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The Limitations of Homo Novis

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(J of S Editor's foreword: L. Ron Hubbard pulled no punches when he wrote these words, first published early in 1952. The importance of theta clearing could not be more clearly or vigorously described)

The theta being is the principal target of the auditor.
The preclear is the theta being.

A homo novis is limited in his self-determinism by all the economic and social restrictions of an aberrated society. He is not free of the need for food, clothing or shelter. He dies when you get him too cold, he perishes when the oxygen content drops too low. He is living in a tolerance band which keeps him cramped to the face of one second-rate planet in a tenth-rate system, prey to all the ill will that blows. Is this being free or self determined? Maybe he is good enough to overlord his fellows into a security for himself never before possible. But that is his only real route toward security. He must fight and command for his three squares, he must use police protection in order to keep himself free of bullet holes and bumper marks. Compared to a homo sapiens, homo novis is very high and god-like. Compared to a truly self-determined being, homo novis is an ant ready to die under anybody's misstep.

This universe is a rough universe. It is a terrible and deadly universe. Only the strong survive it, only the ruthless can own it. Given one weak spot a being cannot long endure, for this universe will search it out and enlarge it and probe it until that weak spot is a festering wound so large that the being is engulfed by his own sores.

Fighting this battle for survival, and fight it he must, a being in the MEST universe cannot seem to afford decency or charity or ethics; he cannot afford any weakness, any mercy. The moment he does he is lost—for he is surrounded by chilled, coarse rock and molten energy which, no matter the state of aberration of his social surroundings, will engulf him the instant that he ceases to obey the very laws of MEST.

This is a universe of force. It is not a universe of reason. Brutal, unthinking, without decency or mercy, MEST force awaits with punishment any being with any weakness.

The possession of a MEST body is a liability, for through that body the being can be given pain, can be regimented by the routine demands of eating and care from harm until at the very, very highest he can be but a puppet dancing to the spin of some unthinking planet under the strong glare of a remote and careless sun. Under these conditions a being, burdened with the care and liability of a body, made uncertain by an unknowingness, bows to strange and nonexistent gods, resorts to terrible makeshifts in lieu of justice, cringes before the mightier bomb, the sharper blade.

You have examined an engram. A standard engram is simply the collision of the body with the MEST universe with sufficient impact to produce the confusion of attention known as "unconsciousness."

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Should you care to make a test, just run “care of the body” as a total therapy. You will discover that by running out the postulates of a pc about his body and its care and his injunctions and insurances to others that they care for their bodies you can produce soaring changes in tone. An entire book can be written concerning this therapy. An entire book has been written about it—the first book in Dianetics. This therapy could be styled, “The efforts of a theta being to reconcile the frailty of a MEST body with the ethics of a theta being.” They do not reconcile, these two. Schopenhauer, Zeno and names without number in philosophy have been trying to make this reconciliation for eons. One says, “Defeat it all and die, for only by dying can you defeat it.” Another says, “You can’t win, therefore the only victory is in refusing to try to win.”

Christianity and a million other -anities have struggled with this problem, and the result is a pot-pourri of answers, none of which can reconcile the problem. You have a soul—it goes off somewhere, you don’t know about it. You are a soul, you don’t know about it.

Today we live in a vast cult called “Worship the body.” Medical doctors, school teachers, parents, traffic officers, the whole society unites into this war-cry, “Care for the body.” This stems from the concept that the body is all that one has, that he will have just one body, that his total devotion is the care of that body.

A body is a vegetable. It is not even a sentient vegetable, for it lacks perception in the whole theta range. Like any vegetable it grows from seed and has habit patterns which help it survive. And, like any vegetable, one way or another, it gets used by others.

Early theta beings saw MEST bodies acting and being as though they were selfmotivated. This was a curiosity. The early theta being did not know that these MEST bodies depended wholly for their wits upon the guidance of a decayed theta being. The bodies looked like entities of considerable force and skill. The theta beingness of them was hidden and unapparent. Thus, even theta beings have been fooled by MEST bodies.

A MEST body, whether it belongs to the race of Man or the race of ants is only an animated vegetable. Given a theta being to guide it, it becomes part of a composite such as homo sapiens. Here we have a theta being, decayed into unknowingness, devoted to the care of a MEST body. The “I” of this body, the actual volition of it, all its wits and skills are theta things derived from the guidance of a theta being. By itself the body would live, walk around, react, sleep, kill, and direct an existence no better than that of a field mouse or a zombie. Put a theta being over it and it becomes possessed of ethics and morals and direction and goals and the ability to reason; it becomes this strange thing called homo sapiens, a being above animals and yet an animal.

Give this MEST body a psychotic theta being and you get a sort of Frankenstein’s monster. Give this MEST body a nearly unconscious theta being and you get a zombie.

The body is a carbon-oxygen engine which runs at 98.6°F. The theta being is the engineer running this engine in a homo sapiens. There is already an entity running this engine, the genetic entity, but there is here only a total devotion to avoiding pain, seeking survival factors of the meanest sort, begetting new MEST bodies. Every cell in that body has its own theta—the genetic entity is theta. A theta being is something else entirely.

In the first place, the theta being came into being without the need of a MEST body, without the need of motors. It is close to a perpetual motion machine in that it can create energy and impulses. It thinks without facsimiles, it can act without experience, it can know simply by being. When we have talked of optimum performance in Dianetics or Scientology, we have talked about the actual top level capabilities of the theta being, not the capabilities of the MEST being. Early work in Dianetics treats of the composite called homo sapiens and treats that composite for what it is, an identity of several parts which act in greater or lesser coordination. You can go right on treating this composite being as a unit, you can go right on treating him and getting results for which you will be praised. But you must know that you are not treating the actual identity when you treat the MEST body. You are furthering a composite, and actually you are subscribing to the International Cult called “Care of the body.”

You can, at your own choice, go on living with and processing this composite known as homo sapiens and create homo novis. You can use Dianetics to make hitherto impossible strides. But be advised that in this choice you are living with paradoxes which no philosopher in all the ages ever reconciled—the injustice of death, the depravity of human beings as in Plato, the penalty of assisting another, the impossibility of having good ARC and survival too, the liability of being kind and merciful and every “unanswerable” religious paradox known. You, by persisting in yesterday’s reality are persisting then in problems which have never been resolved with the factors accepted. You are demanding of a MEST-theta composite that he be self-determined when every zephyr from a hard universe contains death for him and can turn him like a top; you are demanding that he be “careful” when his only salvation is to be carefree; you are saddling him with all the unanswered riddles of an aberrated life in an aberrated world. And you are condemning a preclear to the dwindling spiral—for the theta being as part of the composite decays fast and soon dies forever in the rigid apathy of MEST.

Thus Scientology is given you. In lieu of this data the only thing which could be given Man is the answering salute to the gladiators—they who are about to die.

As an auditor, the choice is yours to make—the paradoxes or the answer.