



# Cincinnati Skeptic

*Newsletter of The Association for Rational Thought*

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*Truth is stranger than fiction, because fiction has to make sense.*

— Randy Cassingham, *This is True*

## Such is War!



© José Tricot

**Lady: "Can't you fools see I had the right of way?!"**

## December Meeting

### Different Size Infinities

ART member Dr. Gary Weiss, Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cincinnati, was the speaker at the December 14 ART meeting. He spoke about a discovery that brought a deeper insight into the nature of reality and mathematics and is the basis of much of modern mathematics. Most of the mathematically uninitiated public have a general perception that all infinite sets are the same size - infinite. But around the turn of the twentieth century Georg Cantor discovered this is not true and revealed some unexpected results contrary to the perceptions of the general public.

Gary explained briefly how these different size infinities are constructed. Mathematicians work from a set of rules called axioms which serve as the basis from which their theories are derived. The essentials of counting are not so much labeling but pairing. To a mathematician (and in particular to Cantor), a set having 5  
(Cont. Pg 6)

## January Meeting

### Smart (R) Recovery

Richard C. Bozian, M.D., was the guest speaker for our January meeting at the Dubliner restaurant. His topic was about a self-help program designed to aid people recover from the abuse of alcohol and other substances. This program is an alternative to established twelve-step programs.

Dr. Bozian became involved unknowingly with the substance abuse problems about twenty-five years ago while he was working with diseases of the liver. The Department of Justice was funding a detoxification center in order to break the cycle of drunks returning to jail repeatedly. Medical coverage was provided for a facility separate from the police system, but it was soon found that the people, mostly men, who were directed to the center were "lost souls." They had no jobs and very little support once they left the center. They continued to return to jail.

Dr. Bozian had been researching the metabolism changes that occur as a result of alcohol use but had little knowledge of the psychological or sociological causes and effects of alcoholism. Volunteers from Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) had participated in the rehabilitation efforts, but after  
(Cont. Pg 7)

### In this Issue:

Different Size Infinities.....	1
Smart Recovery.....	1
Taos/Kokomo Hum.....	2
Comments Corner.....	3
Puzzle for Thinkers.....	3
Too Many Books.....	4
Poem In a Box.....	9
Science Book Club.....	9
Up Coming Events.....	10
Membership Dues .....	10
Membership information.....	11

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The By-Laws require that officers for the following year be elected annually at the May meeting. They begin their duties on following July 1st.

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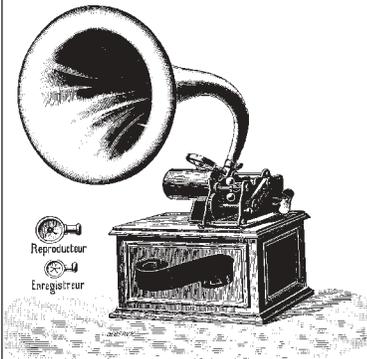
**Also from the December Meeting.....****The Taos Hum**

Rick Davis, an ART member, gave a brief report on the Taos and Kokomo hums. These are supposed low frequency hums that sound like diesel engines operating in the distance. Low frequency hums generated by various electrical and mechanical equipment are difficult to localize and also difficult to control. The hums occurred at a low frequency level below the threshold of hearing for most people.



Los Alamos National Laboratory and Phillips Air Force Laboratory are located in the vicinity of Taos and were thought to be possible sources of these hums. Congress asked Los Alamos and Phillips to investigate the hum. An engineer from the University of New Mexico was brought in as an "disinterested" party.

Only one to two percent of the people in the affected areas reported hearing the hum. Testing a sample of the affected, ten people reported hearing ten different frequencies at ten different sound levels. Such hums could be found in background noise from distant traffic or other similar types of sources.



Four different theories have been proposed for the source of these hums:

- (1) Those hearing the hums are more sensitive to low frequency noises. But it is not clear exactly what noises they are sensitive to since the sound detecting equipment could not pick up such purported hums and the "hearers" are all reporting different stimuli.
- (2) They are caused by an unknown energy form that the equipment could not detect.
- (3) They are caused by some sort of inner ear disease such as tinnitus that causes a ringing in the ears. Approximately four percent of the population suffers from debilitating tinnitus. But this ringing in the ears is normally a high frequency sound.
- (4) Mass hysteria, which would mean the source is an internally generated auditory hallucination.

Kokomo, Indiana, also has a reported a low frequency hum. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) was asked to investigate but did not because this was not a worker-related problem. EPA no longer has a noise office. To resolve this mystery, Kokomo called for bids from acoustic engineers. The lowest bidder proposed examining people who were more naturally sensitive to non-physical energy. No external source from equipment nor anything else was ever detected,

-- reported by Bryan Sellers



## From the Un-Easy Chair...



Our organization, Association for Rational Thought (ART), is affiliated with the national skeptics group, Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP), which has headquarters at the Center for Inquiry, PO Box 703, Amherst, NY 14225-0703. We send them about two dozen copies of each newsletter issue for distribution to other skeptics groups around the country. Usually a list of American skeptics groups is published on the inside back cover of the *Skeptical Inquirer*, the magazine of CSICOP. The *Skeptical Inquirer* is in its 26<sup>th</sup> annual volume.

One of the benefits of our affiliation with CSICOP is that we also receive the newsletters of other organizations. These are kept in a library by ART. We also receive enough copies of the CSICOP national newsletter, *Skeptical Briefs*, for distribution to our membership with the *Cincinnati Sceptic*. The current issue includes the December (Vol. 12, No. 4) issue of *Skeptical Briefs*, and is the fourth issue distributed with our newsletter.

*Skeptical Briefs* often reports on doings in and among the local groups. The present issue describes Roy Auerbach's report on our October presentation: Professor Edgar Slotkin's talk on *Witches and Fairies*. See page 14 of *Skeptical Briefs*.

— Wolf Roder, editor



The captain of the *Beagle*, at 55 looking older than his years, made plain that he regretted publication of *The Origin of Species* and rejected its contradiction of the first chapter of Genesis. In the last chapter of his own *Beagle* narrative, FitzRoy had expounded the view that the extinction of the mastodon and other large animals was due to their inability to fit through the doors of the Ark.

— John D. Cox, *Storm Watchers* (2002) p. 82

## A Puzzle for Thinkers...



### A City of Cyclists.

The average car produces 2.4 kg of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) for each liter of gasoline it consumes. In a city of one million where the average car gets 12 km per liter, how many kg of CO<sub>2</sub> are produced per year if one of every four people drives their car 30 km each day?

A casual cyclist going 15 km/h uses about 18 liter of air per minute. Assuming the air is 20 percent oxygen and the body uses 20 percent of that to produce 84 percent as much CO<sub>2</sub> and that a liter of CO<sub>2</sub> weighs 1.97 gram, in a city of one million, how many kg of CO<sub>2</sub> are produced per year if one out of four people bicycles 30 km at 15 km/h each day?

Given these patterns, what size city of cyclists would produce the same amount of CO<sub>2</sub> as the motor city of a million?

— Source: *International Bicycle Fund*

### Solution to last issue's problem.

Ounces of magic water. You have three equations with four unknowns:

$$\text{Flame} = 3 \text{ Life}$$

$$\text{Flame} = 2 \text{ Gold}$$

$$\text{Sea} = 0.5(3 + \text{Flame})$$

but the size of one of these is given below, i.e. Life needs 2 ounces, from which you can solve for the other unknowns, : Flame=6, Gold=3, and Sea=4.5

Distribute the apprentices as specified over the grid and find there are: 16 Life; 14 Flame, 7 Sea, and 12 Gold, from which it is fairly simple to calculate that you need a total of 183.5 oz of magic water to satisfy the needs of all apprentices.

The ladle is a hemisphere of radius R=3 cm filled to a depth of h=2 cm. Applying the formula for the volume of segment of a sphere,  $V = \pi h^2(3R-h)/3$  The filling will hold 29.3215 cm<sup>3</sup>, which is as near as you are likely to get to one fluid oz (29.57373 cm<sup>3</sup>).



## *Too Many Books.... Too Little Time....*

*Them: Adventures with Extremists*  
by Jon Ronson

(New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002)

“Them” are the nutty conspirationists on the fringe of society whose main stock in trade is hate. Ronson explores and visits with Islamic fundamentalists, Aryan Nations, Identity Church, Ku Klux Klan, Reverend Ian Paisley, the Weavers of Ruby Ridge fame, the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, and several others of this ilk. Ronson does not consider himself a debunker however, he does not even want to be taken earnestly. Rather, he tries to write amusingly and look at this world he explores as funny. At one point he refers to himself as a journalist of humor. Ronson’s thinking troubles me and I have difficulty with his attitude. Having lived under the Nazis, in a postwar communist country, and under an apartheid regime in southern Africa, I find governments driven by pseudo-science and ideology distinctly unpleasant. They are not a thing of fun. On the other hand, Ronson is Jewish and consequently has to be careful in what he says or admits when he is with various among the nut cases he studies. And, some issues even he finds less than hilarious.

Holding the narrative together is one claim which all the conspiracy theorists seem to hold in one way or another. Somewhere in a secret place exists a small group of men, an elite of evil, which secretly governs the world. There all the trouble in the world originates. All nefarious and unforeseen activities and actions are planned and made to happen by this conclave of power. To conspirationists they may be known as the Elders of Zion, or simply the Zionists, as the Illuminati or the Freemasons, they may be named the Bilderberg Group, or the devotees of the “Great Pagan Owl.” The evil elite may be bent on creating the New World Order, or occupy America with black helicopters, or try to install World Government. Ronson organizes his book around a quest to find these men in their lair from which they rule the world.

Most of these conspiracies of course simply do not exist. But Ronson is lead to interviews and

explanations of the real Bilderbergers, the Club of Rome and similar think and idea exchange groups. And here I can not go along with him. He seems to regard serious conferences and organizations as simply the obverse of the nut-house gangs. Ronson’s descriptions come very close to not distinguishing between “them” and us. It is a part of his trying to be funny and keeping it light.

Some of the descriptions are genuinely funny, though they always are also a bit scary. Dr. Paisley racing around southern Cameroon preaching to crowds of Africans. Of course the locals don’t speak English so he needs an interpreter, who imitates his mannerisms and the inflection of his voice. With experience and many repetitious sermons, the translator and becomes increasingly like a caricature of the preacher. Meanwhile Paisley brings the divisiveness that sees Papists as monsters, and has torn northern Ireland apart, to the forests of Africa. David Icke, another conspiracy theorist, insists the Illuminati are really genetically altered twelve foot tall lizards who can take on human form. Thom Robb, who runs a KKK organization from the Ozark Mountains refuses to use the “N” word in public. He also tries to teach and train his followers not to use the “N” word; with little success. What fun is the KKK if you can’t use the “appropriate” language.

Would I recommend this book. Only if you want to make fun of a very unfunny subject, although some times that is about the only way to handle it. I would also hope you already have a fair insight and knowledge of the extreme irrational fringe, because in Ronson’s book it is sometimes difficult to distinguish who are “them” and which are us, and sometimes on whose side is he, or has Ronson lost it and downright become one of them.

— Wolf Roder

Few thought he was even a starter,  
There were many who thought themselves smarter  
But he ended PM,  
CH and OM,  
An earl and a knight of the garter.

Clement Attlee (1883-1967) “on his own career.”  
PM: Prime Minister 1945-1951  
CH: Companion of Honor  
OM: Order of Merit

*The Shadow University: The Betrayal of Liberty on America's Campuses*  
by Alan Charles Kors and Harvey A. Silvergate  
(New York: HarperCollins, 1998)

This quotation by Wendy Kaminer blares from the cover of my paperback edition: "A scrupulously fair, painstakingly documented account of repression on America's campuses, where students and faculty are regularly denied fundamental rights of speech, conscience, and due process." Huh? Repression, denial of rights and justice? This book is about political correctness and speech codes on campus. Surely, a tempest in a tea cup. But the authors do come on strongly.

The book starts with a detailed examination of the "water buffalo" affair, in which the senior author played a major part for the defense. A student yelled at some Black sorority sisters who were horsing around outside his dorm window "shut up you water buffaloes!" He felt annoyed and was disturbed in his studies. It was late at night and dark. The Black women felt insulted. This student was railroaded, threatened with expulsion, made to do community work and undergo "sensitivity training," etc. An administrative apparatus ambitious to make an example and a University President bucking for a major government appointment played ignoble roles. But is this a typical case, and is it a serious problem.

The authors examine the case for free speech on the college campus, and the effect of "speech codes" which place distinct limits on freedom of expression. These rules or guidelines are informally referred to as "politically correct" usage. They tend to be distinctly one sided; certain pejorative expressions about ethnic minorities, women, and Jews are prohibited, while there is little bother about insults to white men or the majority religion. These rules are not merely advice to teach raw students good manners; universities have grievance committees and quasi-judicial proceedings to enforce correct speech. Punishment is meted out within the power of the institution up to and including expulsion of a student and possibly a faculty member unless he or she has tenure.

The authors make an excellent case for free speech on campus. They examine the various Supreme Court decisions on the matter in some detail. They can also look back on the McCarthy era of the fifties, which had particularly vile effects on campuses. Professors

and students were not infrequently driven to loss of job, study, and career. They advocate that all sides should develop a good measure of thick skin and tolerance for angry and hurtful words; the interchanges of democracy demand it.

Is this really a free speech problem? Having spent the greater part of my life on university campuses, I have never felt particularly limited by "political correctness." Nor have I ever actually looked at a written speech code. The authors of this book never come to grips with the actual problems for the administration. Strong language, and perceived insults may persuade a minority group or organization to protest, as the Black women did in the "water buffalo" case, leading to upset, unrest, and interruption of the smooth flow of campus life. Administrations want to avoid upset at all costs, especially as they tend to be helpless in the face of real grievances and active violence.

Kors and Silvergate compare campus speech codes to industrial harassment laws. Can campus talk be compared to a hurtful and antagonistic work place? A company is required to maintain a "neutral" environment. Women, Blacks, and other minorities can hold a company liable and demand damages if they are harassed to the point their work becomes difficult, or they lose promotion or even their employment altogether. The authors clearly reject his argument, even though a university has less control over its campus than the firm over its workplace.

This is an interesting study. I have some difficulty in making up my mind. On the one hand I surely am in favor of free speech, any where, at any time, and always. On the other hand I am vividly aware that speech can have consequences. If the Weimar Republic had stuck to its prohibition on Hitler's speech making, and even more shipped the agitator back to his home country, Austria, the world might have avoided a lot of pain and suffering.

— Wolf Roder



**That proves it!** In Psalm 46 of the King James Bible, published in the year that Shakespeare turned 46, the 46th word is "shake" and the 46th word from the end is "spear."

— bio-astrologer Esmeralda von Löwenzahn-Dentdelion

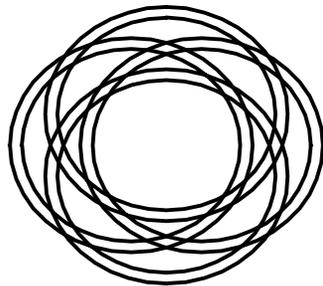
### *Different Sized Infinities from page 1...*

elements really means that one can pair that set with the well-known set  $\{1,2,3,4,5\}$ . In general, a set has  $n$  elements precisely when and only when it can be paired with  $\{1,2,3,\dots,n\}$ .

Set sizes are derived by comparing sets via counting (i.e. pairing with a well-known set), which in a more sophisticated framework should be viewed thru mapping (i.e., associating) each element of the first set to a member in the other set. So in short, two sets are the same size if they can be paired member to member in such a one-to-one correspondence.



As a representative example of an infinite set, Gary mentioned the set of natural numbers consisting of 1, 2, 3, . . . , etc., an infinite set, which goes on and on. No matter what member (which in this case the members are numbers) is contained in the set, a larger number can always be found by adding one to that number. This makes  $\{1,2, \dots\}$  an infinite set. Once accepting this way of measuring set sizes, many infinite sets which might seem to have different sizes are actually the same size. For instance, the set of even numbers has the same size infinity as the set of natural numbers, which consists of both odd and even numbers. Although they are both infinite, on first impression the set of even numbers might seem to contain only half the numbers of the set of natural numbers. However, they have the same size because one can find a pairing: simply divide each even number by two. This creates a pairing of the evens with all the natural numbers. In other words, all the numbers of both sets can be mapped to each other in a one-to-one correspondence as shown in the mapping sequence of 1 to 2, 2 to 4, 3 to 6, etc. Therefore, contrary to common perception, the set consisting of both even and odd numbers is not twice as large or even any larger than the set of only even numbers. (Of course, anyone believing all infinite sets are the same size would say to this, "I told you so.")

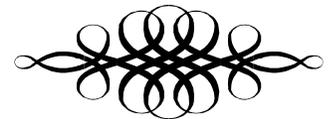
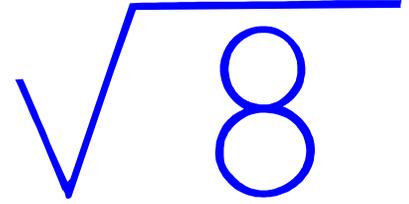


Similar logic applies to all fractions. They are rational numbers, meaning ratios that are represented as quotients of natural

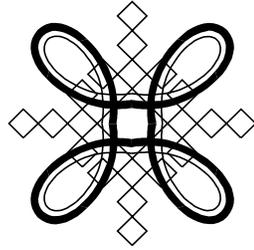
numbers. These can always be made smaller by dividing by a larger number, for example,  $1/2$ ,  $1/3$ ,  $1/4$ , . . . , etc. And these again can be mapped one-to-one with the natural numbers by simply placing the natural number in the denominator of the fraction. And this (same size) applies to many other sets, such as all negative and positive integers. And all natural counting numbers can be represented by fractions with either one in the denominator or by multiplying the numerator by the denominator, such as  $3/1$  or  $6/2$ ., and a complicated argument counting these after arranging in a square array shows that the entire class, although containing the natural numbers as a subset, is really the same size set as the natural numbers.

In contrast, the set of real numbers, representing all possible decimals, for example 1.01, 0.0144, etc., cannot be mapped to the natural numbers in a one-to-one correspondence. They actually represent a larger infinity than the natural numbers. Cantor proved this by what is now called the "Cantor diagonal process" which Gary presented. Amazingly then, the set of real numbers between 0 and 1 represent a larger infinity than the set of all natural numbers. But also, as Gary showed, the set of real numbers between 0 and 1 has the same size infinity as the set of all real numbers. I will not attempt to explain this proof here due to space limitations and the complexity of the mathematical reasoning, but briefly summarizing the basic approach, one starts with the hypothesis that the natural numbers and the real numbers between 0 and 1 can be so mapped in a one-to-one correspondence. Cantor then proceeds to demonstrate that this hypothesis is false in a skeptic like contrarian way by using this assumed hypothesis to destroy itself. By similar types of analyses, other sets can be compared and demonstrated to be either of equal size or one set is a larger or smaller infinite set than another.

These different sets can be manipulated in mathematical relationships with unexpected results.



Adding two infinite sets together equals the maximum of the larger set, not the sum of the two sets. Thus adding two infinite sets of natural numbers together equals the same size infinity as the bigger set taken individually. So adding the set of real numbers to the set of natural numbers equals the same size infinity as the real numbers, or more generally, the size of infinity of the larger set. Likewise, multiplying two sets together produces the maximum of the larger of the two sets while dividing a larger set by a smaller set will equal the larger set whereas dividing a smaller set by a larger set produces a set that is a non definable process.



A most important process is taking a set  $X$  and its power set  $P(X)$ , of all subsets of  $X$ . Then the Cantor method can be used to establish that  $P(X)$  sizewise is strictly larger than  $X$  itself. Challenge for skeptics: what does this imply if one chooses  $X$  to be the set of all sets?

-- reported by Bryan Sellers



### Men

Maria feigned a look of hurt, which fooled Cruz but not Pilar. "So are you a doe or a buck?"

Maria laughed again and pulled the cigar from her mouth. "A doe. A buck would just want to ram things.

"I thought only bucks had antlers," Cruz said.

"Yes," Maria told him, "all men think that. I know because I made myself a man once. It wasn't that interesting--just boom, boom, boom--nothing like a real life. I put baseballs in my undershorts and the fender from Armando Garcia's ruined car on my shoulders. I made eye patches out of coins to block most of my vision, and tied bags of sand to my ankles--it was just like being a man. I spent an hour humping that couch over there." She pointed at one of the walls. "Oh, I threw it out afterward. I remember feeling an overwhelming desire to say something smart. You feel it right here." She lodged her hands between and beneath her breasts. "Tits keep that from happening to women. Our blessing."

— Robert Boswell, *The Geography of Desire* (1989) pp. 89-90

### Smart Recovery from page 1...

some time Dr. Bozian started to question the tenets of AA. Later, he learned there are alternatives to AA which rely upon rational thinking. After some investigation, he became involved with starting a program called Self Management And Recovery Training (SMART).

Although Dr. Bozian acknowledges that AA has helped millions of people overcome their dependence on alcohol during the past sixty years, it still has a ninety percent failure rate. The AA program focuses on the alcoholic's powerlessness, the need for constant moral inventory, and the "disease" of alcoholism which may be present at birth. It requires an alcoholic to turn his or her life over to God and to continually seek direction through prayer and meditation. Although this approach is not workable for many,

AA insists that it is the only method that works. Consequently, AA is opposed to a scientific approach or any program that does not include the "Twelve Steps" to recovery.



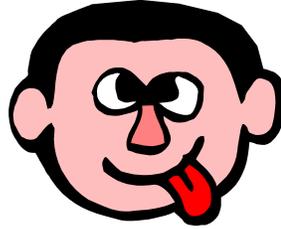
SMART has an approach that is consistent with the latest basic and clinical research in the neurosciences. Dr. Bozian explained that our bodily feelings of pleasure must have evolved to enhance survival and reproductive behavior. Eating and sex are two examples. Any behavior or substance which provides pleasure can become addictive. However, many modern pleasures are accompanied or followed by pain, unhappiness, or other unpleasant experiences. Eventually, the benefits of these pleasures are greatly exceeded by the costs of an increasingly poorer existence. The person addicted to a substance has great trouble realizing or caring that there are these huge costs being paid for the pleasures.



Addictive substances such as alcohol, nicotine, and many illicit drugs chemically affect the way the brain works and hinder the addict's ability to think rationally. Consequently, the addicted individual must first abstain from the addictive

substance for a long enough period to be able restore the ability to think rationally. Secondly, he or she must be

“fed up” with the quality of existence resulting from the substance abuse and must be able to replace the addictive momentary pleasures with more enduring and satisfying thoughts and activities.



Usually a person who is recovering from an addiction has lapses and returns to abusing the addictive substance. Instead of beginning all over again as in AA, the person is encouraged to examine the reasons for the



lapse and learn how to avoid the contributing causes for the lapse. Contributing causes for the initial addiction and for lapses are biological, cultural, and societal in nature. As is the case for many complex human behaviors, the causes are both genetic and environmental. No single gene has

been found to increase the likelihood of addiction in humans, but some predisposition toward substance addiction is inheritable.

Regardless of the causes, a person can overcome an addiction by taking control of his or her life. SMART enables one: (1) to become motivated by understanding the consequences of the increasingly high cost of addiction in comparison to the decreasingly low pleasurable benefits of continuing the addiction, (2) to become better at coping with the urges to use or abuse an addictive substance, (3) to learn ways to manage personal behavior in order to reduce the opportunities and incentives to lapse, and (4) to find ways to balance one's life experiences such as work and relaxation, the “shoulds” against “wants,” and “alone time” versus “social time.”



Although recovery is a psychological process, it also restores many of the normal physiological functions of the body such as metabolism, sleep quality, digestion and use of nutrients. As recovery from substance abuse progresses, so does overall health. As general health and the quality of life improves, a person obtains greater self-esteem and is less likely to lapse into drug addiction.

Dr. Brozian provided a list of references to allow us to learn more about the topics he had been discussing. He especially recommended *The Conquest of Happiness* by Bertrand Russell (1930); *Sex, Drugs, Gambling and Chocolate* by Thomas A. Horvath (1998); *Sleep* by J. Allan Hobson (1995); *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain* by A. R. Damasio (1994); and *Alcoholics Anonymous: Cult or Cure* by Charles Bufe (1998).



Dr. Brozian is professional advisor to SMART and is president of the board of directors of Recovery Resource Center, Inc. There are several websites where additional information may be obtained:

[www.womenforsobriety.org](http://www.womenforsobriety.org),

[www.unhooked.com](http://www.unhooked.com),

[www.lsr-cincinnati.org](http://www.lsr-cincinnati.org),

[www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org),

[www.rational.org](http://www.rational.org).

— reported by Bob Streifthau

Ahead of any aid, developing countries look to the industrial powers to renew the growth of the world economy. It has been left to the market to determine the rate of investment. The 500 transnational corporations have been deciding what technologies to deploy and when and where and in whose interest to deploy them. Just as the market has no mechanism to internalize the cost of its operations to the environment, so it has no way to respond to human need, purpose or hope not qualified as economic demand. For that response, the self-governing citizenry of the industrial countries must call upon other institutions.



— Gerard Piel, *The Age of Science* p. 443



### A dishonest mumbo-jumbo

Never, no matter what may be the progress of science, will honest scientists who care for their reputation venture to predict the weather.

— Dominique François Jean Arago (1845)

*Poem in a Box***Building a Better Mousetrap.**

Christian Morgenstern (1871-1914)

trans: W. D. Snodgrass and Lore Segal, 1967

I  
Palmström hasn't a crumb in the house;  
nonetheless, he has a mouse,

von Korf, upset by his distress,  
builds a room of trellises

and places Palmström therewithin,  
fiddling an exquisite violin.

It gets late; the stars shine bright;  
Palmström makes music in the night

till, midway through the serenade,  
in strolls the mouse, to promenade.

Behind it, by some secret trick  
a trapdoor closes, quiet, quick.

Palmström, before it, silently  
falls asleep, immediately.

II  
Von Korf arrives in the early dawn  
and loads his Useful Invention on

the nearest medium-sized, as it were,  
moving van for furniture,

which is then hauled, by a powerful horse,  
nimble, into the distant forest.

There, profoundly isolated,  
this strange couple is liberated:

First the mouse comes strolling out,  
*then* Palmström — after the mouse.

The animal, with no trace of fright,  
takes to its new home with delight.

Palmström, meanwhile, observing this,  
drives home with Korf, transformed by bliss.

**Science Book Club Selections and Schedule Dates for 2003**

- held the 4th Sunday of each month at 2:30 pm in Room 3A at the downtown Cincinnati Library except where noted:

**Jan 26** - *Invisible Walls: Why We Ignore the Damage We Inflict on the Planet and Ourselves* - by Peter Seidel, a local author. Peter Seidel leads the discussion of his own book, several library copies are available.

**Feb 23** - *The Ends of the Earth: The Polar Regions of the World* - by Isaac Asimov

**Mar 23** - *Why We Get Sick* by Randolph M. Nesse and George C. Williams

**Apr 27** - *What Remains to Be Discovered* - by John Maddox

**May 20** - (Tuesday before Memorial Day weekend) - *Why Is Sex Fun?* - by Jared Diamond

**June 22** - *Dawn of Human Culture* - by Richard Klein

**July 27** - *The Blank Slate* - by Stephen Pinker

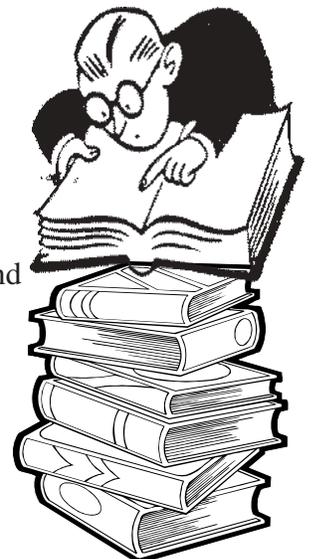
**Aug 24** - *The Universe in a Nutshell* - by Stephen Hawking

**Sept 28** - *Acquiring Genomes* - by Lynn Margulis

**Oct 26** - *Pale Blue Dot* - by Carl Sagan

**Nov 23** - *The Future of Life* - by E. O. Wilson

**Dec 21** (3rd Sunday, before Xmas) - *Significant Others* - by Craig Stanford





## *Details of Upcoming Events...*



*Sixth Meeting of the 2002-2003 Season!*

*Date and Day: Sat. Feb. 8, 2003*

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM -- program  
12:15PM - 2:00 PM Lunch (The Dubliner.)

**TOPIC:** Discussion of various topics by various members.

*Seventh of the 2002-2003 Season!*

*Date and Day: Sat. Mar. 12, 2003*

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM -- program  
12:15PM - 2:00 PM Lunch (The Dubliner)

**TOPIC:** UFOs

**Lance Moody** will speak of UFO's or other concerns of the moment and from his long and interesting experience and knowledge of various rational and un-rational affairs.

*Keep your eyes on the mail....  
more details to come....*

**Future Programs and Speakers** some firm some tentative, all excellent.

**12 April:** Ron Decker with another program on the Tarot card deck.

**10 May:** Rick Davis will take a skeptical look at acupuncture. What works and what does not work, and is the any theory at all to explain it other than the placebo effect.

**Friday evening, 13 June:** We shall bash superstition at the Dubliner, with broken mirrors, open umbrellas, spilled salt, black cats, and walking under ladders.

### **Further Future:**

Gene Kritsky on any of a number of topics — his recent research on some of Darwin's papers as they relate to design; mythologies found in the history of beekeeping; teaching evolution in Islamic countries. (This will not happen until the next year)

Mary Pacinda on the challenges of editing science textbooks for secondary level curricula in the face of "Idiotic Design" issues and proficiency testing.

## Membership Duration And Dues.....

### REMINDER.....

All memberships start in August, coordinated with our fiscal year, from 1 August to 31 July of the next year. This will allow us to mail renewal requests only once a year in the Fall.

**RE-  
MINDER...  
YEARLY  
MEMBERSHIPS  
ARE DUE  
NOW!**



State officials in Ohio are presiding over the state's demise. If you're wondering why the quality of life in Ohio seems to be lower than it used to be, look no further than our state leaders. Ohio ranks near the bottom among the fifty states in terms of investment in education. States with a strong tradition of such investment enjoy economic growth, high-paying jobs and more stable families and communities. In Ohio, our governor and the state legislature are now planning to fix this with even deeper cuts to education.

--Akron Beacon Journal (4 June 2002)

**The Association for Rational Thought** is an independent, nonprofit, scientific and educational organization. We share the ideas and philosophies of CSICOP, the Skeptics Society, and JREF.

**CSICOP**: the *Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal* publishes the *Skeptical Inquirer*, a journal of investigations of paranormal claims. P.O. Box 703, Amherst, NY 14226-0703, phone: 800-634-1610, fax: 716-636-1733, www.scicop.org

**The Skeptics Society**, publishes *The Skeptic Magazine*. PO Box 338, Altadena, CA 91001; phone: 626-794-3119; fax 626-794-1300; skepticismag@aol.com and www.skeptic.com,.

**JREF**: the James Randi Educational Foundation publishes the *Swift Newsletter*. 201 SE Davie Blvd. Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316-1815. phone: (954) 467-1112, fax: (954)467-1660, www.randi.org

**A.R.T.** meets on the second Saturday of each month September through June, 10:00 AM and publishes *Cincinnati Skeptic* bi-monthly. A.R.T. meetings are open to the public. A.R.T. also maintains a database of information on paranormal claims for local new media to consult and investigates local paranormal claims. A.R.T. was founded by Cincinnati area skeptics in 1991. Annual dues are \$15.00 and include a subscription to the *Cincinnati Skeptic*.

For more information call: President Roy Auerbach (513) 731-2774 or Rick Davis (513) 474-3087 or visit our website.

**Address Changes & Corrections, Membership Questions:** Brad Bonham(513) 761-5613 (bonham@compuserve.)

**Mailing Label Information:** "00/00/00 Member": You are a member in good standing; your membership will expire on the date on the label. "Lapsed": (*highlighted*)- your membership has expired. Please send your dues as soon as possible.

**Yes!** — I want to support the important work of **The Association for Rational Thought** and receive *Cincinnati Skeptic* and meeting notices. I have enclosed funds for:

New Member

Renewing Member

Contribution

Gift membership for/by:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

***We have kept dues low and will continue to do so in spite of rising costs. However, if you are able to, your additional contributions are very much appreciated. Please give generously, if possible. Thank you very much!***

**I would like to make a contribution in addition to my dues to further the important work of the Association:**

Contribution Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Dues: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to the **Association for Rational Thought** and mail to A.R.T., P.O. Box 12896, Cincinnati OH 45212. *Contributions are not at present tax deductible, but we are working on it.*

Request subjects for future meetings

Please do *not* include my name and address in mailing lists exchanged with other groups.

### ***Skepticism and ART on the Electronic Media***



For the latest in skeptical news via e-mail, join SANE, the Skeptical Area Network Effort. You will find cheerful, rational messages from CSICOP, James "The Amazing" Randi, your fellow local skeptics and ART in your e-mail box every week. This is our means of staying in touch between issues of the *Cincinnati Skeptic*.

Be sure to check out our skeptical website at <http://www.cincinnati-skeptics.org> --- It contains: our BLURBS on various subjects; lots of nifty links to skeptical thinking around the world; the information for joining SANE; the basic definition of who we are, what we do, and our bylaws. In addition, you'll find such things as how to get to our meetings; other ways to reach us; and how to send sample copies of the newsletter to potential members.

—David Wall, Web Site Manager

**Web:** <http://www.cincinnati-skeptics.org>

**E-mail:** [darkon@one.net](mailto:darkon@one.net)



Association for Rational Thought  
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Cincinnati, OH 45212

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### What is a skeptic?

Modern skepticism is a response to the torrent of paranormal and pseudoscientific claims that pervade our lives. The stories of ghosts, flying saucers, miracle cures, lake monsters and many other fringe beliefs often go unchallenged. Skeptics provide the challenge.

While many of us are not scientists, we embrace the scientific method as mankind's best invention for seeking knowledge. Skeptics are not cynics. We don't simply reject every unusual idea. We do know extraordinary claims demand extraordinary evidence. We insist on the evidence.

Cincinnati Skeptics, The Association for Rational Thought, meet to discuss such claims. We debate the merits; we skewer dogmatism. We have fun.

The truth is out there. And skeptics are looking for it.

## Preview Of Coming Attractions....

*sixth Meeting of the 2002-2003 Season!* Date and Day: Sat. Feb. 8, 2003

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM -- program -->12:15PM - 2:00 PM Lunch (usual place.)  
(See page 10 for Details!)

*Seventh Meeting of the 2002-2003 Season!* Date and Day: Sat. Mar. 8, 2003

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM -- program -->12:15PM - 2:00 PM Lunch (usual place.)  
(See page 10 for Details!)

*Eight Meeting of the 2002-2003 Season!* Date and Day: Sat. Apr. 12, 2003

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM -- program -->12:15PM - 2:00 PM Lunch (usual place.)

***Watch your mail for further details!***

**This year there will be a Friday 13<sup>th</sup> in June.**

**Help the program committee think about a celebration!**

***Join US!***