heart, hammering away at the things that most disturbed him about living in the USA...the brainwashing and double-think constantly force-fed to the citizens, turning them into docile, compliant workers for the industries that owned the professional politicians who were allegedly supposed to be looking out for and protecting those compliant workers.

Chiefly among Mack's personal hatreds were the omnipresent racial standards forcing many groups to live far below the commonplace standards and to be constantly put down for their race or their color. Mack even felt that he and Jeanette were discriminated against in some US states where it was forbidden for mixed races to become married... this because of Jeanette's Amerind background.

The next worst hate was the way people in the USA who did not conform to religious-imposed heterosexuality were treated, even beaten and left on the streets to die. There were no provisions for homosexuality at all, gay or Lesbian, and neither would be tolerated even though both were commonplace throughout the nation. Mack would have been shocked and very sorry to learn, decades after his death, that the USA, under George Bush, was the only single nation member of the United Nations to not sign the universal accord granting reasonable rights to homosexuals.

Indeed, it is a good thing that Mack did not live long enough to witness, first hand, a US federal administration that would attack without valid reason Afghanistan and Iraq and slaughter many thousands of their innocent citizens, to say nothing about killing many thousands of US misguided young people..."Support our troops" indeed! Terrorists and slaughterers of the world. Mack would have wept real tears knowing that any US federal administration through ruses like "Homeland Security" and "Patriot Acts" would subvert not only the actual US Constitution but the Bill of Rights as well. That same administration imprisoned for indefinite terms persons who had never been even charged with a crime, indicted, tried, or convicted...just imprisoned on federal orders where they were routinely tortured, humiliated, and had their religions defiled every hour of every day.



Another of Mack Reynolds' crusades was to try to bring the US into conformity with other nations as far as personal use of recreational drugs was concerned. His comments in *The Expatriates* were:

"Throughout the world, among civilized peoples, the narcotics addict is recognized as a sick man. In the United States, addicts are criminals to be imprisoned.

"The line drawn between what a narcotic is and what it isn't seems an arbitrary one. In the United States, caffeine in coffee, tea, Coca-Cola, and Pepsi-Cola is perfectly legal. For that matter, it can be purchased in 'No-Doz' tablets in drug stores and even truck-stop restaurants along the highways without prescription. Tobacco is also openly available, in spite of recent claims of smoking being conducive to lung cancer. According to Norman *The Naked and the Dead* Mailer, who has self-admittedly done considerable research in the field, the cigarette habit is harder to shake than is heroin. We wouldn't know.

"Marijuana, on the other hand, is illegal.

"Back in the thirties a scandal arose about American soldiers stationed in the Panama Canal Zone smoking marijuana. After numerous letters of indignation to newspapers and magazine articles viewing with alarm, the Surgeon General of the U.S. Army did an editorial on the subject for the Army medical journal. In it, rather testily, he declared that marijuana wasn't any more dangerous than cigarettes and, in fact, wasn't habit-forming. A few years later, a similar cry went up in New York, and Mayor LaGuardia named a commission to investigate the use of the weed. To everyone's surprise, including LaGuardia's and the commissions, they found that marijuana is not habit-forming, is not a sexual stimulant, and is not conducive to crime. They could have saved themselves a considerable amount of time had they read the definitive work on the subject, a several-volume report of a British commission in India, brought out during the nineteenth century. The whiskey people in Scotland had complained

about the wide use of 'bhang' or Indian hemp. Investigation brought out the above information. Not habit-forming, not a sexual stimulant, not conducive to crime.

"The question becomes, then, why is marijuana listed as a narcotic and its use or possession a prison offense? Sponsors of the weed claim that the reason is because the stuff cannot be taxed efficiently, were it legal. It is unbelievably easy to raise, will grow in just about any climate, and anyone can cure his own. Its effect is similar to that of alcohol, except there is little, if any, hangover. In short, there is no profit in it for the equivalent of tobacco firms and distillers, and the government's liquor taxes would plummet if it became widely used.

"Be that as it may, there is no doubt that American narcotics laws tend to drive our addicts abroad, both for a source of supply and to avoid prison, rather than to cure them."

#

By 1964 wanderlust again overtook Mack and Jeanette and they visited India and then, by steamer, to Japan and Hong Kong. From then it was back to Europe for yet a final tour, this time visiting and living in the U.S.S.R., Romania, Ukraine, Kiev, Moscow, Leningrad, and on to Finland. But nothing they found, no place they lived, satisfied them nearly as much as they had already known in Mexico.

In 1965 William Hamling moved his publishing company to San Diego, California and set it up in grand style as Greenleaf Classics, Inc., and I, as editor in chief, was moved along to California as well.

Also in 1965 Mack and Jeanette Reynolds returned to San Miguel de Allende, proclaiming it to be their residence of choice for the rest of their lives. They became *emigratti* (an eight-year process to become Mexican citizens legally), and Jeanette undertook the management of hotel *La Casa de Sierra Nevada*, a small five-star hotel with a gourmet dining room where Jeanette's talents really came to the forefront, causing the hotel to be featured in a number of national travel magazines worldwide.

Describing places the Reynoldses lived during 1965-66, in *The Expatriates*, Mack Reynolds wrote:

"The present writer has, in his time, lived in Woodstock, New York (for eight years), in the Vieux Carre of New Orleans (a year), lived in Taos, New Mexico (three years), and in various art colonies abroad...."

In 1966, thanks mostly to Donald Gilmore and the incredible pornography empire he was building for himself in Guadalajara, I began to feel the need to expand into Mexico myself. With Don's help I found the perfect house in Ajijic, Jalisco, and by early 1967 it had been reconstructed to my design, including the addition of a guest room on the upper deck, all the renovations had been completed, the interior redecorated and furnished, the yard landscaped, and the house staffed. And, in order to be closer to the core of porno writers turning out many manuscripts every month for Greenleaf Classics (we were publishing *fifty* titles a month at the time), I became an expatriate myself and moved into the middle of that porno factory.

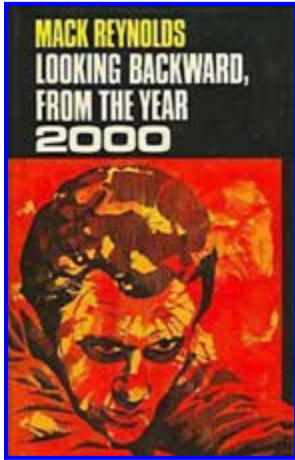
That house, at *Constitution 14*, became in short order *la casa de me corizon*...the place where my heart lived. And where I lived for five and a half years...the very best five and a half years of my entire life. The first time, ever, that I felt really free and unrestricted by the continuous brainwashing by USA feds and their multinational owners. Mack Reynolds was right all along, and he gave me the right to feel as free as he and Jeanette did.

While I lived there in Ajijic, Jalisco, only a few hours away from the Reynoldses in San Miguel de Allende, I would visit them as frequently as I could, often bringing along other writers and friends who were welcomed as special guests by the Reynoldses. I wrote of these visits and my love of Mack and Jeanette in "Nuñez 32," elsewhere in this issue of *eI*.

By 1970 it was bad times again for Mack Reynolds...he was not making any sales of his fiction. In *Mack Reynolds Starmont Reader's Guide* (1988), Curtis C. Smith wrote, "*Locus*, a science fiction trade magazine, reported on 15 March 1974 that Ace was holding eight unpublished Reynolds books in their files. Even when the books were published, Reynolds didn't necessarily get paid; writing to Pohl on 12 June 1973, Reynolds said that Ace took a year to pay the initial advance for *Looking Backward*, and 'it's been out since March, now, and I haven't yet received my publication advance.'"

In 1972, as “Maxine Reynolds,” Mack Reynolds wrote two Gothics, both published by Beagle Books. Those two Gothics were titled *The House in the Kasbah* and *The Home of the Inquisitor*.

In 1976 a collection of his short stories was published as *The Best of Mack Reynolds*.



In 1982, because business was so bad and they were not able to sell any of Mack Reynolds writings, Scott Meredith Literary Agency cancelled Reynolds as a client. Immediately afterward Mack was diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus and operated on for same, only it was too late. Mack died on January 30, 1983 in hospital in San Luis Potosi, and his body was returned to San Miguel de Allende to be buried there in his adopted home of choice.

It is ironic that Mack Reynolds was to have been Guest of Honor at Boskone XX in Boston, Massachusetts the following month, February 1983. (See the eulogy written and delivered at Boskone XX by Fred Pohl elsewhere in this issue of *eI*.)

Jeanette Reynolds made arrangements with Robert P. Mills literary agent to handle Mack's material and packaged up “dozens of unsold short stories and several novel manuscripts” and sent them off to Mills to deal with. Most of those stories and novels never appeared anywhere. After Bob Mills died, and Richard Curtis literary agent became successor, those unsold manuscripts were again packaged up and returned to

Jeanette at home in San Miguel de Allende. All of them disappeared along with Jeanette's death and none of them has resurfaced since then.

#

As a twist-of-fate incident, Mack's mother, Pauline, died in November 1991 at the age of 102.

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Prozine cover scans Courtesy Jacques Hamon Collection <http://www.collectorshowcase.fr/>

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Wild men though we fancy ourselves, we are behind *Fortune* magazine by at least ten years politically.  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *PITFCS 134*

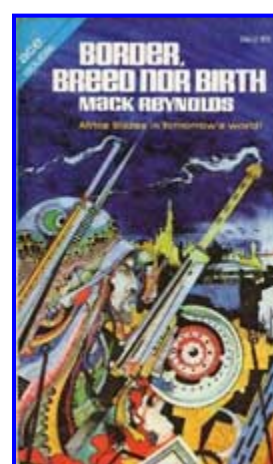
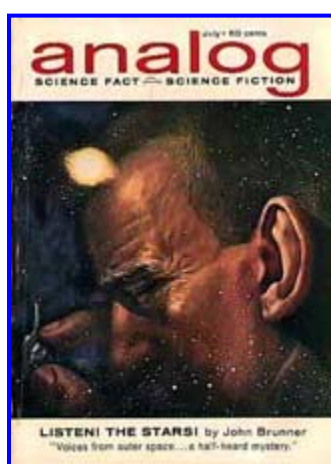
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# Mack Reynolds and Politics

by George W. Price

Mack Reynolds was a great storyteller, though I strongly disagreed with him on politics (I am about as far to the right as he was to the left). Of all his stories, I best remember his “North African” series.

Like Kipling, Reynolds believed in delivering a strong story plainly told. The comparison to Kipling springs to mind because he used Kipling quotations for the titles and epigraphs of that “North African” series: *Black Man's Burden*; *Border, Breed Nor Birth*; and *The Best Ye Breed*. They started appearing in *Analog* in 1961, and by 1978 they had all been published as books by Ace. They were about Homer Crawford, a black American sociologist who found himself pitch-forked into becoming a leader in the struggle to modernize backward North African countries. It's Kipling turned inside out—instead of the “superior” whites having a duty to help the “lesser races,” we have a black man showing the natives how to help themselves.



What I have remembered about the stories for all these years are not the plot twists or character development—though there were both in good measure—but one simple insight that most stories of “national liberation” have never displayed. Reynolds understood that modernizing a backward society requires much more than booting out foreign imperialist overlords or dethroning native tyrants. It requires that the natives must *change their own culture*. That's because nearly always it is precisely that native culture that keeps them in backwardness. Imperialists and tyrants may take advantage of the backwardness, but they don't cause it and their departure won't end it. And making such deep cultural changes is no easy task, as Homer Crawford painfully learns. The changes can't simply be imposed by fiat. If leading people in battle is hard, persuading them to abandon traditional patterns of thought is far harder.

I no longer remember if Reynolds explicitly made this point, or if it was something that I only slowly became aware of as I devoured the stories. (It's been a long time since I read them.) And I am quite sure that he and I would have strongly disagreed on just what changes to native culture would be necessary for modernization. That doesn't matter; they are good stories—read them if you get the chance.

By the way, I am quite aware that it is now politically incorrect to refer to indigenous peoples as “natives.” I am doing it anyway, partly out of scorn for the whole PC idiocy, but mostly because the habits of thought that led technologically advanced peoples to think of those less advanced as “natives” has had so much influence on how we deal with them and what we think must be done to “raise them up to our level.” As Reynolds understood, they have to raise themselves up, we can't do it for them.

#

If you want to see what Mack Reynolds and many others were thinking back in the early 1960s, Advent:Publishers

in 1992 reprinted Ted Cogswell's *PITFCS (The Proceedings of the Institute for Twenty-First Century Studies)*, a "fanzine for pros" that is mostly letters by science fiction professionals or semiprofessionals. It contains a number of letters by Reynolds (and some by me), including comments on *Black Man's Burden*. This is a monster of a book: 350,000 words in 384 big pages (8.5 x 11) of small print, clothbound. We still have some available; send your check for \$40.00 to Advent at P.O. Box A3228, Chicago, IL 60690-3228. Also ask for a catalog and learn about our more recent books, such as Joe Major's *Heinlein's Children: The Juveniles* (2006, \$25.00), Doc Smith's *Have Trenchcoat, Will Travel* (2001, \$20.00), and Damon Knight's *In Search of Wonder* (3rd edition, 1996, \$21.00).

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Prozine cover scans Courtesy Jacques Hamon Collection <http://www.collectorsshowcase.fr/>

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The First Amendment reads more like a dream than a law, and no other nation, so far as I know, has been crazy enough to include such a dream among its fundamental legal documents.

— Kurt Vonnegut

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# Memories of Mack and Jeanette

Artwork by Brad Foster

by Jerry Murray

As Earl Kemp pointed out in the first paragraph of his Mack Reynolds story, "Revisiting *The Expatriates*," elsewhere in this issue of *eI*, "When Dallas was born in 1917 the world was in an uproar, with war and threats of war breaking out frequently. The USA declared itself into the World War and sent troops to France. In Russia a revolution was well underway that forced the czar to abdicate his position in favor of the liberal government that replaced him. Then, in October, one month before Dallas' birth, the Bolsheviks, headed by Trotsky and Lenin overthrew that liberal government by force of arms and executed the czar and his entire family."



Jerry and Suzann Murray. Photo by Earl Kemp, LAPB, Mission Hills, CA, 2008.

Over fifty years later, when I met Mack and Jeanette Reynolds in San Miguel de Allende in the early 1970s, America was still in an uproar of anti-war demonstrations and socioeconomic upheavals.

Fatal shootings of Kent State Vietnam protesters by National Guardsmen had shocked the nation. Hundreds of Vietnam vets pelted the White House with their medals as 200,000 anti-war demonstrators rallied on Capitol Hill. In New York City, thousands of homosexuals marched through Greenwich Village chanting "Say it loud, gay is proud!" thus giving birth to the Gay Pride movement. Betty Friedan, Bella Abzug, and other angry women activists formed NOW, the National Organization of Women, demanding equal pay for women workers. And right in the middle of these social revolutions, Earl Kemp was not only a key figure in defending the Constitutional Rights of American citizens to freedom of speech, but also instrumental in bringing the Reynoldses and me together in San Miguel.

Mack's lifelong discontent with governmental systems provided grist for the geopolitical novels and short stories that made him one of America's most acclaimed writers of science fiction. Before settling down in San Miguel, he and Jeanette traveled the world in their search for some form of government that approximated Utopia. I got to San Miguel in a less noble and circuitous way. Sick of the Vietnam war and fed up with corporate politics, I swapped my job as a salaried chemical engineer for a hand-to-mouth career as a free lance writer of sexually oriented pulp fiction, and moved to Mexico and San Miguel to mend or bend a busted marriage.

Succeeding with my portable typewriter beyond my expectations, I quit California and dragged my unenthusiastic young wife to Ajijic, where we quickly became part of Earl's stable of high-living, pot-smoking, carefree porn writers. In less than a year I felt so out of touch with reality that I was making almost monthly speed runs back and forth to L.A. in my new VW van to see what was happening in the rapidly developing new world of swinging singles, which I was fictionalizing on my IBM Selectric in backwater Ajijic. After six months of this, my wife decided to move from Ajijic to San Miguel to room with porn writer Vivien Kern while brushing up on her Spanish at the Instituto, and from there she ran off with a Mexican tour guide working out of Mexico City.

Feeling it was all my fault, and knowing it wouldn't last, I moved in with Vivien to be there to forgive my foolishly fallen young wife when she came straggling back to me. But on that night when she did come back, it wasn't to be forgiven, it was to catch up on her sleep while her lover was guiding a tour to Acapulco

"You can't ruin your life like this!" "He's only after your money!" "Think what this will do to your aged parents!" "Not to mention poor old me, facrissake!" Ten minutes of this roused my yawning wife to the point of lashing back at me, loudly, and ten more of that made Vivien bring in a middle-aged neighbor named Jeanette, who chain-smoked our cigarettes while convincing me to spend the night on the couch at her house while Diane crashed at Vivien's, and we would meet for further discussion in the morning.

Round Two ended when Diane took a bus back to Mexico City, leaving poor old me to get any sympathy I could from the illustrious Mack Reynolds after he'd finished his daily quota of pages and come down from his rooftop office to host me for lunch.

I knew he was illustrious because Earl had told me so, but I hadn't read anything by him because I'd never been a science fiction fan. I forget what Jeanette served us, but remember Mack pouring glass after glass of vino tinto while politely informing me that I was a spineless fool for not kicking my unfaithful slut of a wife out in the cobblestoned street when she'd first walked into Vivien's apartment the previous night. I was taken aback by the vitriol spouting from the mouth of this paunchy, pipe-smoking man of letters, thirteen years my senior, who scorned me for letting my wife walk out of my life without at least a couple of black eyes.

(In an important aside, I only realized the source of his scorn when I read Earl's account of Mack's earlier life in his ezine article, which said that when Mack was in the service, his first wife dumped him, took their three kids and ran off with a guy.)

Years later, when I met Mack, it took several weeks of casual contact with him before we became anywhere close to becoming friends. I knew the ice had broken when I was invited to join one of his afternoon literary discussions with five or six other writers that helped Mack relax after his long morning at the typewriter, his lunch, and a short nap. Some of the other writers were local, like Dwight Swain and Dalton Works, and others were college professors who had taken sabbatical leave to write a bestseller, like Ted Cogswell, the head of the English department at Ball State Teacher's College, and Gary Jennings, who was writing a lengthy novel about the Aztec civilization...plus me, a lowly porn writer among the giants of literature.

I was timid in joining in the discussions, which were more about politics than writing, but I did keep up with their drinking, and after my second meeting, Mack drew me aside and showed me a recent *World Almanac* declaring there were less than 10,000 professional writers at work in America. That seemed like a lot to me, until he pointed out the asterisk defining a professional writer as one who had earned at least \$3,000 in the previous year.



Then he raised his voice, telling me that I was earning five or six times that amount, with nobody bossing me around, and little or no need for doing any research, thus giving me the freedom to take my typewriter any place in the world and associate with *real* professional writers, like him, who didn't pay income tax and drank as much as they could handle, and wrote whatever they could sell. I probably whined that the stuff I wrote wasn't worth much compared to the social commentary he wrote. So he held up a finger and said, "The only good writing is writing that sells, because it entertains, or makes people think. Most of those 10,000 so-called writers are writing cookbooks, textbooks, and copy for advertisements. More power to 'em, and besides them, there are thirty million people struggling to write novels so boring they'll never be published!"

Time and again in my long career as a writer of fiction and electronic trade journal articles, I have silently thanked my friend Dallas Mack Reynolds for keeping entertainment in mind on the road to freedom in making a living.

Another thing I learned from Mack was not to judge people too quickly. I don't recall his declaring himself as a socialist, but he often referred to himself as an anarchist. To me, that term described a wild-eyed Hungarian who throws bombs at government buildings and tries to shoot politicians. To Mack, an anarchist was a citizen of a calm and prosperous state whose people were so enlightened that they needed no rules or regulations to keep them from harming themselves or others. Earl's history of the Reynoldses' travels indicates how much he and Jeanette searched the world for that impossibly Utopian state, and while San Miguel was a comfortably prosperous city, there was always something interesting, and even dangerous going on in and around the Reynoldses' house even on the calmest of days.

I rang the bell at Nuñez 32 one fine spring afternoon and waited a while before Jeanette, who was clearly exhausted,

opened the door. She gestured me in, asked me to fetch a couple of beers, and flopped down on the couch in their sunken living room. I went warily into her kitchen, on the lookout for Pancho, her huge scarlet macaw, who was so jealous of any male visitor that he'd sneak up behind him and bite his Achilles tendon, very painfully. He was usually perched on Jeanette's shoulder, cooing and kissing her ear as she did her splendid cooking and her routine chores about their beautifully decorated house. He was on her shoulder that day, she said, as she climbed the stairs to water the profusion of plants on their roof garden, or mirador. And as she bent to water a low lying pot by the parapet of their house, Pancho launched himself over the parapet and swooped down toward the cobblestoned street, gaining just enough airspeed to flap his wings hard enough to clear the parapet on the house across the street.

"I hadn't clipped Pancho's wings enough," she said, "and with both Mack and the neighbors gone for the rest of the day, it was up to me to rescue him."

Despite her noticeable arthritis, Jeanette had dragged their 20-foot-long ladder across the street, propped it up against the neighbor's wall, and climbed it to the top of their parapet, which was studded with broken glass. Across the patio she could see Pancho at her level in a mango tree, nodding his red and yellow head at her in greeting. Instead of climbing down and asking for some help, she dragged the ladder up and over the neighbor's wall, lowered it onto their patio, and avoided the broken glass as she climbed over the parapet to descend on the ladder. Then she had to drag it across the patio and prop it up in the tree, climb it until she could reach Pancho, and then hold out her helping hand to him, whereupon he said, "Hello, mother!"

#

A simple event like a fishing trip can have repercussions.

I was in the middle of an overdue manuscript for Earl when Mack was between books, and went on a fishing trip with Dalton and two other friends. It took two or three hours to drive to Los Mochis, a jungle fishing village on the Sea of Cortez near the Tropic of Cancer. After sipping some Scotch along the way, they had dinner and went to bed in a rented *jalapa*, with the woven palm windows opened wide to get some of the tropical breeze circulating over their sweaty bodies as they slept on cots in their shorts. When they awoke in the morning, their hangovers were compounded when they saw that their toes were still bleeding from the bites of the fruit bats that had visited them during the night. Mack's pals were rather glum on the drive home, but he just laughed and laughed, because while they were facing the ordeal of being treated for rabies, he had already been through the process a few months earlier, after a stray dog had bitten him while he was walking Plotzy in San Miguel.

Plotzy was a lively female hound dog that the Reynolds usually walked outside of town. I sometimes drove them in my VW van and accompanied them on their walks in the beautiful foothills of the Sierra Madres. They knew the area well enough to explain sights like the red and yellow carpets that covered many of the hills during that lovely springtime.

"Get down on your hands and knees, Jerry," they said, "And if you look very closely at those tiny red flowers, you'll see where all the world's cultivated zinnias originated." A similar examination of the yellow carpets showed me the tiny wild flowers from which the world's giant marigolds were hybridized. Another thing I learned from those walks, and have used with my own pulmonary problems, was how Jeannette kept her arthritis under control by being physically active almost beyond what her chronic disease would permit.

Flying over mountainous terrain that abounds in the central part of Mexico, the discerning eye can see individual hills and mountains resembling pyramids thickly covered with tropical growth. It goes beyond rumor that in addition to the hundreds of pyramids that have already been excavated by the country's limited number of properly funded archaeologists, some more 5,000 pyramids have yet to be discovered in Mexico. Many of the so-called undiscovered pyramids have been stumbled upon by indigenous native Mexicans, and repeatedly mined for their pre-Columbian treasures.

The quality of the Reynoldses' collection of ancient artifacts surpassed that of many museum displays I've seen, and I was very disturbed to return from one of my forays to California to find that they'd suffered a serious loss at the hands of the local police.



No one's allowed to excavate Mexico's pyramids without a government license, but no one's been able to follow a native who has already found the pyramid and is returning to get a few choice specimens for sale to collectors. The Reynoldses were fluent and friendly with all Mexicans, and perhaps Jeanette's Amerind background also helped them acquire a collection large enough to display some favorite specimens on shelves in their house. Whatever it was that brought this to the attention of the authorities, theirs was one of several houses in San Miguel that was raided on the same night. The worst of the raids was so devastating to an elderly friend of theirs who was professor at the Instituto that he jumped out his second floor window and died in the street.

Then and now, corruption is rife in Mexico, but justice can still prevail if one has friends in the right circles.

I was still living in the spare bedroom of Vivien's spacious apartment when Jeannette arrived one morning, breathless with the news that Diane was on the phone from Mexico City, where she'd been jailed. Still waiting when I'd hurried to the Reynoldses' house, she said she'd been jailed on an utterly ridiculous charge of obscene public behavior, and would not be released until her fine had been paid through an attorney who was ready to come to San Miguel that day and return to Mexico City in the morning with the money from me. I told her I wasn't prepared to give any money to a stranger without absolute proof of his good intentions, but that I was willing to talk with him if he came to San Miguel. Mack was there at the time, nodding his approval as I spoke with her, and advising me to give Diane the Reynoldses' San Miguel address for the meeting with the attorney and his clerk who would leave immediately.



Mack Reynolds

Mack then gave me some further advice, turned their house over to me, and went to bed early. I stayed up sipping vino tinto and sharpening my machete until my hands were bloodied, and when the doorbell rang near midnight, I opened the door and admitted three decidedly disreputable attorneys to what they thought was my vacation abode in Mexico. I listened to everything they said about getting my wife out of one of the country's worst jails at any cost, and told them to meet me in my attorney's office when it opened the next day at ten a.m.

I was waiting in Mack's attorney's office when the trio arrived, clearly awed by the busts of Socrates, Plato, and other ancient jurists glowering down at them as 'my' lawyer, clad in a judge's black robe, coolly enumerated the laws they had already broken and the punishment they were in store for unless they got the police to release my wife at once, have her call me (at the Reynoldses' phone number), and put her on a first class bus to San Miguel before the day was out. She called on schedule, assured me she hadn't been harmed and was free to go, and said she'd already been sent enough money by her parents to fly home to Washington State. I sent her some more, and said I hoped we'd meet again.

After thanking the Reynoldses profusely, and promising to return, I headed back to see my family in Orange County and mend some fences in San Diego before going back to San Miguel, this time with my fifteen-year-old nephew Ross as my navigator and traveling companion. Passing through El Paso we picked up fifteen-year-old Frankie Damos, firstborn son of one of my old college pals, and for the month of June all three of us were fifteen years old as I drove us from El Paso to Acapulco to Oaxaca to Mexico City, where Frankie caught a first class Tres Estrellas bus to Juarez, and Ross and I headed for San Miguel.

Ross was skinny as a rail, and the moment Jeanette saw him she began fixing him mountains of delicious viands he'd never heard of before. Mack quickly took to him, and introduced me to a nun who managed the rental properties of the town's Monsignor, who was in New York interviewing boys on Time Square for summer jobs as his altar boys in San Miguel.

My nephew and I rented a very nice house near the old market place, and set up bachelor quarters for the rest of the summer. We were given the keys to the Reynoldses' household, and they suggested trips we might take to visit parts of Mexico few tourists ever see. One was Guanajuato, Mexico's witchcraft headquarters, another was Los Pozos, an eerily empty ghost town in the high desert, still populated by a few invisible citizens, and a nameless village so far out in the *vavatete* they'd never seen it themselves, though they had seen Timbuktu.

I've never found it on any map, but they said it was on a side road to Guanajuato, and its unique attraction was that

cowboy movies were occasionally made there because it was so genuinely primitive that there were no electrical wires to mar the scenery. We left Plotzy at home and drove in my van to what looked like the turn-off, and headed away from the two-lane paved road for a mile or so before turning left to parallel it. After a few miles more, we saw the top of a crucifix, its bottom obscured by dozens of men facing the cross, and were wearing what looked like bridal veils on their heads that hung down their backs. A few miles more brought us to the village, where we were greeted by grimly scowling women who were tending three or four tables displaying miniature skulls, skeletons, and coiled whips.

Past them was an odd, squatty church with an even odder and squattier structure in the shape of a beehive that apparently served as the church's entry. We had to get down on our hands and knees to crawl into it, and once our eyes were accustomed to the darkness, Mack said, "These dark stains spattered all over the bottom three feet of the walls look like bloodstains to me."

"These people could be Penitentes," said Jeanette. "And anyone who's sinned has to be thoroughly whipped before they can go into the church for forgiveness."

I said, "What do you suppose they were looking at when they were gathered around that crucifix in the desert?"

And Mack said, "They were watching the congregates take turns whipping the shit out of some sinner. And as a sinner myself, I say let's get the fuck out of town, *now!*"

We were fifty feet shy of the van when several dozen short, squatty guys in the bridal veils came marching single file past us, some of them carrying placards on sticks, all of them wearing big, coiled bullwhips at their waists, and all of them with their eyes glazed over from having eaten peyote.

We were edging closer to the city limits, thinking they were ignoring us, when BANG...BANG...rocks started hitting my van...BANG and BANG and BANG again, as we hastened to do Mack's bidding, and got stoned out of town as fast as I could drive.

Having read this article you know Mack and Jeanette were innate adventurers, and like Ross and me, I'm sure this trip stood out in their memories throughout their lives.

Another trip the Reynoldses enjoyed recounting was their round the world cruise, on which they made quite a comfortable living while seeing the world.

I'm not sure exactly when it happened, but I know they had settled in San Miguel when they decided to set out on a carefully planned departure, and from then on, followed a wonderfully impromptu itinerary.

Ever aware of the tenuous life of a free-lance writer, they took a second class bus to Panama City, checked into a cheap hotel at a weekly rate, and began reading through the daily shipping news in search of independent freighters passing through the canal with accommodations for eight or fewer passengers. Lore from other world travelers had told them that the rules at the time stated that a shipboard physician was only needed for ships taking on more than eight passengers, which gave the captains of smaller freighters tacit authority to negotiate passage for people seeking an economical ocean voyage.

It took them a couple of weeks to settle on a tramp steamer that was going on an open voyage that might take it, and them, around the world. After coming to a meeting of the minds with what seemed like a properly flexible skipper, Mack boarded the ship with his typewriter, eight reams of typing paper, and eight cases of Scotch whisky. Jeanette boarded with plans of her own, which began when the steamer cleared the Panama Canal, at which time she went below to the galley and easily cooked her way into being placed in charge of providing the crew and passengers with their meals, an occupation that included shopping for the provisions each time they docked at a new port.

So it went as the ship zigged and zagged its way across the Pacific, picking up and delivering any cargo the captain had negotiated for on the radio waves. While the captain was dealing in copra, or rice, or drums of diesel fuel, or bicycles, or used cars, he was also making a few bucks trading the fluctuating currency rates on his ports of call.

By the time Jeanette finished her grocery shopping, she knew everything there was to know about the best

restaurant in town. There she charmed the chef or the owner into divulging their signature recipe, always promising to mention their name in the book she was writing titled, *Cooking My Way Around the World*.

Back at sea, the Reynoldses always dined at the captain's table, and always the convivial drinker and storyteller, Mack was soon sharing in the captain's oceanic trading intercourse.

By the time they got back to Panama City, Jeanette had completed her cookbook and Mack had finished seven or eight more of his science fiction novels.

Returning to the rest of our 1972 summer vacation, Ross and I enjoyed watching Jeanette cook, doing things like deftly boning a duck with her arthritic hands, and eating the results while Mack kept our glasses wet with Mexican wine. I think they would have adopted Ross, and perhaps me too, but as it was, with summer vacation almost over, Mack did all he could to make it a memorable one for us.

In addition to his afternoon sipping sessions with the authors, there was a table reserved for writers at the *Cucaracha* bar across the street from San Miguel's plaza and its replica of Paris's Notre Dame Cathedral. Vivien was his favorite female writer, and though he discouraged her from joining us at the writer's table, he made a place for Ross at the table for special occasions. I got my sister's permission for Ross to skip two weeks of school and stay for the big fiesta commemorating Captain Allende's starting the revolution in which Father Hidalgo sacrificed his life to overthrow Spain's oppressive grip on Mexico.

After ordering beer all around and tequila for everyone but Ross, Mack pointed at the life-sized bronze statue of Father Hidalgo standing on a pedestal in front of the shops several yards away from the *Cucaracha*. The robed priest was extending the palms of his hands to a kneeling Mexican Indian in a loincloth. Mack said, "Ross, when the music starts keep your eye on that statue." As it did, a soldier armed with a rifle took up a position at the base of the statue, and a shop girl came to stand in the doorway and smile at him. In and out she went while the parades were passing, the bands were playing, we were drinking our beer, and the September afternoon was getting so hot that the shop girl came out and brought the soldier a glass of water.

The fiesta was getting bigger and better, and the afternoon hotter when she beckoned from the doorway with a can of Pepsi in her hand. The soldier quickly followed her into the store, and right away, one guy was climbing the pedestal and reaching down for a bucket handed up by another guy, so the first guy could fill to overflowing the priest's cupped hands with fresh excrement.

"Once every year, the Indians do that to try to get even for all the bullshit they've been fed by the Catholic Church."

Vivien came with us as Ross drove my van to the Mexico City Airport, leaving a number of sad gringo expatriates behind. But fortunately there was Ted and George Cogswell's wedding to distract us from my nephew's absence.

George owned a discotheque in Ajijic, and like everyone else in the wedding party at the Episcopalian church, including the priest, she was an atheist. The ceremony was followed by the wettest reception I've ever attended, and that was followed by Ted and George getting into her Jeep and heading for their honeymoon suite in Puerto Vallarta.

An hour later the reception was winding down when the Jeep came roaring back, stopping between the plaza and the police station for Ted to shove his screaming, cursing bride out on the cobblestones, where bride and groom were immediately arrested for being drunk and very disorderly. Placed in separate cells, Ted made a pillow out of his boots and went to sleep on the thin mattress of the cell's wooden cot. George propped her mattress against her cell's door, set it on fire, and screamed bloody murder until the cops turned them loose at dawn to continue on their honeymoon. When the honeymoon ended, George sedately began serving tea at the Sunday seminars Ted hosted for his graduate students at Ball State Teacher's College in Muncie, Indiana.



Ted and George Cogswell in their wedding finery, matching leather safari suits.  
(Best available photograph.)  
Courtesy Megan Cogswell Collection.

Last time I saw the Reynoldses was in 1977, when my bride of three years, Suzann, demanded I take her to places and people I'd known when I lived in Mexico, and especially in San Miguel. They were overjoyed to see me, mutual attraction between them sprouted immediately. Married. I had time to tell them Ross had grown into a sterling man, who asked me to give them his best regards, but before we'd had our first drink at the five-star hotel Jeanette was managing, I got so sick with *tourista* that I stayed in our hotel room until it was time to leave San Miguel for the last time in my life.

When I was a trade journal writer for electronic publications, I made side trips to Ajijic several times while covering Guadalajara's emergence as Mexico's Silicon Valley. When Suzy came with me, we found my ex-wife Diane happily living in Ajijic, with only a couple of kids and no husband to irritate her.

I take this opportunity to thank Earl for giving me this opportunity to reminisce about the most creatively entertaining couple I've ever known.

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Just because some of us can read and write and do a little math, that doesn't mean we deserve to conquer the Universe.  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *Hocus Pocus*

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# Jeanette's Radiant Aura

by Ross LaDue

I really enjoyed the history/recollections of Mack and Jeanette Reynolds. Though they focus more on Mack, it was Jeanette that I remember the most.

As a fifteen-year-old, most everything was a wonder to me then, but mostly the time I spent in Mexico. Pretty much near the top of that list of wonderment was Jeanette. Mack was friendly enough and very entertaining, but did not come off as overly warm. Jeanette more than made up for that.

Our first meeting was quite impressive. My uncle Jerry Murray and I were in San Miguel, staying at Vivien Kern's house (Jerry using me to gain entrance to her house, knowing that her fondness of me would offset the fact that she was pissed off at him for various reasons. That being a whole other story...). Our first day in town, we went over to visit the Reynoldses. Jeanette answered the door, a huge scarlet macaw right beside her. His name was Poncho.

She greeted Jerry nicely enough and upon my introduction, gave me one of the warmest hugs I've ever received. She held close to me and acted as if I was some long-lost friend as she toured me around the house, the center of it all being her kitchen. I felt very much at home.

Jerry seemed a little standoffish, due to the fact (I later found out) that Poncho disliked him. As big as Poncho was, he still was able to hide himself and then come out of nowhere to bite Jerry on his Achilles tendon and inflict great pain. Jerry was always preoccupied with knowing where Poncho was whenever we visited the Reynoldses.

While Jerry and I ate very well (a bottomless kettle of fabulous stew, fresh pork chops for breakfast, and such) at our house next door to the Monsignor (of whom Jeanette did not like and would tell many sordid stories of his visits to New York City), nothing came close to the meals offered up by Jeanette. I would stop by several times a day and was always offered the most wonderful meals.

Jeanette seemed to be able to whip up perfection on a moment's notice, and my endless appetite would just inspire her to keep cooking. Many of the best meals I've had since have been compared to hers, and hers are seldom outdone. I think it was more her love and enjoyment of the meals she created than the actual food that made the difference.

I never thought of Jeanette as a mother (too old) or as a grandmother (too robust), but more as a buddy. A buddy who could cook! She must have been in her 60s when we met, but when I would walk the hills outside of town with her, even I would have a hard time keeping up! I really found great joy in her positive attitude and friendliness. She knew everyone in town and everyone enjoyed seeing her. I would go with her to the marketplace in town. It was only a ten-minute walk. But by the time we shopped, then stopped and talked to the numerous people along the way, it would take two hours or more. Everyone along the way seemed to light up with a smile as she greeted them.

The story that Jerry told of that nameless town with the very short doorway leading into the church and the blood on the walls is quite true. There were many people wandering the streets but none of them were women. Some men were dressed up as female brides, wearing somewhat fancy white bridal gowns. Other men had the typical plain white peasant shirt and pants and hats seen in most any Mexican town. Except that the backs of their shirts were stained red with blood. Their own blood. Still fresh from the self-flagellations they were performing as they walked down the street.



Ross LaDue in Vivien Kern's living room, San Miguel de Allende, 1972.



It was all fueled by some hay-wired religious beliefs, tequila, and peyote. The men all seemed to have spooky gray-colored eyes that were glazed over with some intense visions. Even myself, being an average, thickheaded and unaware fifteen-year-old boy, picked up on the very strange, uncomfortable, and heavy vibe that was in the air. It's the only town I've ever been run out of and literally had rocks thrown at me to get me out of town. It was all very creepy.

I think the people and places in Mexico at that time WERE from a science fiction novel. Not happening out in space on some other planet, but just down south from here, in this world.

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The Internet has already become for a fortunate few ('spiritual scuba divers', one is tempted to call them) a limitless ocean without bottom or shores. In whose depths one can breathe effortlessly—in and out, in and out. It is the habitat of the newest creatures to evolve in our part of the Milky Way—as enchanting and nobly bizarre as any giant manta or moray eel, say. They are recorded thoughts and feelings about what it is like to be a living thing.

— Kurt Vonnegut

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# My Singular Encounter With Mack and Jeanette Reynolds

by Gary Sohler

It was the best of times; it was the restless times. For the young. In the early 1970s. In America.

After living for three long years as a “*Whole Earth Catalog*-inspired” urban dropout hippie on a remote, funky, 10-acre, western Oregon dirt farm, my live-in girlfriend Barbara (Bobbie) and I finally became sick and tired of a daily life consisting of two colors: gray and green.

Bobbie and I agreed, one particularly dark green and gray winter day, that we were both, in our hearts and souls, artists, not farmers, and that if we could create any life we wanted, we would go study art...somewhere, anywhere on earth with more than two colors in its landscape. Shortly thereafter we somehow magically heard about an art school deep in sunny Mexico that was popular with American expatriates that had cheap tuition and cheap living expenses. It was the Instituto de Bellas Artes in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico.

And so, I sold my beloved farm to two New York couples, both of whom were recovering heroin addicts, and whose wealthy family trust funds paid to ship them out of town to recover and enter methadone programs in Eugene, Oregon, far from big city temptations.

On a blustery and rainy day, shortly after closing escrow, Bobbie and I packed what meager belongings we owned into her 1968 Dodge Dart and, with \$13,000.00 (a hippie fortune in those days) in the bank, headed south to the sunshine of Mexico.

And it was there that we met our new neighbors Mack and Jeanette Reynolds.

It was my friend and former porno publishing collaborator Jerry Murray who told me, when I informed him of our move, “Hey, be sure to look up Mack and Jeanette Reynolds when you get to San Miguel.” And so we did.

Our contact with Mack and Jeanette Reynolds consists of one, and only one, memorable dinner at their exquisitely decorated home at the south end of San Miguel’s Zocalo.

Having been a voracious reader of science fiction novels all my life, I had, I’m sure, read every one of Mack’s extraordinary novels, so it was with both trepidation and diffidence, that Bobbie and I accepted Mack’s and Jeanette’s invitation to come to dinner at their house after making our initial contact with them.

We were warmly welcomed as “family” that night. Even their huge dogs, after sniffing us extensively, decided that we were okay. I remember that their entire home was lovingly and tastefully decorated with extraordinary art and tchotchkes of every conceivable description, from many countries around the world. Their house was a virtual museum, but a very personal museum.

Jeanette, the consummate hostess, was effusive and utterly welcoming. She hugged us and put us instantly at ease. Mack, obviously half in the bag already that night, was hospitable and boozily jovial. The dinner party consisted of less than a dozen familiar local friends. The San Miguel expat cognoscenti. Bobbie and I, mere young art students. We were a little intimidated, being in the midst of this accomplished and erudite crowd, yet we felt comfortable by the mere fact that we had been invited to participate in this soirée.

The dinner was exquisite, and beyond anything we could have imagined. It was an East Indian-themed spread that consisted of a curry extravaganza, with more than 30 exotic side dishes, elegantly served, buffet style, in addition to the traditional basmati rice and authentic chapattis. We ate and ate in convivial companionship, always wondering,



Gary Sohler enduring another lousy day in Paradise.

how in hell did she manage to import or find these extraordinarily exotic dinner ingredients here in this remote Mexican city?

After dinner, many of the guests left, the remaining women retired to the kitchen to schmooze and clean up. I found myself fortunate enough to be sitting alone with Mack, tequila/rocks in our hands, in their comfortable living room, with a merry fireplace burning, nursing a warm alcoholic buzz. It was during this intimate conversation when Mack told me, “Gary, you and Bobbie are lucky. You’re free and independent, just as Jeanette and I were a few years ago. You can chart the course of your lives.”

To illustrate his point, he related to me how he and Jeanette had, several years previously, lived a wonderfully adventurous peripatetic life as freighter ship passengers traveling throughout Europe.

How they managed to figure this out, I’ll never know, and Mack didn’t reveal his secret, but somehow, during their wandering years, Mack and Jeanette wrangled passage on the small to medium-sized freighter ships which plied the rivers and waterways of Europe.

According to Mack’s account that night, he and Jeanette had discovered and booked passage on freight ships that meander throughout Europe’s extensive waterways.

Like most geographically challenged Americans, I was not aware of the fact that, in addition to some of the world’s largest navigable river systems, Europe, both east and west, enjoyed some of the most extensive man-made canals and commercial navigable shipping canals in the world.

Here’s what Mack told me: Every freight-carrying ship on earth has several comfortably appointed cabins, usually reserved for company executives. Those cabins are commonly unoccupied, or at least were, in the days when Mack and Jeanette began their travels.

Mack and Jeanette somehow managed to discover this esoteric fact, and booked, what were in those days, unimaginably cheap fares, occupying the “executive” cabins, which included dining at the Captain’s table for every single meal. The shipping companies enjoyed the extra revenue. Mack and Jeanette traveled like company executives on the cheap.

According to Mack, he and Jeanette traveled like this, throughout Europe, for at least two years, Mack having both the time and leisure to write stories and novels in the distraction-free environment of their quiet cabin on a slowly steaming ship through Europe’s most scenic and bucolic landscapes. Jeanette of course pursued her own career, writing cookbooks consisting of her inimitable recipes.

Being the inventive gourmet chef she was, Jeanette inevitably found her way down to the ship’s galleys, where she gracefully ingratiated herself with the usually Filipino ship’s cooks, and concocted lavish feasts for the officers and crew, using local exotic ingredients obtained at the ports-of-call markets where she became an astute and discriminating shopper.

In our conversation that night, I was most impressed by Mack’s account of how he and Jeanette generated a very respectable, if technically illegal, income by becoming low-level black market commodity traders as they steamed from port to port throughout Europe.

It went like this: Mack would inevitably engage and befriend the ship’s steward with convivial drinks and lively conversation. A ship’s steward, according to Mack, was not just a housekeeper and general major domo, but was a de facto concierge, agent, and entrepreneur, knowing everything about the ship, the ports at which it called, and the realities of trans-national economics.



Mack Reynolds with his pipe.  
Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.

Acting on the ship’s steward’s recommendations, Mack would go ashore and buy, say for example, 80 pair of

genuine Levi's jeans in Belgrade, Yugoslavia for \$4.00 per pair, bring them aboard in the dead of night, having paid the Port Customs man his relatively affordable expected baksheesh on the dock. At the next port the steward would carry the package to a trusted garment retailer contact, sell them for \$10.00 per pair cash, pay off the Customs official, and split the profits with Mack. Bada Bing!!

Next port, buy 80 cartons of western-made cigarettes on the black market for \$1.00 per carton, and haul them aboard using the ship's cargo boom at midnight. Customs official gets his cut, Mack sells the cigarettes at the next port for 400% profit, less expenses. As Mack said, "Thank God for international trade tariffs!" And so it went, through dozens of ports, dozens of hot commodities, and dozens of cash deals that kept Mack and Jeanette in comfortable circumstances during their travels.

Business will always find a way to move, work, and profit. According to Mack, he and Jeanette profited immensely during all of their voyages on commercial freighters, thanks to ridiculous international trade tariffs and the friendship of astute and friendly ship stewards. Mack and Jeanette had the ready cash. The ship stewards had the connections. And thus will world economy always find a way to make a buck despite government "controls."

And thus did Mack Reynolds regale me for several tequila-fueled hours on the one and only evening we ever spent together. I can honestly say, at this late stage of my life, that Mack Reynolds' stories, that one special night at his house, genuinely inspired me to think creatively and unconventionally when it comes to making one's way in the world, generating money, and being truly free to express yourself artistically. I count Mack Reynolds as one of the better teachers (by example) in my life.

Bobbie and I eventually staggered away home after that wonderful, enlightening dinner party with two of the most extraordinary people I have ever met.

I remember being violently sick later that night, mostly from the tequila that Mack and I pounded profligately through the evening as he astounded me with his wildly engaging and inspiring adventure stories. He was a storyteller of serious and deep, but always entertaining consequence. I will always be grateful for having met this incredible couple who helped open my eyes and who changed my life, making it possible for me, much later in life, to actually have the courage to travel, risk living my dreams, work, and make money creatively, and continue to think unconventionally.

Although I was not aware of it at the time, Mack and Jeanette Reynolds were two of my most valued teachers. Sometimes we don't recognize our most valuable teachers until long after the lesson is over, the teachers are gone, and the "school" has closed.

"No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your consciousness.

"If the teacher is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind." —Kahlil Gibran

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If you can do a half-assed job of anything, you're a one-eyed man in a kingdom of the blind.  
— Kurt Vonnegut

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# Me and Mack Reynolds

Artwork by Brad Foster

by Earl Terry Kemp

Allan Hunter passed me the lit joint. It was really good weed, but it always was. Together, we had done our time through three years of high school in a blissful haze of smoke. As a final swan song for our last year, we really manipulated the system.

With a razzle-dazzle campaign, me as the manager and Al as the candidate, we got him elected to President of the student body on an all-dope platform. ("Get A Head With Allan" was our campaign slogan.) This pleased our classmates and irritated the teachers and in particular, our principal. But that was all right by me, I had him tied up in court, where I was suing his ass for kicking me off the varsity track team because I wouldn't cut my long hair.

I had the dick by the shorthairs and he knew it.

God, how he despised me.

It was mutual.

And as a last hat trick, I slipped him a soggy banana peel on graduation night, just as he slipped me my diploma and tried to shake my hand. He hid it well, I knew it was a slimy mess.

Yet another plan coming together.

For that summer vacation, Al and I had a very special field trip planned.

Off to Mexico, via Guadalajara all the way to Ajijic and beyond, with a few choice pit-stops along the way.

Al had heard so many stories about my father's porn factory in Ajijic, the fine weed, and non-stop parties that he was practically drooling at the thought of going. Now, it wouldn't have been possible to go, it wouldn't have been fun to go, we wouldn't have gone, had fun, smoked ourselves silly every day and night, without my father at our side.

Driver, facilitator, and tour guide on Al's introduction to a very special path, Carlos Castaneda had nothing on my father, most likely he could've learned a trick or two from him as well. But that's my dad.

Finally, after washing the leftover banana from my hand, rolling up an ounce of our best, not-for-sale-only-personal weed, I was ready. Shortly, we were all very ready. After fogging the inside windows of my father's Chevy Blazer (*Servicio particular en Ajijic*), the Titanic Trio were ready to begin their journey into the annals of history.

With a nod to Fritz Leiber, we Three Sought Adventure, and found it all along the way.

Somehow we sailed past the interior border check, seeds and stems pouring out of the car door as the Federale stuck his face inside the smoky interior, yanked open the door, and asked, "Anything to declare?"

After we all stopped giggling, we breezed straight through. Back on the road, rocketing down the two-lane highway at ninety miles an hour, playing chicken with the truck drivers as we approached one-lane bridges at the bottom of long valleys, and winning, we ran out of weed somewhere outside of Hermosillo.

But that wasn't a problem, maybe it was our karma, or maybe it was just the cloud of smoke that hung around our



car, but at our first Pemex gas stop, a local kid approached us. One quick walk around the block, smoke was sampled and \$5 changed hands for a fat two ounces of killer *mota* rolled up inside a used *pan de Bimbo* (sliced white bread) plastic bag. We thought we had scored big time, while we had really been ripped off. We later learned that readily available kilos were going for from \$8 to \$10, depending on condition (age) and quality. But that didn't matter as the car and we were well re-supplied. Once again ready, the Terrible Trio was smoking down the *carretera* toward *estupendo* Jalisco and the quiet little fishing village of Ajijic, the place my father frequently called *la casa de mi corazon*...the place where my heart lives.

Guadalajara, then Ajijic, we were home at last. It was Al's first visit, but he knew he was home too. After a tour of the small town, horseback riding, sampling the local cuisine, the local product, beer, weed, and Hermalinda's special tacos, we were ready to get back on the road.

We had a Mission, we were on a Field Trip, we were the Three who Sought Adventure. The local whorehouse wasn't enough. The upscale Casa Chelo in Guadalajara wasn't enough for us. We needed a more rarified air, a choicer experience, something more worldly for two just graduated teenagers.

So it was off to San Miguel de Allende on a pre-arranged visit with Mack and Jeanette Reynolds.

In Ajijic, my father and I had introduced Al to the various expatriate porn writers who were busy scraping out a living on the edge, writing for Greenleaf and others whenever they needed money, were sober enough, or crazed enough, to write. There was Don Gilmore, the Don of Porno and king of Guadalajara expatriates. There was Jerry Murray, but Al already knew Jerry. Daze of hanging out around our swimming pool in San Diego, watching Jerry flirt with all the women, whenever his wife wasn't around. There was Vivien Kern, the sweetest looking little old grandmother, who had the dirtiest mind I've ever known. Well, Al knew her too.

He didn't know Vern and Suzi, but few did. Vern Lundgren was special. He was truly crazy. Al knew it the first time he met Vern down there in Mexico, when Vern walked into the house and pulled his nine-millimeter out from under his loose shirt and waved it in his face.

"Get down on your knees, motherfucker, or I'll waste you as you stand."

I don't know if Al was afraid. He didn't get down on his knees. Maybe it was because I was laughing hysterically, after all was said and done, I'd seen this act before. It was Vern's usual drama, followed by an especially vivid session of smoking opium-laced Indica with him as he tried to weasel money out of us.

But Al and I were sage wheelers and dealers, we had bent our high school to our will, profiting wickedly. It was nothing to soak and smoke all of Vern's very best product, and leave him hollow and empty.

Vern was so upset, that after showing us around to the various whorehouses in the area while still trying to weasel money out of us, he went home, pulled out his nine-millimeter and shot himself dead. One less porno writer for Ajijic.

I don't know where my father was during all this, probably hanging out with Johnny Poling, Linda DuBreuil's son, in Zapopan, doing peyote. But that's a different story, better told some other time. (See "Señor Pig" in [e112, February 2004](#))

When all three of us were back together, we wisely got loaded and loaded up the truck and left a trail of dense smoke from Ajijic all the way to Mack's doorstep in the state of Guanajuato.

Mack was ready for us.

Maybe my father knew it.

I didn't.

Al didn't.

I know his vicious parrot was more than ready for us. I still have the scars from its deadly bite.

Late at night, barely time to say hello, we crashed in the guestroom. Morning was better, Jeanette cooking us all a very fine and much needed breakfast. Sometime during that meal, I saw a change come over Al.

Al wasn't easy to impress. He was streetwise. He had Been Around. Mack impressed him. I know it. Al told me so.

"Gosh, Terry, Mack's the only friend of your father's who ever impressed me."

See, I remember.

And it only got better.

Mack could talk. I don't mean make noises from his mouth. He could talk. There wasn't a subject that he didn't hold forth on, with expertise and a complete knowledge. From the local conditions to his secret stash of forbidden-to-own Aztec, Mayan, and older artifacts, he was the soul of enlightenment. It showed. He cast his spell on the three of us.

We didn't need to get stoned (as much) around Mack. Being in his presence brought us to that much sought after higher plane of existence.

With Mack as tour guide, we explored the local streets.

Mack opened the door to his concealed, very secret room, and showed us all of his treasures, both literally and figuratively. It was pretty heady stuff for two young teens. It was pretty heady stuff for my father as well, we had to drag him away when it was at long last time to, very sadly, depart from Allende.

The only thing I wasn't sad to part from was that damned parrot. It would sneak around and, when the moment was ripe, pounce, nipping hard at exposed body parts. Squawking in delight with each new victory.

It squawked a great deal.

The rest of the trip was a blur of fond memories, capped by the biggest possible joint ever rolled and smoked. It took nearly a pack of cigarette papers to make. It was heroic and we smoked it all in memory of Mack and the view of the clouds from Olympus he had shown us.

None of us would ever forget the trip to his very special world.

Oddly enough, there was soon to be a second chapter to this trip for me.

The World Science Fiction Convention was held in Los Angeles later that summer, and of course, being nearby in San Diego, my father and I made our separate ways to that Mecca.

As a first faanish project, I had hounded after Ed Wood, one of the Advent boys, for some historical anecdotes about early fandom, meeting my father, and all that jazz. My letters, unanswered, and my questions forgotten. But we bumped into Ed in the First Fandom hotel room and floating bar. All somewhat juiced, or buzzed, as personal preferences held forth, Ed indulged me, offering to answer all those questions I could no longer remember.

That's when Mack became my hero. He blazed into that room. If there is a state of sublime drunkenness, without being drunk, a state of being where alcohol is only a prop, then Mack had reached it. I got the impression that he often reached that special place.

No kidding.

I know it's true because he was wearing a pair of purple and red prism glasses. Now, I had seen that type of

spectacles before, and worn them, and knew it was hard to see, or maneuver with them on. But Mack was not only managing, he was clearly seeing the world around him, without any kind of difficulty, as it must truly be for those who have reached that almost mystical point of self-enlightenment.

I knew I was in the presence of a Great Soul.

He saved me from Ed.

I owe him.

I will never forget how he took me under his arm, steered me away to the floating bar, and taught me several secrets unknown to mere mortals, over a bunch of drinks, about this and that.

Secret words, secret advice.

Much later, my father asked, "What were you two talking about for so long?"

Mack had sworn me to secrecy, telling me in advance that my father would try to pry the secrets out of me. Mack, the oracle, was right, he did.

Now, for the first time, I will hint at those secret words. Inside their meaning was the power to see through those damned spectacles, as well as all others.

*Hey, Mack, wherever you are, I'm still trying.*

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I am eternally grateful for my knack of finding in great books, some of them very funny books, reason enough to feel honored to be alive, no matter what else might be going on.

— Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

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# Nuñez 32\*

By Earl Kemp

His name was Dallas Reynolds, but only very close friends called him that. To the rest of the world, he was plain old Mack Reynolds. I first became aware of him in the early 1950s when he was playing pre-expatriate games with Fredric Brown, living in art colonies in Taos and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Even then I envied him his chosen lifestyle. In my wildest dreams I could never picture myself doing what Mack was doing, even way back then, living the life of a free-lance writer. It was such an incredible gamble to me, putting everything on the line that way, hanging on to the next words out of the typewriter to pay all those obligatory bills like shelter and food and, as far as I could tell, doing pretty good at it too.

As the 1950s progressed, along with my fanaticism, I had already met Mack Reynolds at some long forgotten science fiction convention. Not only that, I pegged him right away as my kind of guy. I already had those hopes in abundance and it was rewarding having them fulfilled.

In the 1960s, Mack took on much greater significance in my life, once I began working for Hamling's publications. At the time, Mack was a regular columnist in *Rogue*, writing of his time and life as a rambling international tourist almost of the backpacking variety. He and Jeanette, his lovely, capable, and extremely inventive wife, moved almost randomly around the world living for long periods of time in remote spot after remote spot, acquiring languages and talents and foods and.... It was these adventures that formed most of his columns, and from him that I acquired a large helping of wanderlust.

At the same time, Alfred Bester who wrote a travel column for his employer, *Holiday*, also wrote a regular column for *Rogue*, as did old Wisconsin buddy Robert Bloch.

In 1963 I edited Mack's *The Expatriates* for Regency Books. The theme of the book was a perfect continuation of the life of the man and the adventure trail calling to me like a speed-freak siren.

Jeanette had some form of connection with Spain, close relatives, but that didn't keep them there for very long. There was much visiting back and forth.

Mack and Jeanette both experimented a bit with the more popular diversions of that time period and Mack would often pass along things like hash brownie recipes and tall tales of his own inner journeys.

When it became time for me to start traveling around, buying up porno books for reprinting, it was Mack who charted the courses for me, made the itineraries, and told me where to go to look for them. Indeed, in many cases he would himself do the book buying, holding the books for our next meeting or arranging to independently smuggle them to me in California.

My longest running and most intense contacts with them came after my own semi move to Mexico, where they had been living, as *emigranti* (becoming Mexican citizens legally), for some years. At the time it required eight years to become a Mexican citizen. They chose for their last residence, and one of the very few they had known for long periods of time, the quite sophisticated and elegant old world city of San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato. An incredibly beautiful city, and a former silver-mining capitol of the world. It was delightfully Old World...you could have been walking down a street in Barcelona or Madrid for that matter. There were venerable old buildings of higher learning, libraries, theatres; everything needed to make for a perfect art colony.

The next-door city Guanajuato, Guanajuato is also filled with really unusual things like the mummies that so excited Ray Bradbury and an incredible underground cross-town freeway system running through what was the city sewer system 100 years earlier.



Earl Kemp, always talking about nothing.

Nuñez 32 is a never-to-be-forgotten address...the street number of the Reynolds residence in Allende. It was Jeanette's masterwork. She was the complete Renaissance woman. I suspect there was nothing she couldn't do and accomplish at a master craftsman level or above.

For their house, Jeanette designed it in detail. She acted as her own building superintendent and hired all the subcontractors by herself. She oversaw the construction of the house and made sure every detail was done to her exact specifications, and it was a beauty to behold. Once inside the entryway area and moving into the center courtyard patio, the first thing you saw were giant wooden doors some eight feet wide and 10 feet tall. They are magnificent, hundreds of years old, made of hand-hewn wooden logs into different panels and framework, complete with ancient old iron hardware. It was the double entry doorway that had once graced the front of a very old and very isolated Catholic Church.

I once asked Mack where he got it but Mack just shrugged. "Some friends just dropped it off here once when they passed through town," he said.

I loved the courtyard area most about the house, filled as it was with large-leaf tropicals, fragrances of several flowers, gentle breezes, the twitterings of various birds, the tinkling of almost-silent running water, and the omnipresent tequila.

Mack and Jeanette Reynolds had a penchant for entertaining, holding always open houses for the 'right' crowd and that crowd consisted of every writer, agent, editor, artist, publisher, photographer, model, who could get close to them. It was always happy hour (and I have to admit that over time Mack really got to putting away the tequila from a bottomless imperial gallon bottle) inside their salon and it was always filled with big names that you recognize... people like Gary Jennings, Ted Cogswell, Dwight V. Swain, Avram Davidson, Martha and Henry Beck, Jerry Murray, Vivien Kern, and fragments of the Kemp entourages. Even the sleaze book writers loved Mack, taking to him as if he was their father.



Mack Reynolds.  
Photo by Bruce Burn,  
Peterborough, 1963. Courtesy  
Peter Weston Collection.

On one occasion Mack was being honored by the SFWA in a Los Angeles meeting. As soon as I heard about it, I called Prof. Dwight V. Swain, also a great friend of Mack's, in Norman, Oklahoma, and suggested that the two of us meet Mack in Los Angeles and celebrate his honor together, and we did, crashing the SFWA meeting held inside what had been Walt Disney's private apartment in Disneyland, host venue for the SFWA meeting. It was almost like just the three of us being together again in Mack's living room, only there wasn't nearly enough tequila for that.

Another time I recall that Mack and I attended a book sale held by a local library to dispose of excess paper. Properly serconed, we spent hours walking through a huge churchyard filled with tables covered with books. Every now and then we would discover some special item of secret porno and giggle like hopheads at a church bazaar.

On another occasion the Reynoldses invited us to a wedding. Ted Cogswell and George Rae were to be married in Allende on the weekend and we were expected to attend and join in the festivities. The party also included Martha and Henry Beck who were visiting from Indiana. Naturally we rushed to Allende to be there on time. It was a wonderful wedding and Jeanette had planned and arranged everything including the sumptuous buffet dinner. Ted and George were married in

matching light tan glove leather safari suits complete with matching hats...portends of many adventures to come no doubt.

A grand time was had by all and Ted, always the perfect *Pitfucks*, did the same thing he would do in the living room of my house in Chicago, pass out on a couch with an empty tequila bottle in a death-grip in his hand.

Jeanette was also a criminal of a specialized sort. It was, and probably is, illegal in Mexico to trade in antiquity, in artifacts of the past, all declared property of the state. However, they so attracted her that she was known to every tomb raider, grave robber, smuggler, and thief for many miles around. [I have personally seen them sneak into the house after dark with burlap bags filled with things to die for.] She had a secret stash warehouse literally filled with

the illegal goodies of Mexico's past. She shared this secret with me and gave me some of those wonderful things that I still have to this day.

She was also employed in Allende by some rich Iranian (a nonresident of Mexico) who owned a small five-star hotel, *la casa de Sierra Nevada*, that became so well known under Jeanette's management that it was touted in several travel magazines. The hotel came complete with a gourmet dining room. It was Jeanette's job to manage the hotel in a deluxe fashion unknown to most Mexicans and to oversee only the very best gourmet food in the dining room. It was commonplace for significant people to stay there.

Jeanette had a number of pets at home including two large Dobermans and extremely fierce watch parrots. When you were in her house, you had to be on guard at all times to avoid the attacks of the screaming, multicolored birds (the really big kind) that roamed freely throughout the house.

Jeanette's Dobermans were treated like pampered children. Their diet consisted of only filet mignon leftover from the rich Iranian's gourmet kitchen. They ate better than most Mexican nationals and had more sheltered, protected lives.

When I was her houseguest on one occasion, she told me to show up for lunch at a special time and I did, to watch Ladybird Johnson, her two daughters, and 16 high-profile US federal bodyguards have lunch there at the table beside me. (The bodyguards weren't eating, just stashed around the dining room in strategic places.)

The floorshow, however, wasn't Ladybird, her daughters, or the Secret Service agents... it was the diners. The dining room was filled to capacity by expatriate Texans... *Tejanos malos*...and every one of them was dressed to kill in what they thought of as ranchland richness. The women, mostly well on in age and in heft, were dressed in Dale Evans type cowgirl outfits, short skirts, bulging midriffs, and lots of jewelry. The men all wore Western cut suits, string ties, Stetson hats, and very expensive boots. And the whole crowd, instead of eating, kept moving around the dining room in frantic gyrations all trying to catch Ladybird's eye. She ignored all of them completely.

They would hoot and howl, toss arms and hats into the air, and do everything they possibly could to attract her attention...without success. I actually expected them to break into a resounding chorus and dance number from *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* at any minute....

It was a grand show and Jeanette had rightly placed me in the room where I couldn't possibly miss any of it.

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It was a delightful drive from my house in Ajijic, Jalisco, to Allende, a little less than 200 miles, and I made the trip as often as I could and as often as they would have me as a houseguest. To get there was a pleasant trip across black-dirt-rich Irapuato, literally with "strawberry fields forever" reaching to the horizon in any direction. Along this route were numerous roadside vendors selling assorted baskets of fresh-picked strawberries or bottles of locally produced honey in assorted flavors. I would always pick up some selected berries and honey for Jeanette as I drove through the area. And, every time I would leave Allende going home, I would be loaded down with things like plants for my yard, delectable goodies to eat along the way, thermoses filled with nectar....

Needless to say, I loved them both dearly and miss them very much.

[I do though wonder who wound up with that warehouse filled with Mexico's past.]

In Jerry Murray's "Memories of Mack and Jeanette," elsewhere in this issue of *eI*, he explains what happened to much of that fabulous collection.

I have no photos of Dad (Ted Cogswell) and Mack—he loved Mack! The last time I was in San Miguel de Allende (2001) I asked a local where Mack and Jeanette had lived (there was a long entrance—I had been there in the '70s—but could not remember the address). I found their name on the wall in tile—made me think of them all. I remember Dad telling me that he was over at their house in San Miguel for drinks (ha ha)—and he went in the bathroom—as he was getting ready to take a pee—he felt someone looking at him—it was Jeanette's parrot—Dad had to jump on the john to escape—and call for help—Jeanette rescued him.

—Megan Cogswell,  
February 2009

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\*Revised and expanded from an original appearance in *Banana Wings #28*, November 2006.

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Another flaw in the human character is that everybody wants to build and nobody wants to do maintenance.

— Kurt Vonnegut

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# Gnome Press and Mack Reynolds

by Earl Terry Kemp

While doing some research for an ongoing project, The Anthem Series (which see), I came across the follow little gems of some interest. During the heyday of Gnome Press, Martin Greenberg hired Robert Bloch and Wilson Tucker to edit a newsletter. The publication was grand in design and scope, it was not only aimed at the fan and collector, and it was going to be distributed by general bookshops and newsstands across the nation.



Mack Reynolds

*Gnome Press Presents: The Science-Fiction WORLD*, a four-page, 9"x12" newsletter, lasted only six issues, from August 1955 thru the spring 1957 issue, and then it folded. Who knows why? There were signs in the last few newsletters that the end was nearing. Greenberg had begun his Pick-A-Book catalog, selling in-stock titles at half price. The editors of the newsletter placed a small notice that back issues and new issues of the publication could no longer be had from them, those interested must contact Gnome Press.

So, the newsletter folded, and shortly thereafter, so did Gnome Press.

But these six newsletters contain some of the funniest, wittiest, commentary on the state of fandom ever written. The first two were absolute gems of the first water. In them, the two editors began a number of columns such as, "Fandom at Random" and "Writer's Cramps," and much like the ongoing PITFCS, they chronicled the comings-and-goings of celebrity fans and writers, but with a tongue-in-cheek stance that has never been seen since.

In keeping with the theme of this issue of *eI*, the following two snippets of minor note are offered for your enjoyment.

## **Fandom at Random** (Vol. 1, No. 1, August 1955)

Mack Reynolds is now living in Spain with his family and a dog half as big as he is. In recent years, Mack was living in Florida, New Mexico, and Old Mexico: by the time this reaches print he may well be on his way to the moon.

## **Writer's Cramps** (Vol. 1, No. 2, February 1956)

Mack Reynolds has deserted Spain and the sunny islands lying offshore, to go junketing through Africa.

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Alas, in subsequent issues the two editors abandoned their chronicling efforts, just as the humor leaked out of the final productions. We shall never see their like again, and something, a sense of wonder, has gone with them.

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We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful what we pretend to be.  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *Mother Night*

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# The Summer of 1953

by Emil Reynolds

I was thirteen when I found out my dad had written a “real book.” To me that was one with a hard cover. I was very familiar with his stories in science fiction magazines and travel articles, but *The Case of the Little Green Men* was a REAL BOOK!

Dad went on to write a good many books, novelettes and stories, but this has always been one of my favorites. Combining a good mystery with some topnotch science fiction. It does make sense to me as dad started out writing mysteries for the pulp market right after World War II. He never made much of a success at it and it wasn't until his good friend Fredric Brown, a very well respected SF writer in the early '50s, suggested that as he loved reading science fiction he should try writing it that his efforts as an author bore fruit.

#

Ask what I did during the summers of 1952 or '54 and I would not be able to recall a single memorable thing. But, Ah! The summer of 1953! Now that brings back a rush of memories. It was my first exposure to an “Art Colony,” and my Dad made sure I was exposed to plenty. Art courses, pottery lessons, silversmithing, and lots of parties where I met many authors and artists. People like Frederik Pohl who was to write such a stirring eulogy for my Dad when he passed away 30 years later.

I spent the summer of 1953 in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico. Now that's an experience any 13 year old would relish. The primary reason for my visit to Mexico was to spend time with my Dad, Dallas “Mack” Reynolds, who at the time was a well-known writer of science fiction novels and stories. The secondary reason was my mother wanted to get me away from an abusive stepfather.

San Miguel is an original colonial city nestled in the mountains north of Mexico City. By decree it maintains the old flavors of the Spanish period. Because of the temperate climate and very low cost of living, it was a natural magnet for expatriate American artists of all types. Artists, writers, sculptors, you name it and they flocked to San Miguel in droves.

I was fascinated by the people I met, among them Ben Stahl the artist and Francis J. McComas the mystery writer and, with Anthony Boucher, editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*. My father seemed to know everyone in town. There were parties almost every night and the booze flowed freely.

Don't get me wrong, there were plenty of other things to do and see. Tabuada was a natural hot springs not far from town. It had several hot pools of different temperatures to relax in. Dad took me on a trip to the city of Guanajuato to see the old museums and scared the hell out of me when we visited a place with old mummies that were very well preserved. Some of them in some terrifying pose, as if they were buried alive and awoke to find themselves interred. What 13 year old would ever forget that? The museum also impressed Ray Bradbury enough to cause him to write a story about the mummies.

I got to see the square where Pancho Villa's head sat on a spike after his brief period



Earl Kemp and Emil Reynolds.  
Photo by Earl Terry Kemp,  
Laughlin, NV, January 2009.



My father and his mother, my  
grandmother Pauline.  
Courtesy Emil Reynolds  
Collection.

of glory. And explored some old silver mines that dated back a hundred years.



My stepmother, Jeanette, had a tremendous reputation in San Miguel as a chef. Her dinner invitations were sought out and always appreciated for the worldwide renowned dishes that she served. Unfortunately my strongest memory of her culinary delights was a dish she served that had chicken feet in it. GROSSED ME OUT! She had a tremendous collection of Indian artifacts that provided endless inspirations and imaginative thoughts to my young mind. I still have a terra cotta figure with obsidian eyes that I display in my den. I can't begin to imagine how old it must be and the story behind it.

My dad had a pair of parrots that roamed freely about the house. One was named Pistol Pete and the other Combat Kate. There is no doubt in my mind where Combat Kate got her name. She ruled the house and would not hesitate to attack when something was not to her liking, which was often. I loved her. She would often perch on my shoulder to ride around the house.

Rule number one that summer was do not talk to or bother dad from about 8 a.m. until noon every day. That was his writing time. I soon discovered that even if the typewriter wasn't clacking away, it did not mean that his thoughts weren't devoted to his work. He spent a great deal of time researching his subjects and was very knowledgeable of a very wide range of subjects. I truly regret that he did not live long enough that we could enjoy some of our old age together.

Yep, that summer of 1953 was one to remember all right.

#

Three years later I was once again living with Dad, on the lovely island of Rhodes, Greece. Home of one of the ancient wonders of the world, the Colossus of Rhodes. We were there for only three months when we relocated to Vienna, Austria. Daily I was exposed to museums, palaces, concerts, and another variety of well-known persons.

A few months later we were off to Torremolinos, Spain another art colony. Are you getting the idea there was no moss growing under Dad's feet? All the while of course I was receiving an education in "life" that has proven to be invaluable to me as an adult.

Dallas "Mack" Reynolds was a unique individual. Immediately at the end of the Second World War, where he served as an officer in the merchant marine, he decided to become a writer. This despite the fact that his only experience was as a junior reporter on a little New York State publication *The Ulster County Digest*. After a few years of struggling to no avail to get published writing numerous detective stories, his friend and great science fiction writer Fred Brown asked him why he was writing detective stories and reading sf? He switched, and it was a very successful change. He sold a couple of dozen sf stories that first year. From that time forward he concentrated his efforts on science fiction and supplemented that with travel articles for numerous magazines.

His forte was stories that included his personal thoughts of what future social, economic, and cultural living would be like. Its amazing in retrospect how accurate he was in forecasting things like "the annual guaranteed income" which we now know as welfare, and his story of "Roll Town," in which groups of people without permanent homes live in motor homes and travel around the continent. Remember this was when the only motorized camper was the little Volkswagen



This photo shows my collection of my Dad's books and other writings.  
Courtesy Emil Reynolds Collection.

bus! The personal favorite story was his book *Compounded Interests*.

My Dad was happiest when he was on the road. A true adventurer who was constantly sending me post cards from exotic places like Baghdad, Timbuktu, or the jungles of South America. He wrote so many travel articles that *Rogue* magazine made him their “Foreign editor.” One thing for sure, he gave me the wanderlust and would be proud of all the places I have been able to travel to. All thanks to the stories and cards I read.

My favorite story about my dad is about his trip to Baghdad. He made the trip in the late fifties and Baghdad was not much of a tourist destination. In fact he had a heck of a time finding a suitable gift for my stepmother Jeanette. After much searching he finally found something that looked like it was appropriate. It was a rectangular shaped pendant about two inches by three inches that was meant to be worn on a chain around the neck. It featured an animal running that appeared to be a wolf, and was hammered in relief in pure silver.

Relieved to have found the perfect gift from an exotic location, he returned home and presented it to Jeanette, who promptly turned it over and found it stamped “Made in France.”

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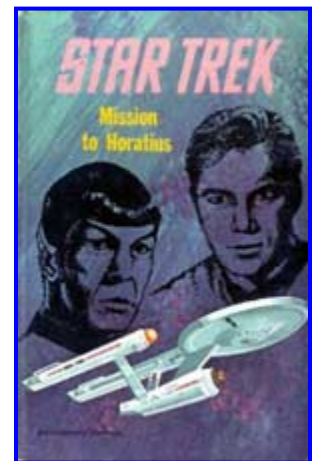
We had a cute incident during our move from Greece to Austria in the late spring of 1957. As we reached the border of Yugoslavia which at the time was a communist country ruled by Tito, the border guards became quite agitated when they found our Dalmatian and a case of dog food in the baggage car. The canned food had a picture of a dog on the label and the guards were convinced that we were smuggling canned dog for human consumption.

As we did not speak their language or they ours it was an impasse until a Yugoslavian businessman from the next compartment intervened and straightened things out. Lesson learned—never take for granted that another culture will understand yours. To this day I laugh whenever I see a Dalmatian.

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The last time I saw Dad was at a science fiction gathering in Seattle in January 1981 called SF XPO 1981. He was the featured speaker along with one of the *Star Trek* series actors, Sulu I believe, and he was much in demand for autographs and photos. As dad had written the first *Star Trek* novel, *Mission to Horatius* (unfortunately commissioned to be written down to a 12-year-old level when the average trekkie age was from 20 to 40 years old), it seemed everyone attending wanted his or her book autographed. This left little time for visiting, we were even interrupted at dinner and when we escaped to his hotel room for a little liquid refreshment.

It was his first opportunity to meet two of his grandchildren and I must say they were in awe of his celebrity at the function. And that so many people were there to hear him speak. Unfortunately the photos we took turned out to be of very poor quality. Due to time constraints he was unable to stay after the close of the show. I would have loved to have gotten some prime time with him at our Bremerton home.



A year later it was too late.

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Dad died in hospital in San Luis Potosi in January 1983 of cancer of the esophagus, brought on no doubt by his long love affair of Sir Walter Riley pipe tobacco (I can smell that smoke while I’m thinking of him). Whenever we managed to see each other while I was stationed in Europe (USAF) a can or two was always at the top of his wish list.

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Everything was beautiful and nothing hurt.  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*

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# *The Case of the Little Green Men*

by Robert Lichtman

Mack Reynolds's first novel, *The Case of the Little Green Men*, was published in 1951 in hardcover by Phoenix Books in New York and Ambassador in Toronto. It never saw a paperback edition, was only reviewed in a couple places (by Sam Merwin in the January 1952 issue of *Amazing* and by P. Schuyler Miller in the February 1952 *Astounding*), and wasn't followed by another Reynolds novel until *Of Godlike Power* in 1966. It's not that Reynolds wasn't busy. His first short story sales were in 1950 (eighteen in that year alone, one a collaboration with Fredric Brown), and he wrote and published well over a hundred of them throughout the '50s and '60s, finally slowing as the '70s neared and he shifted his attention to writing novels.

This is, so far as I know, Reynolds's only mystery. Stretching the truth of his science fiction credentials (he'd only started being published the year before the novel appeared), the publisher's blurb on the inside flyleaf quotes him about this novel:

The author, a top science fiction writer who proves equally adept in the mystery field, says of this novel: "The detective isn't tough and he isn't even smart and he doesn't prove the case against the killer. And boy doesn't get girl, either. Otherwise, this story is just about like a good many others you've read. At least it starts the same way. We can't help it if it dissolves into men from Mars, people who believe in space ships and flying saucers, murders without motive, and heat rays fired by little green men (or were they?)."

The publishers disagree about it being an ordinary baffler, even at the outset. Rather, they are of the opinion that its humor, colorful characterization, fast tempo, and sustained suspense make it a must for murder addicts, science fiction fen (the plural of fan in science fictionese), and any other men or Martians with a taste for homicide-cum-fantasy.

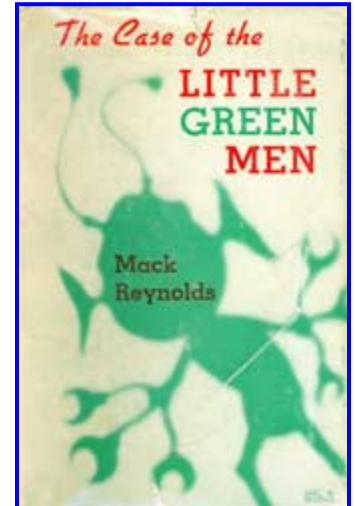
I agree with both Reynolds and the publisher. Except for the fannish elements, this is a fairly routine murder mystery yarn. Its general tone and pacing is reminiscent of the mysteries of Fredric Brown, making me strongly suspect that Reynolds may have gotten pointers on Brown's style and technique while they were close neighbors and associates in Taos.

But wait, there's more. It's clear from many of the details in the novel that Reynolds had some sort of intensive exposure to science fiction fandom. I suppose this could have been from reading a bunch of Rog Phillips's "Club House" columns in *Amazing* and/or some of the other fan columns in the prozines of the time, but whatever the source it adds a delicious layer of verisimilitude to the fannish aspects of the book. It's on that fannishness I wish to focus here.

At the beginning of the book our broke, unheroic detective, Jeb Knight, meets his prospective clients, three classic fan types from "the Scylla Club" described thus: "one, a stuffed shirt who looked like a cartoon of a successful businessman, whose belly was beginning to declare he was middle-aged, whose jowls were too heavy; two, a thin, nervous kid who couldn't have been more than nineteen, whose clothes hung on him as though he were studying to be a burlesque comedian, whose glasses needing changing or he wouldn't have been blinking so much; three, a tall, lanky customer, whom a Hollywood synopsis would have called a *Jimmy Stewart* type, although his grin was a bit more vacuous than Jimmy's."

They have come to enlist his aid in determining whether or not extra-terrestrials are on Earth spying on the human race. He disparagingly calls the aliens "little green men," eliciting this response from one of the three fans:

"You say jokingly, 'little green men,' and your tone of voice implies that the very thought of alien life is ridiculous. Yet you have no evidence to support your prejudice."



Asking why aliens would want to know what's happening on Earth, he is told:

"There might be a multitude of reasons, Mr. Knight, but here is just one, a good one. Let us suppose that you were a member of an advanced race with a civilization far beyond ours. Suppose that for some time you had been observing the progress of mankind from afar, noting his nature, his institutions, and his way of conducting himself. Suppose that you observed his discovery of nuclear fission and the manner in which he was utilizing it; and suppose further that you noted that he was about to achieve space travel. What would you do, Mr. Knight?"

Knight conjectures that "If I was such an alien, I'd destroy the human race before it could get to be in a position to destroy me."

When he asks the fans why they're particularly interested in knowing whether such aliens are on Earth, one of them says, "It is to be...assumed that they are keeping under surveillance those humans who might possibly suspect their presence on Earth."

Who would that be!? Why, science fiction fans, of course. Desperate for money, Knight takes the assignment—the requirements of which include writing daily reports on his progress—and sets out to do some research on science fiction. He goes to a newsstand owned and operated by "an ex-carny midget," who runs it because he'd "got tired of being gawked at by the marks."

"Got any science fiction magazines, Tiny?"

A grimace on Tiny's already impossibly wizened face was something to see. He snorted, "Science fiction mags, yet. There's getting to be as many of them as comics; all over the place, couple new ones start up every month. Since the atom bomb an' the rockets and the flying saucers, everybody's reading science fiction. Not that I mind, of course."

He got down from his stool, came around the end of the counter and led me over to a section of his racks. He waved one of his miniature hands. "There you are, Jeb—science fiction—take your pick."

There must have been a good twenty-five. I ran a hand over my chin and scowled at them. "Which is which?" I asked him.

Tiny hunched up his little shoulders. "They got science fiction mags for everybody, from kids to college professors."

He picked one up and handed it to me. "Now this mag is *Planet Stories*. It's pretty strong on action. The guys who read the more serious stuff stick their noses up and call it space-opera; you know, wild west stuff. Only the hero isn't a sheriff in Nevada; he's a space-man on Jupiter. It's got a pretty good following, though; one of the oldest mags in the field."

He picked up another. "This here's *Startling Stories*. Guess you could call it the average science fiction mag. It ain't as slick as one or two of the others, but it's for—well, you might say maybe a more advanced reader than *Planet*."

"All right," I said agreeably. "I'll take these. Which of them would the members of the most exclusive science fiction club read?"

"You mean Scylla?"

I eyed him. "How did you know?"

He waved his cigar airily. "Why, Jeb, I been a fan myself for years. Read 'em all. Wish I had time to be more active. Most of them highbrow fans read *Galaxy*, *Mag of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, and this here *Astounding*." He picked up a digest-size magazine and offered it to me. "*Astounding* puts a lot of science in its yarns—the editor and most of the writers are engineers and technicians."

I picked up two or three more of the magazines and paid him for the works, saying casually, “Listen, Tiny, what chance do you think there is that the Martians or Venusians have figured out space travel?” I steeled myself, waiting for him to accuse me of being short some marbles. Tiny pulls no punches, especially with his friends.

But Tiny takes him seriously—“I’m more inclined to think they’re from Alpha Centauri or some other nearby star”—and then goes off to wait on another customer. Knight, certain that there are no aliens but too broke to pass up the money offered by the fans, gets on with his work. He first attends one of the Scylla Club meetings (and there meets the girl he doesn’t get), where the first supposedly alien incident occurs when one of the members is murdered (supposedly by an alien “heat ray”) under mysterious circumstances.

After that he gets involved with the police—who know him and his reputation, and who laugh disparagingly when he tells them the reason he was at the Scylla Club—and with various other fans, plus friends and relatives of fans. Before long, he learns the truth about why he was hired when he sits in on an interview of one of the fans conducted by the detective investigating the murder:

“It all started because of the Convention, the AnnCon. We’re on the entertainment committee.”

Lieutenant Davis slowly took the bottle from his vest pocket again and shook two pills into his hand. He said softly, “I continually get the impression that I came into this conversation late; either that, or you guys are ribbing me.” His voice suddenly became sharper. “I hate wise guys,” he rasped. “Start making sense, dammit.”

Madigan took over. “The tenth anniversary of the first World Science Fiction Convention is to be held here in this city in a few days, Lieutenant. We call it the AnnCon as an abbreviation of Anniversary Convention. The Eighth Convention, held in the Northwest, we called the NorWesCon; the one in New Orleans, Louisiana, was the NolaCon, and....”

“Okay, okay, so you’re going to have a convention here; so what?”

Madigan was flustered, but he went on, “As Art just said, he and I—and Shulman—were on the entertainment committee. We wanted to have something different, some skit—well, not exactly a skit—but something with a stf....”

“Eh?” Davis scowled.

“A stf. Scientifiction abbreviated. We wanted something different. Well, we thought that for only fifty or seventy-five dollars we could hire a private detective to investigate the presence of aliens from space here on earth. We’d have him do up daily reports and then we’d read the reports before the convention. We thought that if we were able to convince him we were sincere, he’d make a serious attempt to do that for which we hired him.” Madigan ended lamely, “we thought it would provide considerable amusement at the convention, reading his reports.”

Davis said, still unbelievably, “Well, why’d you hire a jerk like Knight, eh? Why didn’t you get a decent agency? Didn’t you read about him in the papers last month?”

Art Roget shot an embarrassed look at me. “We were afraid that the larger agencies wouldn’t take the assignment.”

I flinched, probably noticeably.

The plainclothesman named Mike had returned with the water. Now he started to laugh. “Oh, brother. What he means is, he didn’t think anybody but a sap like Buster, here, would take on such a case.”

Sap or not, Knight sticks with the case. After all, it had been agreed that he’d be paid for so many days of

investigation, and he wants to get all the money he can from the fans. But now he's got a personal interest in what's going on because of the murder. An additional twist that develops is the mysterious disappearance of the *entire* run of a fanzine published by one of the trio that hired him. And it was that fanzine's editor who got murdered. Could there be something in the fanzine and the theft of its whole edition that connects with the murder?

At the AnnCon, Knight visits the huckster room and soaks up the ambience, such as it is:

I looked about the hall. Along the sides were erected a score or so of tables loaded with books and magazines. Some had signs advertising this or that publishing house. I only recognized one or two of the names. I found out later that the science-fantasy field has a half-dozen or so small publishers of its own.

[...] I stopped at one table on which there were at least twenty-five different publications and picked up one of them at random. *Without Sorcery*, by Theodore Sturgeon. It was a collection of shorts which had evidently been reprinted from original magazine stories.

A youngster next to me gushed, "Don't you think Sturgeon is wonderful?"

"Uh?" I grunted at him. Then, "Oh, oh sure. He's out of this world." I put the book down and went on to the next exhibit. This table was loaded with old magazines, scores of them. The owner was busy arguing with half a dozen potential customers at once. I picked up one of the publications and thumbed through it. It was pretty well worn, the date was 1939, the cover was gruesome, and the title of the magazine was *Unknown*.

The table's proprietor said, "Trying to complete your collection?"

"Not exactly," I told him. Something else seemed to be in order, so I asked, "What's the price on this?" reaching into my pocket for some change. I figured that I'd look more authentic wandering around the hall if I was carrying a magazine with me.

"Three dollars," he told me.

I glared at him indignantly. "You batty? This magazine is falling apart; it's more than ten years old."

He took it from my hand with as little gentleness as was consistent with the magazine's condition, and glared back. "That's the issue in which *Sinister Barrier* was first—"

"All right, all right," I cut him off, "keep it." I got on to the next table before he assaulted me.

As the convention rages on, another murder occurs, this one in a room at the convention hotel. It begins to look as though perhaps there might be some clue to the murders in the stolen run of the fanzine, *Off-Trail Fantasy*, since as I mention above it was the editor who was the first person murdered (at the party). Worth mentioning in this connection is that before the theft took place Knight visited with the editor where he lived (with his mother, of course, having his fan room in the basement) and surreptitiously pocketed a copy of the issue. But that copy is also stolen—from Knight's desk where he'd stashed it—and near the end of the novel he goes back to the mother's house to look for other clues. He finds the stencils for that issue:

There were twenty of them stashed away in a large brown Kraft envelope letters "Stencils" with the current year on it. Those for the latest run-off of *Off-Trail Fantasy*, the September issue, were on the top, easily distinguishable.

My hand shook as I pulled them from the envelope. I turned and looked at Mrs. Shulman. "They're here," I told her in triumph. "We've got the material our murderer went to such pains to destroy."

...I pulled up one of the red kitchen chairs and began scanning the stenciled page of contents. It wasn't too difficult to read the stencils—not as easy as a printed page, of course, but possible. It went:

*Editorial*

*Fandom Can Be Fun, by Art Cole*  
*This Month's Prozines, by Es Rapp*  
*Wish I Had Written That, by A.E. Van Heinlein*  
*Ultimate Destiny, by Harry Shulman*  
*Insurgentism and the NFFF, by Vernon Briney*  
*Book Nook, reviews, by Bob McCain*

Oldtimey SF fans will recognize the inversion of names in the first and last pairings, of course, but *everyone* will “get” the “A.E. Van Heinlein.” As to whether Knight finds anything in the fanzine that points to the murderer, I remain silent—in order not to include a spoiler in this review.

There are plenty of other fannish and SF references that pop up throughout the novel, including mentions of Charles Fort, Kenneth Arnold, and Willy Ley in connection with aliens. I figured out who-done-it well before the ending. This is not a condemnation of the book, which moves along at a decent pace and remains entertaining to the end. Unfortunately, although the price of the 1951 hardcover was a mere two bucks, the handful of copies available now *start* at \$75. It's a prime candidate for reissue as a print-on-demand book so that it can be read by a wider audience. (Since Reynolds's son Emil is alive, arranging this would be easy. It could be “shot” from one of the originals to keep costs down.)

## News F\*L\*A\*S\*H!

Due to my interfering,  
Richard Lupoff, publisher of Surinam Turtle Press,  
Barry Malzberg, agent of record,  
and Emil Reynolds, executor,  
have made arrangements to reissue

### The Case of the Little Green Men

in the immediate future  
—Earl Kemp

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When writers crack up, when they really end up in the nut house, is when they can't do it any more.  
— Kurt Vonnegut

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# Dallas McCord “Mack” Reynolds (1917–1983)\*

by Frederik Pohl

My friend Dallas McCord Reynolds, known to the world as Mack, died last month. If he had lived just a little longer, and if his health had permitted, he would have been here this weekend as your Guest of Honor. I wish that had happened, and that he were the one speaking to you here today, for if ever there was a writer in science fiction overdue for honor, Mack was the one.

I can't give the Guest of Honor speech that Mack would have given for you. I only wish I could have heard it, because Mack was going to talk about the year 2000, and he had a lot of interesting things to say on that subject—in fact, it formed the central theme of almost everything he wrote over the last decade and more of his life. What I can do is talk about the year 2000 as I see it, from my own point of view, not Mack's—and I will. But first I'd like to tell you a little about the man who should have been here today.



Fred Pohl and Earl Kemp.  
Photo by Earl Terry Kemp,  
LAPB, Mission Hills, CA, 2006.

There are two things that you have to know about Mack Reynolds. The first is that all his life he was a Socialist, and by that I don't mean just that he thought capitalism was in need of reform but that he thought it ought to be abolished. He came by that honestly, because his father, Verne Reynolds, was not only a member of the Socialist Labor Party but ran for Vice President on that ticket once (1924) and for President twice (1928 and 1932). The second thing is that Mack came to science fiction writing late in life—at least, late by the standards of the science fiction field, where most of us go directly from “See Dick run. Run, Dick, run!” to Heinlein and Le Guin and Cordwainer Smith. Mack didn't publish his first science fiction story until 1950, when he was already in his thirties, making him a sort of instant senior citizen in a field characterized by extreme youth. And he didn't begin as a fan. I'm not sure how much of the science fiction pulps of the '40s and earlier Mack ever saw, but I do know that the kind of science fiction that he grew up on wasn't *Amazing Stories*, it was the social Utopias of Edward Bellamy and others. Once Mack made the plunge, he certainly wrote science fiction of all kinds including galloping interstellar spy-adventures like *Planetary Agent X* and *Mercenary from Tomorrow*. But Bellamy and Wells were his models—Bellamy more than Wells—and the kind of science fiction he liked best, both to read and to write, was the kind that talked about the social condition of human beings.

In the 1960s I was the editor of *Galaxy* and *If*. A monthly science fiction magazine is a bottomless pit. Every month you pour half a dozen of the best stories you can find into it, and thirty days later the beast is hungry again and you have to find another batch to fling in. When you do that for ten years or so—not with one magazine but with two, and sometimes more—individual stories tend to precipitate out of the memory. But some remain. I remember the pleasure of finding in the week's submissions to *Galaxy* stories like “Among the Bad Baboons” and “Criminal in Utopia” and “Spying Season” and “How We Banned the Bombs”—all by Mack Reynolds—and I remember something else about them, too. At that time I was in the habit of doing a lot of lecturing to business and management groups. They really didn't care a whole lot about science fiction, but they were all worried that they might be missing some advance look at what was going to happen in the world that science fiction people seemed to know about before anybody else. So I would tell them about some of the possible events and changes that science fiction talked about. And very often, when the lecture was over, somebody would come up to me and ask, “Where can I read more about this idea of the Minimum Basic Allowance?” And more often than not I would find myself saying, “In the works of Mack Reynolds.” Most people thought of Mack as a slam-bang action adventure writer—I did myself—and it wasn't until I observed this sort of incident happen half a dozen times that I realized he was also doing some pretty acute thinking about the economics and sociology of human affairs.

And toward the end of the decade I tried an experiment. I was publishing in *Galaxy* and *If* some of the best work of nearly all the good science fiction writers active at that time—nearly everything Heinlein wrote at that time, and nearly all of Ellison and Silverberg and Cordwainer Smith...in fact, there is a statistic that I treasure, although as far as I know nobody else has ever noticed that it was so, and that is that more Hugos went to stories originating in

*Galaxy* and *If* in that period than to stories from all the other magazines in the world combined.

But I wondered how much the awards reflected the actual merit of the stories in the eyes of the readers. That has always been a topic you can get an argument on at any SF convention—are the “readers” the same as the “fans”? Do the votes for Hugos, which are fan votes, reflect how much a story is really liked?—not to mention the Nebulas, which are given by neither “readers” nor “fans” but by the people who write the stuff they’re voting on? So I decided to find out. With Lester del Rey, who was then working with me on the *Galaxy* publications, I worked out a sampling technique. We sampled a chunk of subscribers to both *Galaxy* and *If*—choosing names from a variety of areas, making sure that they had had every copy of both magazines for the full year involved and thus had presumably read all the stories, conducting the sampling in two stages by means of postcard ballots. In the time I had spent, years ago, in direct-mail advertising I had learned to respect rigor in sampling techniques, so we tried to make this one as bias- and error-free as possible. And we discovered some interesting things. Some of those “Big Names” and celebrated stories were not really very popular with the readers; in fact, some of the most highly praised of them wound up way in the cellar of the lowest ten per cent. But there was one writer who had the unique distinction of having four or five stories in that year, and every one of them in the top quarter or even the top ten. Who was it? No one but Mack Reynolds, of course. So ever since then it has been clear to me that Mack is the most seriously underrated writer science fiction has ever had. He never won a single Nebula or Hugo, but he gave a great many readers pleasure, and provided a lot of inquiring minds some very nutritious food for thought.

I still think Mack Reynolds was perhaps the most under-appreciated writer in science fiction.  
—Frederik Pohl, email, December 30, 2008

So for that reason, and many others, I wish Mack had been able to be here this weekend, to get some of that honor for which he was so long overdue. There’s one other thing that you need to know about Mack Reynolds, and that is that he was never a person to spoil a good party—or a good convention. So let us not fall to think of Mack Reynolds this weekend—but let us do as he would have wanted us to do, and have a good time while we’re doing it.

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This eulogy was given at Boskone XX, Boston, Mass., February 1983, where Reynolds was to be Guest of Honor.

\*Reprinted from *Science Fiction Chronicle*, April 1983, with the permission of Frederik Pohl and Andrew I. Porter. Special thanks to Elizabeth Hull for help with this article and to Earl Terry Kemp for OCRing the text.

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A purpose of human life, no matter who is controlling it, is to love whoever is around to be loved.  
Vonnegut, *Sirens of Titan*

— Kurt

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# Dallas McCord “Mack” Reynolds (1917—1983)\*

by Dwight V. Swain

Dallas McCord Reynolds, 65, long-time SFWA member, died at San Miguel de Allende, Gto., Mexico, on January 30, 1983 following several months' illness.

Which says far too little about a man on whom a great deal might very well be said.

Fred Pohl, in *The Way the Future Was*:

“I think Mack may be the most underrated writer in science fiction today. As far as I know, he has never received any of the ongoing awards, perhaps has never been as much as nominated for one. What was he doing beating out so many of the Big Names [in *Galaxy's* annual poll]?”

“And then it penetrated my tiny, torpid brain that Mack had in fact contributed quite a lot to science fiction. I remembered telling Robert Theobald about some of the interesting political-economic ideas in science fiction, and realizing that they had all come from Mack: the credit-card economy, the Minimum Basic Income, ‘Common Europe,’ some fancy variations on today’s political systems—all Mack’s. I was at first surprised that he had done so well, and then surprised at myself for being surprised.

“Mack is a heavysset, hard-drinking, no frills guy, and he writes the kind of prose you would expect. No one would call him a stylist. The ‘New Wave’ hypertrophy of literary values left Mack untouched. But if you consider language as a tool for the communication of concepts, then Mack uses it better than most of us.”

The background facts on Mack are simple enough. He was born in Corcoran, California, November 12, 1917. His forebears were among the '49ers. Graduated from high school in Kingston, New York, he worked on assorted newspapers in the area, reporter to editor, from 1936 into the '40s, then in 1943 became a supervisor for IBM. An early marriage brought three children and, ultimately, a divorce. World War II and 1944 saw him in the Army Transportation Corps Marine Officers Cadet School. He later served in the South Pacific as a ship's navigator.

(Parenthetically, I should point out that Mack, despite reports to the contrary, was never a Marine. A marine officer in the Transportation Corps is something totally different.)

Out of service following the war, and stimulated by Jack Woodford's euphoric *Trial and Error*, Mack plunged into writing. A sale to *Esquire* in 1946 infected him with the virus of free-lancing beyond hope of recovery.

In September 1947, he married Jeanette Wooley. It probably was one of the most serendipitous steps he ever took. Jeanette proved the epitome of supportive wives. Intense, intelligent, hard-working, and good company to boot, she brought to their venture a thorough practical knowledge of how to stretch a dollar / shilling / franc / peso / rupee / kopeck or what-have-you to its ultimate limits.

She also shared Mack's beliefs and ideals. Of that, more later.

Mack wanted to become a full-time writer. Jeanette said she'd give him the chance, to the tune of herself supporting the family for two years while he established himself in the field.

On that basis, the Reynoldses went to live in Taos, New Mexico, then and now a considerable artists' colony. There Mack encountered Fredric Brown, an established mystery and science fiction writer with a solid reputation based on a host of devastatingly clever vignettes and short-shorts, plus such novels as *What Mad Universe*, *Martians Go Home*, and *Night of the Jabberwocky*.



Mack Reynolds

Discovering that Mack was a science fiction fan, Brown persuaded him to zero in on that genre, rather than the detective stories he was at the time attempting.

That was in 1949. Mack began selling the field almost immediately (“The Galactic Ghost,” his first sf sale, was to *Planet Stories* that year, though it didn’t see print until 1954). He and Fred Brown also collaborated on several stories (other collaborators through the years included Ted Cogswell and August Derleth). His first book, *The Case of the Little Green Men* (which, incidentally, is a mystery set against a science fiction convention background) appeared in 1951.

Mack also made contact with William L. Hamling, publisher of *Imagination*, *Imaginative Tales*, and a would-be *Playboy* rival called *Rogue*. The result was a 10-year (1955-65) tour of duty for Mack as *Rogue’s* travel specialist, a roving reporter who ranged through 75 countries writing about such subjects as saloons, sexpots, the liberation of Paris, and the Oracle at Delphi, to name a few. In the course of it all he found himself in uncomfortably close contact with several wars and revolutions, but at least it gave him and Jeanette an excuse to live in such exotic locales as Torremolinos, Spain; Tangier, Morocco when it was an International Zone; and Hong Kong.

It was all great background. Mack used much of it in the flood of science fiction which he continued to produce. As the indices reveal, there was a mass of it—I recall Mack telling me some years ago that he’d long since racked up his 500th sale. Before he was through he turned out more than 60 books. A sampling includes such titles as *Of Godlike Power*, *The Cosmic Eye*, *Computer World*, *Ability Quotient*, and *Rolltown*.

Eighteen years ago, the Reynoldses decided it was time to settle down. The place they chose was San Miguel de Allende, a Mexican mountain town in the state of Guanajuato about four hours northwest of Mexico City. At an altitude of 6,000 feet, its climate comes close to ideal. An arts center, it also provided temporary or permanent residence for a number of writers. I recall such recognizable names as David Dodge (*To Catch a Thief*), Gary Jennings (*Aztec*), James Norman (*The Nightwalkers*), Robert Somerlott (*The Flamingos*), and Avram Davidson (*Masters of the Maze*).

A thorough-going professional where his work was concerned, Mack was up early to breakfast, walk the dogs, and settle down to the production of six pages minimum of finished copy per day. Afternoons until perhaps three he napped, plotted, researched. Largely self-educated though he was, he had more than a small knack for scholarship. His research was sound, if offbeat; his library a magnet for other writers.

Evenings, the Reynoldses in effect held open house for transient literary types—and anyone else who offered interesting ideas or conversation. Jeanette (a gourmet cook on a level that drew international recognition for a hotel she managed for a while) poured on the calories. Mack, as convivial host, poured the drinks. It was a role he played to perfection. What with his years as *Rogue’s* saloon editor, no liquor was a stranger to him. He used to claim, upon occasion, that between them he and Jeanette once drank a Dutch ship’s bar dry. At graveside, it was commented that for Mack the only holy water was a glass of good vodka.

Always, though, writing remained Mack’s truest love, and the bulk of his copy was science fiction.

“I suppose I like the field because there are few taboos,” he once wrote the editors of *Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature: A Checklist*. “I can, and do, say just about anything I want to say. And I feel I have a lot to say.”

Which is, if anything, an understatement. To understand Mack’s writings, however, you first need to understand Mack himself, and particularly his beliefs and background.

“I am a dedicated ‘radical,’ neither Communist nor Socialist,” he once declared. “I believe that in the immediate future great changes must be made in our socio-economic systems or the race is fated to perish. I try to work this into my fiction.”

Mack came by this point of view naturally enough. His father, Verne LaRue Reynolds, was named for Jules Verne. Converted to socialism as a result of reading two famed sleeper-wakes Utopian socialist works (*Looking Backward* and *Equality*) by Edward Bellamy (1850-1898), the elder Reynolds first joined the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), then the Socialist Party, and finally the Socialist Labor Party. He was its candidate for Vice President in 1924; for President in 1928 and 1932.

The influence of all this on son Mack would be hard to overestimate. Himself an SLP member for 25 years, he was secretary to John Aiken, the 1940 presidential candidate, and had served the party in a wide range of other situations. This included work with the party local in my hometown of Jackson, Michigan, an industrial city famed primarily as the location of Southern Michigan State Penitentiary, an institution which was, for a time at least, the world's largest walled prison. Though I was long gone by the time Mack arrived, and though I was no SLPer, I did know most of the local's old-timers. It formed a lasting bond between us.

In any event, science fiction for Mack was no mere flight of fancy into ray guns, space ships, or far-out technology. For in addition to being a solid writer, he was also, in the best sense of the word, a futurist: a man who extrapolated from today's world and science to explorations of possible avenues of tomorrow's social development and change.

Mack's precepts were shared by Jeanette. She was every bit as much a radical as he. As a girl, she'd grown up in a Louisiana cooperative colony. When she married Mack and supported his efforts to become a full time writer, it was on the condition that nothing he wrote should violate their principles or contradict their mutual beliefs.

In view of all this, and since he lacked a background in the so-called "hard" sciences, Mack made his specialty what in some circles is referred to as "social science" fiction.

In this area, he ranged far and wide through topics ranging from race relations to interplanetary espionage, straight space opera to philosophy. Many of his tales were keyed to the year 2000, a future close enough that he felt reasonably comfortable in considering its possibilities. Often, his work shows the influence of Frederick Engels' classic *The Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, and Lewis Morgan's *Ancient Society*—both volumes still on the reading lists in many sociology and anthropology courses.

Human freedom was a passion with him. Two months spent traveling by van through the USSR (he and Jeanette entered from Rumania and came out at Leningrad) left him totally *sans* illusions where Communism was concerned. He wanted no part of it, and said so loudly and repeatedly.

His thoughtful appraisals of humanity's future come through especially sharply in his *Looking Backward, From the Year 2000*, and *Equality: In the Year 2000*. Both are updatings of the Edward Bellamy volumes that had helped convert his father to socialism. The original works portrayed a future Utopia. Mack recaptures much of this dream, but he sees the problems and potential trouble areas.

Again, in *After Utopia*, he describes a future in which the world has fallen into stasis because of lack of challenge. His hero's solution is something you'll remember.

This is not to say that you should avoid Mack's work if "socio-economics" leaves you cold. His hundreds of stories take in virtually every aspect of sf, from time paradox ("Compounded Interest" is one of the cleverest plays on that theme, and "Photojournalist" runs close behind) to fantasy (for reverse English on the Faust bit, I defy anyone to top "Your Soul Comes C.O.D."), chicanery in space (try "Come In, Spaceport" for size) to Sherlock Holmes vs. interplanetary menace ("The Adventure of the Extraterrestrial" represents, to say the least, a different slant on the sleuth of Baker Street). Pocket Books' *The Best of Mack Reynolds* gathers together some excellent examples (including most of the above), and many other anthologies include one or two of Mack's yarns.

Also, though the bulk of Mack's copy was science fiction, on occasion he strayed into other fields. Such novels as *The Jet Set* reflect his time in Torremolinos. *The House in the Kasbah*, a gothic, offers an intriguing sketch of Tangier in the days of the International Zone. *The Home of the Inquisitor* (another gothic) captures the atmosphere of San Miguel nicely.

An additional star in Mack's crown (how he'd hate that phrase!) was his sense of humor. No one could accuse him of being sobersided or pedantic. Both in life and in fiction, laughter held a special place with him. Thus, he and Fred Brown joined forces in 1953 to edit *Science Fiction Carnival*, a humor anthology that still pays royalties after 30 years.

Mack also showed a gift for inspired lunacy in such yarns as a "The Martians and the Coys," "Buck and the Space War," and (a particular favorite of mine) a *Rogue* tongue-in-cheek travel piece, "Earthlings Go Home!"

To quote one paragraph, “If you’re on a shoestring, you might try the Marsport Young Men’s Christian, Hebrew, Moslem, Zen Buddhist, and Reformed Agnostic Association. Without going into detail, all Earth-side religions have combined their resources to open this hotel. It isn’t as confusing as you’d first think. The Moslems take over the chapel on Friday, the Hebrew on Saturday, the Christians on Sunday, the Buddhists on Tuesday, and the agnostics go to hell in their own way all week long.”

—This in a mad article that features such Martian specialties as “dehydrated water” (you carry it in burlap bags to wash cats “cold tamales” (because “reverse pepper” is an ingredient, you spit icicles), “nig” (a champagne-like beverage with an anti-gravity effect that has you hovering six feet in the air on three drinks), and the “Accelerate Motel,” a motorized hostelry that avoids extremes in temperature by so moving that it forever stays in the planet’s twilight zone.

Irreverence, too, was near and dear to Mack. You can get the idea, perhaps, from the inscription with which he embellished, my copy of *Looking Backward*:

“To Dwight and Joye: With love, kisses, hugs, warm murmurs of endearment, and sweet suggestions of assignations, not to speak of a fond pat on the fanny, to Joye, and mild regards to Dwight.”

Or, consider his dedication of his 1958 hardback, *How to Retire Without Money!* written under the pseudonym of Bob Belmont:

“To Mack Reynolds without whose assistance this book could never have been written.”

(Ironically, this volume proved most distressing to the Socialist Labor Party faithful. They claimed it championed social parasitism. By the time the row was over, Mack and Party had parted company.)

Mack’s end was relatively—and blessedly—brief. In November 1982 he complained of having trouble swallowing. Taken to a Beaumont, Texas, hospital, he was operated on for cancer of the esophagus. He made what appeared to be a good recovery and returned to Mexico. But a relapse, further complications, and additional hospitalization followed. On January 30, he died.

Knowing how Mack felt about funerals (the very thought of such infuriated him), no services were held, though Ted Cogswell and I did say a few words to the friends who gathered at graveside.

At the time of his death, Mack was scheduled to appear as a Guest of Honor on February 18 at New England’s Boskone XX convention. No replacement was named, and Fred Pohl delivered a eulogy. For the future, Tor Books has purchased rights to several of his previously unpublished books, and the New England Science Fiction Association plans to issue a collection of his earlier works.

So, goodbye to Mack Reynolds. A good man, a good friend, a good writer. I for one shall miss him.

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\*Reprinted from *SFWA Bulletin*, Summer 1983 with the permission of Jane Jewell. Special thanks to Robert Silverberg for help with this article.

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If I am going to spend eternity visiting this moment and that, I’m grateful that so many of those moments are nice.  
— Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*

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**“Lotus in Space”** by Ditmar