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**BEAR TRAP** A New Suspense Novel by **ALAN E. NOURSE**  
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**EXCITING REPORT** by **CIVILIAN SAUCER INTELLIGENCE**

# requiem for a scientist

by C. M. KORNBLUTH

When is a scientist not a scientist? A leading SF writer analyzes the work of a prominent Ufologist.

I DO NOT know Ivan T. Sanderson, but our mutual friend who edits this magazine tells me that Sanderson likes my writing. Well, I used to like his writing very much indeed, and I wish I still did.

The first thing by Sanderson I read was ANIMAL TREASURE, a big sumptuous book about a zoological expedition to Africa which he headed. It is a book in the great English tradition of popularized science writing, and I ask leave to expound on those last three synergic words.

Firstly, *popularized*: ANIMAL TREASURE is free from specialist lingo and makes its myriad points in plain language. The famous chapter on Bats, for instance, could surely be read by a child of twelve with pleasure and profit, and without bewilderment.

Secondly, *science*: The book is about a new and creative effort to push back the borders of the unknown. Sanderson realized that the taxonomic phase of zoology had practically ended and that the study of the living animal in its habitat was just beginning; as a scientist must, he left the old behind and explored

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*Still in his mid-thirties, Cyril Kornbluth, called S. F.'s "angry man" wields (to quote Judith Merrill) "the scalpel of social satire with a savagely entertaining skill." Author of several hundred magazine pieces, and some novels, he here discusses the writings of Ivan T. Sanderson.*

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the new. He made at least one major discovery: that the velocity, so to speak, of animal behavior varies according to barometric pressure. He applied this discovery; by matching his own velocity to that of the animal community he was able to move through it and observe, undisturbing and undisturbed.

Thirdly, *writing*: Sanderson is an educated Englishman and so has the literary advantage of us colonials, despite our occasional crude vigor; moreover he has a large poetic talent. One of the most magical evocations I know is his description of forest rats feeding and at play. Eden is not wholly lost when such a stylist can recall primeval innocence for a page or two.

There is no hint of what L. Sprague de Camp calls "credophilia" in **ANIMAL TREASURE**. I think an attack by Martin Gardner on an allusion to gorillas therein as retrogressed human beings unfairly distorted a moving moment of fancy. There is not much "adventure" in the book; the popularization, the science, and the writing somehow don't leave much room for "adventure." And there is one stupefying incident reported which, for all I know, knocked down Sanderson's scientific skepticism once and for all. Some of Sanderson's native help went fishing in a freshwater African river and

hauled out—an enormous sting ray! A creature whose existence in inland waters was utterly unsuspected by science! It must have been a shattering experience; how shattering, only Sanderson could say.

The next book by Sanderson which I read was about zoological exploration in the rainforest of South America. The prose was as good as ever. The scientific content was nil. "Adventure" and "human interest" were rampant. Perhaps a publisher told Sanderson: "People are interested in what things cost; put in all the prices." That is the kind of thing publishers are always telling writers, and that is one of the 700 reasons why mediocre books get written. The South America book was mediocre.

My subsequent acquaintance with Sanderson's work has been through the newspapers, television and this magazine. He has a zoo—in New Jersey?—which was hit by the summer floods of 1955. (As one victim to another, the hand of sympathy: they caved in my place's basement retaining wall.) He appears on television with his "animal friends" and renders value received; there is an entertaining tension in the idea of an uninhibited animal and a proper English gentleman unbilically twinned by a leash. He wrote a book on the history of whaling which I shall not read be-

cause it derides the New England whaleboat.\* He writes articles which describe the African lion and articles which speculate on (after the African sting ray, why not?) the African brontosaurus.

In none of this is there any trace of the scientist Sanderson once was. A scientist's franchise does not lapse through disuse; Newton's genius slept for decades and then awoke unimpaired for one final effort that awed the mathematicians of Europe. But this is not to say, as our editor does, that Sanderson is, in 1957, a "noted scientist"—let alone "the noted scientist." I think Sanderson's career for some time has been that of a writer and entertainer. I am afraid that his article *UFO—Friend or Foe* in the August 1957 issue of this magazine abounds with inductive proof that Sanderson has left the way of science far behind him.

The article begins with a most unscientific invocation of authority: "the official pronouncement" of a rear admiral connected with a "*National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena*" [italics mine. CMK]. The "pronouncement", reprinted on p. 12, makes it plain that the NICAP is a private organization which had nothing "official" about it in any governmental sense. The membership

of retired admirals and generals in the organization is no guarantee of soundness either, but probably the reverse. As a class, retired military officers are old men in an unfamiliar environment, men accustomed to a kind of two-way loyalty rare in civilian life. A man conditioned to believe what he is told by thirty years of "the briefing process" must be remarkably easy to hoax.

The article then says "the science of Ufology has been established. Now it has to be accepted. This statement would have delighted some medieval schoolmen, but I am afraid it is eight centuries out of date. The Nominalism-Realism controversy is over, and Nominalism won—as Sanderson demonstrates three paragraphs later with the sound Nominalist statement: "A good example of this fallacy is the notion that there is an animal called 'The Whale'. Actually there are more than 150 entirely different kinds of whales..." An even better example of the Realist fallacy is the notion that there is a science called "Ufology". Actually there are an indefinite number of anecdotes ranging from the plausible to the incredible, several hypotheses about the anecdotes, and an absence of tangible evidence.

The article then lists four of these hypotheses and discusses the first ("unexplained natural phenomena...not ~~live~~"\*) mostly by scientist-

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\*It does *not*: it praises them to the skies!!! (I. S.)

baiting in the manner of Charles Fort, though without his good humor. Terms like "established, entrenched, or orthodox Science"; "Science—the Holy Cow"; "poor benighted...scientist"; "'expert'" used ironically; a scientist's "pure desperation"; "puerile"; "fantastic"; and an ambiguous "hot air" are not what we would expect to hear from "the noted scientist" of the blurb.

The next hypothesis discussed is that some at least of the anecdotes are about living creatures hitherto unknown whose habitat is the upper air or outer space. Sanderson professes surprise that the lady resident in Austria who originated the hypothesis is "well known in...astrological circles." I can only say that I am surprised at his surprise, and would wager that she is also well known in anthroposophical circle, antivivisectionist circles, spiritualistic circles, and, if fluoridation has spread to Austria, in anti-fluoridation circles. Sanderson's "surprise" seems to me equivalent to willful ignorance of the fact that many UFO fans are devoutly anti-scientific people.

The hypothesis itself is a charming piece of floss-candy. If it is correct, a UFO trap baited with energy can be easily built and eventually one of the tenuous creatures will be found thrashing about in it, changing desperately from

sphere to spindle to hexagon to lens. But Sanderson does not envision anything as scientifically operative as an experiment to test a hypothesis. He says the "Wassilko-Serecki theory is worthy of the profoundest consideration." Think about it; believe in it. But *do* anything? No; that's clean off the coordinates of "Ufology."

The third hypothesis of the article is that some of the anecdotes are about alien space ships. Sanderson says he will discuss it in a later article, pausing only to remark that "armed with the appropriate findings of modern science, nobody in their right mind should" doubt that somewhere out there is intelligent life. It may be so, but how did "established, entrenched, or orthodox Science...the Holy Cow" adored by "poor benighted, overworked and usually underpaid votaries suddenly become capable of accurate prediction when five pages back it couldn't see its hand in front of its face? Perhaps there is some distinction here which I miss; perhaps there is Good Science and there is Bad Science, and Sanderson can tell one from the other. I admit that I cannot.

The last of the hypotheses discussed in the article is chiefly that some of the anecdotes are really about Russians who land disk-shaped, German-designed aircraft in rural parts of the United

States, pretend to naive hay-seeds that they are space-travelers, and try to indoctrinate them with the Communist "peace line."

Of this hypothesis we might say that it unnecessarily multiplies elements, but this would be to apply the scientific test called "Occam's Razor" and Sanderson might not approve. William of Occam was the great champion of the Nominalists, and we have seen where Sanderson appears to stand on that question.

Aside from Sanderson, I feel that my article would be incomplete without a brief but warm personal attack on the editor of this magazine. Hans Stefan Santesson is a wily professional who knows all the tricks by which a magazine can be made to appear

impartial in a controversy while it actually favors one side. He has intimated to me that the method he will use is to give Sanderson the last word in a counter-article or perhaps let him do a running commentary on this one. Either way should be effective; I can be taken up on quibbles and distinctions that are not differences until the impression is created that an avalanche of facts has buried me from sight. May the reader merely know that I am not miffed at Sanderson for holding his views or expressing them; if he has a faith, he has a duty to spread it. But I do object to its being done in the name of science, and to a mahdi being described, in what is presumed to be an objective editorial note, as a scientist.

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#### NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON AERIAL PHENOMENA

*Important additions have just been announced to the NICAP Board of Governors and panel of Special Advisers, new Board members including Vice Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, U. S. N. (Ret.), former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; Rear Admiral Herbert B. Knowles, U. S. N. (Ret.), submarine expert; and Major Dewey Fournet, Jr., U. S. Air Force Reserve, former liaison Intelligence officer on the Air Force UFO Project Blue Book. Advisers include Wilbert B. Smith, the Canadian Government official who was in charge of Project Magnet, the semi-official Canadian UFO investigation; Albert M. Chop, the Air Force press official designated to handle all flying saucer information at the Pentagon during 1951-53; and Kenneth Steinmetz, past President, Denver Astronomical Society, and now in charge of the Denver Project Moonwatch unit for satellite tracking.*

*Associate Membership in NICAP, which is headed by Major Donald E. Keyhoe, U. S. M. C. (Ret.), is \$7.50, this entitling you to receive The UFO Investigator for a year and special bulletins. Inquiries should be addressed directly to Major Keyhoe at National Investigations Committee, 1835 Connecticut Ave., N. W., Washington 6, D. C.*

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**comments  
from  
a  
scientist**

*by IVAN T. SANDERSON*

**What is a scientist—and what isn't! A defence of the scientific approach—and what this really means.**

THE PREVIOUS observations have, as promised to their author, been shown to me by our Editor and I herewith offer my comments. Probably I would have done better to have adopted my usual practice; to wit, take a clean sheet of letter-head, address it to the latter, type in the middle of it "Oh dear!", sign, seal, and post. However, Mr. Kornbluth has not only done me the honor of tabling me, but has made so many valid points and brought up so many others that are—at least to me—of so much interest, that I welcome this opportunity to make reply to him. But first, let me endeavor to get one point cleared up—about our editor.

This personage, in this case, certainly *does* favour one side but it is certainly not mine. Would anybody as editorially "wily" as Hans Stefan Santeson—despite our obvious eponymous ancestry—favor a mere assembler of useless information such as I, above one such as Mr. Kornbluth whose work is invariably amusing, often brilliant, and is thus always a topnotch circulation-

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*When Cyril first said something about his wish to comment on Ivan Sanderson's fall from scientific grace in taking an interest in Ufology, we said "fine"—and would he mind our showing it to Ivan who might want to make some comments. And here is Sanderson's "Note to C.M.K."*

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builder? No indeed! My amiable adversary leads off; I can only hope to be permitted to follow with the last word.

I do not know C. M. Kornbluth—that, I suppose, is obvious from his opening remark—but I do like his yarns very much indeed. I think I will like him too, when we meet. In the meantime, I am genuinely appreciative of his criticisms for it will be a sad day when everybody agrees about everything and a signal for self-emolition when the time comes that anybody agrees with me about anything! Nonetheless, while I feel he is very right about some things, he seems to be a bit muddled about others, and quite dotty on some. His idea that I do a “running commentary” is probably best.

First then, about *popularized science writing*. I don't think I like this term and I am not sure that it expresses what its writer intends. I presume “science-writing” is a compound noun and that “popularized” is a sort of bastard adjective; whereby, we get a specialized form of writing known only to or principally to “science,” that has already been made popular—a sort of Einsteinian formula that is already known to most people, like  $E=mc^2$ . My first book, *Animal Treasure* had no scientific content as its preface clearly stated and as any zoologist will affirm. It

wasn't “popularized”; it was straight narrative, though it did become rather popular and not only thru a Book-of-the-Month Club choice. It is still in print in several languages. My second effort, *Caribbean Treasure*, which sold nearly as well in its own right, happened to have several purely scientific passages in its text. It contained no adventures except a rather dreary boating incident and I never mentioned the cost of anything therein. My third opus in that series, *Living Treasure*, had whole chapters on purely scientific matters, and sold fairly well. I mentioned a couple of “adventures” and some prices. Thus, I fear me, Mr. Kornbluth has got this first part all backwards and I must explain why so.

It is not properly realized in this country, the United States of North America—as opposed to those of Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina—that what we here call “science” is regarded by the rest of the world as mere “technology”; that what they all call “science” we elevate to “philosophy”; and that everybody else considers that which we term metaphysics, as simple philosophy. Mr. Kornbluth obviously labours under these (as he calls them) “colonial” delusions, rightly or wrongly, for they are in part only matters of semantic

topology. To be precise, he doesn't know what *science* is—as opposed to bottle-washing and button-pushing—and he seems to have no idea at all what constitutes a scientist. He is not alone. This is a national failing and a very dangerous one. Our editor is to be praised for allowing space to, for once, bring this out in the open for a good airing.

There is an extraordinary and widespread if not universal belief in this great country that building radio sets, counting field-mouse droppings, repairing an airplane, and so forth constitutes “science”—see numerous leading weekly and monthly publications. Conversely, and for some even more extraordinary reason, a person to be dubbed a “scientist” has, it is confidently believed, to work for pay for a certain kind of organization. All who do not do so, whatever their training and accomplishments may be are referred to and looked upon as “amateurs.” To define the above specified type of organization is, however, impossible: even the smallest pharmaceutical companies may be eligible but the largest shoe-factory for instance, is not; most educational establishments are, but for some insane reasons Normal Schools are excluded; and so on and so forth.

You can “make” a technician, and sometimes even out

of a moron, by some vocational training. You can “stop” him being one by firing him from his job. You can't “make” a scientist; and to try to do so, you have to give him years of training in true scientific (not technological, mark you) methodology. If your effort succeeds, he or she starts to think in a truly scientific manner, and if he or she then engages in original research with any cogent results, you have a “scientist” and a person who can not then ever “stop” being one. Despite the fact that I now make my living as an impressario by writing, yakking in various media, including on television (with the leather umbilical cord and all), and importing animals, I was trained as a scientist, have degrees, from a rather high-standing university, in Zoology, Geology and Botany, have never stopped original research in phytozoogeography, and so can never “stop” being a scientist. My attitude and approach to Ufology is, thus, not that of a technologist or an “Expert.” Science is defined by the better dictionaries as “The pursuit of the Unknown.”

As to Mr. Kornbluth's specific analysis of my article in the August issue of FU, I have things to say that may as well also be assembled in the running commentary form.

The opening statement in this was neither scientific nor

unscientific. Admiral Delmar S. Farnhey though retired from his Service happens still to be employed by the Government on rocketry and is one of our few really leading experts in such matters. His pronouncement was therefore "official." If he was conditioned by the "briefing process", the Navy must have more facts on UFOs than ever the Air Force.

Ufology is established, and as a science to boot if anybody takes the trouble to be scientific about it—not just technical. The very fact that Ufos are probably of an enormous variety adds materially to this concept. The matter of testing their very existence is a nice point but who is going to provide the money to "test" one, as a geophysicist does earthquakes by letting off little bombs—even? We'll get around to doing something of that nature when the "experts stop yakking, just like many people did about evolution when they had climbed down from Darwin's shoulders.

The possibility that some Ufos might be intelligently-piloted intraspace craft has been fully explored in a piece that appeared in the last issue of FU. Meantime, let me say that if only the poor public, the professional sceptics, the "experts," and the technologists would only read the published works of scientists they

would readily see the possibilities of the suggestion, and at the same time learn what is *good* science and what is *bad*—the latter being the maunderings of the bottle-washers and button-pushers whose little minds, like those of the nominalists, are so closely tied to the limited surface of this earth and to their textbooks.

As to the Russkies in Ufology, there was a time when I thought the idea was all wet. Now, bearing in mind several years in a very agile intelligence service, I am not at all so sure. While General Doolittle (ret) says the Germans never flew a lenticular, supersonic plane, and the Russians may not have one, the pontifications of those people who say they talked with "people" from space is remarkably like the earlier advices of Messrs. Marx, Engels, Lenin, and even that knave, Bernard Shaw. The best destructive propaganda is constructive jitters.

And so we are left with the theorizing of the Grafin Zoe Wassilko-Serecki. I must say I am very surprised that Mr. Kornbluth is surprised that I am surprised that such a theory should have come from an astrologer. As a scientist, I considered it positively thundering but then I did not then and Mr. Kornbluth obviously does not know the Countess Wassilko-Serecki. The theory itself does make more sense

than anything else I have yet heard, and I am not referring to Dr. Menzel and his hot air. It makes so much sense, it *could* explain almost everything that has been puzzling everybody, including the Air Force, but it is naturally incomprehensible to the technicians who firmly believe that "*Life*" must be founded on hydrocarbons, breathe only oxygen, live *on* a planet between 0° and 100° centigrade, and eat matter. The really funny thing is that a bunch of technicians spent a lot of one of our largest radiocommunication corporation's money two years ago only to prove that the other planets did affect the rythm of life on this one.

The really dotty item in Mr. Kornbluth's notes, however, is his preposterous idea that I ever said—and in the *Satur-*

*day Evening Post*, yet!—that there are Brontosauruses living in Africa! Oh dear! why can't writers read; and why must everybody think that all "dinosaurs"—and there are actually no such things, the word meaning merely "terrible reptile," being purely a popular term, and usually applied to members of only three orders of allegedly totally extinct reptiles—are at least eighty feet long and therefore always Brontosaurus. The average size of the members of the three groups of reptiles referred to was about that of a large dog and all I said was there *could* be a few such animals left in parts of Africa just as there is one of an even more ancient order left about New Zealand—the Tuatara. The trouble, I suppose, is lack of proper scientific education.

## GOOD-BY, TERRA

A Martian explorer called Klimp,  
 Found Earth, but it left him quite limp.  
 Tho' man merely bored him,  
 The weather here floored him —  
 So he hurried back home in his blimp.

*Zelda Kessler*