

Terra Incognita: The Mind¹

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Probably the strangest place an explorer can go is inside. The earth's frontiers are being rapidly gobbled up by the fleet flight of planes, the stars are not yet reached. But there still exists a dark unknown which, if a strange horizon for an adventurer, is nevertheless capable of producing some adventures scarcely rivaled by Livingston. During the course of three minor expeditions before the war the realization came about that one of the most dangerous risks in the field of exploration is not located in the vicinity of the geographical goal, but is hard by from the first moment of planning until the last of disbanding—the unbalanced member of the party. After some years of war it became even more of a conviction that there are some things more dangerous than the Kamikaze, just as they had been more dangerous than malaria.

For a mathematician and navigator to become involved in the complexities of the mental frontiers is not particularly strange; to produce something like results from his explorations into the further realms of the unknown definitely is. There is no reason here to become expansive on the subject of Dianetics. The backbone of the science can be found where it belongs, in the textbook and in professional publications on the mind and body.

But in that Dianetics was evolved because of observations in exploration for the purpose of bettering exploration results and safeguarding the success of expeditions, it would be strange, indeed, to make no mention of it in its proper generative field. Based on heuristic principles and specifically on the postulate that the mission of life is survival and that the survival is in several lines rather than merely one, Dianetics contains several basic axioms which seem to approximate natural laws. But regardless of what it approximates, it works. Man surviving as himself, as his progeny, as his group or race, is still surviving equally well. The mechanisms of his body and his society are evidently intended to follow this axiom since, by following it in a scientific manner, several other discoveries came about. That Dianetics is of interest to medicine—in that it apparently conquers and cures all psychosomatic ills and that it is of interest to institutions where it has a salutary effect upon the insane—is beyond the province of its original intention.

What was wanted was a therapy which could be applied by expedition commanders or doctors which would work easily and in all cases to restore rationale to party members unduly affected by hardship and, more important, which would provide a yardstick in the selection of personnel which would obviate potential mental and physical failure. That goal was gained and when gained was found to be relatively simple.

It was discovered that the human mind has not been too well credited for its actual ability. Rather than a weak and capricious organ, it was found to be inherently capable of amazing strength and stamina and that one of its primary purposes was to be right and always right. The normal mind can be restored to the optimum mind rather easily, but that is again beside the point.

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The focus of infection of mental and psychosomatic ills was discovered in a hidden but relatively accessible place. During moments when the conscious mind (Dianetically, the analytical mind) is suspended in operation—by injury, anaesthesia, illness such as delirium—there is a more fundamental level still in operation, still recording. Anything said to a man when he is unconscious from pain or shock is registered in its entirety. It then operates, on the return of consciousness, as a posthypnotic suggestion, with the additional menace of holding in the body the pain of the incident. The content of the moment or period of unconsciousness is called, Dianetically, a *comanome* (Gr.—unconscious law). The words contained in the *comanome* are like commands, hidden but powerful when restimulated by an analogous situation in later life. The pain in the *comanome* becomes the psychosomatic illness. Any percept in the *comanome* is capable of reviving some of the strength of that *comanome* when it is observed in the environment. The *comanome* so planted in the mind has its content of perceptics—smell, sound, sight, tactile, organic sensations. It has them in a precise order. The *comanome* can be played off like a drama when awake life perceptics restimulate it. Which is to say that for every percept in the *comanome* there are a variety of equivalents in awake environment. A man becomes weary, sees one or more of the perceptics in his surroundings and becomes subject to the *comanome* within him.

For example, a man falls into a crevasse and is knocked out. His companions haul him forth. One is angry and comments over the unconscious man that he was always a clumsy fool and that the party would be better off without him. Another member defends the unconscious man, saying he is a good fellow. The unconscious man received a blow on the head in his fall and his arm was slightly injured in the recovery.

After regaining consciousness the injured man has no “memory” of the incident, which is to say, he cannot recall it consciously. The incident may lie dormant and never become active. But, for our example, the man who criticized him one day says, at the moment when the formerly injured man is weary, that somebody is a clumsy fool. Unreasonably, the formerly injured man will become intensely antagonistic. He will also feel an unreasonable friendship for the man who spoke up for him. Now the *comanome* is “keyed in” or has become a part of the subject’s “behavior pattern.” The next time the injured man is on ice, the sight of it makes his head ache and his arm hurt in dwindling ratio to how tired he gets. Further, he may pick up a chronic headache or arthritis in his arm, the injuries being continually restimulated by such things as the smell of his parka, the presence of the other members, etc., etc. That is a *comanome* at work. How far it is capable of reducing a man’s efficiency is a matter of many an explorer’s log. A case of malaria can be restimulated. A man has malaria in a certain environment. Now having had it he becomes far more susceptible to malaria *psychosomatically* in that same environment and with those people who tended him. He can become a serious drag on the party, for each new slight touch restimulates the old one and what should have been a mild case is a highly painful one, being the first case of malaria plus all the subsequent cases. Malaria is a bug. As a bug it can be handled. As a *comanome* it will defy cure, for there is no Atabrine for *comanomes* short of their removal.

Almost all serious *comanomes* occur early in life—amazingly early. The early ones form a basic structure to which it is very simple to append later *comanomes*. *Comanomes* can wait from childhood to be “keyed in” and active at 25, 50, 70 years of age.

The *comanome*, a period of unconsciousness which contained physical pain and apparent antagonism to the survival of the individual, has been isolated as the sole source of mental aberration. A certain part of the mind seems to be devoted to their reception and retention. In Dianetics, this part of the mind is called the *reactive mind*. From this source, without otherwise disclosing themselves, the *comanomes* act upon the body and cause the body to act in society in certain patterns. The *reactive mind* is alert during periods when the analytical mind—or conscious mind—is reduced in awareness.

It is a matter of clinical proof that the persistency, ambition, drive, will power and personal force are in no degree dependent upon these *comanomes*. The *comanome* can only inhibit the natural drives. The value of this unconscious experience is valuable in an animal. It is a distinct liability to Man who has outgrown his animal environment. The reactive mind, so long as it limits its activity to withdrawing, instinctively, a hand from a hot stove, is doing good service. With a vocabulary in it, it becomes deadly to the organism. Those familiar with General Semantics will understand how the reactive mind computes when it is stated that it “computes” in identities. The word “horse” in the reactive mind may mean a headache, a broken leg, and a scream. Such a *comanome*, one containing these things, would be computed that a broken leg equals a scream, a scream a broken leg, a horse equals a scream, etc., etc. If the *comanome* contained fright, then all these things are fright. The value of such a mental computation is entirely negative, inhibits the perfect calculations of which the analytical mind is capable and reduces the ability of the individual to be rational about, as noted, horses. *Comanomes* also contain complimentary material which can bring about a manic state and which, again, is of slight use in computations.

The technique of Dianetics deletes from the reactive mind all *comanomes*. They were hidden beneath layers of unconsciousness and unknown to the conscious mind before therapy. They were inhibitive to good impulses and productive of bad ones. After they are deleted by therapy the conscious mind gains certain attributes it did not possess before, the individual is capable of greater efforts, his actual personality is greatly heightened and his ability to survive is enormously enhanced. *Comanomes* are contagious. A man has one he dramatizes as a rage pattern, and everyone has many. He dramatizes it while another individual is partly unconscious. The *comanome* has now been implanted in the second individual. Deletion of all *comanomes* is practicable. The technique is relatively simple. There is little space here to give more than a most cursory glance at it but an expedition commander can use it without any great knowledge of medicine and no other knowledge of psychiatry, which was the original goal at the beginning of research eleven years ago.

Therapy does not depend upon hypnosis. A state has been found which is much more desirable. Hypnosis is amnesia trance for the purpose of planting suggestions. The problem of hypnosis is to put the patient to sleep. The purpose of the Dianetic reverie is to wake the patient up. Narcosynthesis and other drug therapies have some slight use in Dianetics. But the primary technique consists of stimulants. The best stimulant is Benzedrine. In its absence an overdose of coffee will do. The patient is made to lie down and shut his eyes. The operator begins to count. He suggests the patient relax. At length the patient's eyelids will flutter. (Medicine drumming will also accomplish this without producing a harmful amnesia hypnotic state.) He is permitted to relax further. Then the operator tells him that his “motor strip” (his sensory perceptions) is returning to a time of unconsciousness, the time being specifically named. With coaxing the

patient will begin to feel the injury and sense himself in the location and time of the accident. He is then asked to recount all that happened, word for word, feeling by feeling. He is asked to do this several times, each time being "placed back" at the beginning of the incident. The period of unconsciousness he experienced then should begin to lighten and he can at length recount everything which went on when he was unconscious. It is necessary that he feel and see everything in the period of unconsciousness each time he recounts the incident. Nothing is said about his being able to remember and no hypnoanalysis technique is used. He merely recounts it until he cannot longer feel any pain in it, until he is entirely cheerful about it. Then he is brought to present time by just that command and told to again recount the incident. He may have to do this twice or three times in present time for the somatic pains will again have returned. The treatment is repeated two days later. All feeling of injury from it and all aberrative factors in the incident will vanish.

This technique is outlined here for use on a patient who is not "cleared" of *comanomes* prior to this new accident. A Dianetic clearing from the first unconsciousness of a lifetime to the present time places a man in a situation which is almost injury and aberration proof.

The emergency aspect of this technique is valuable. Clinical tests have shown that when shock is Dianetically removed immediately after an injury, the rate of healing is enormously accelerated, so much so that burns have healed in a few hours. Malaria and various fevers, when their peak effects are Dianetically removed, improve with great speed.

Incidents of hardship and deprivation can be markedly lightened in the recovery period by removing their psychic shock.

It is quite remarkable that the various manifestations and "cures" of native witchcraft and shamanism can be uniformly duplicated and bettered by a modern science like Dianetics. A *comanome* can bring about a mental hallucination (with a simple command like, "You can only listen to me!") which gives a demon aspect. The individual containing such a *comanome* would be considered by a shaman to have within him a demon, for the demon is the only sonic memory the individual would have.

While Dianetics does not consider the brain as an electronic computing machine except for purposes of analogy, it is nevertheless a member of that class of sciences to which belong General Semantics and Cybernetics and, as a matter of fact, forms a bridge between the two. There can be as many *comanomic* commands as there can be words in a language and as many *comanomic* injuries as there can be illnesses and accidents. Therefore, it is no surprise that circuits can be set up in the brain which approximate any school of witchcraft, shamanism and religion known to Man. The Banks Islander sitting around talking to his deceased relatives and getting answers would be found, on examination, to have a fine array of *comanomes* and a very active reactive mind.

The selection of personnel who will not be subject to sullen or hostile behavior and who will not become ill under various climatic conditions depends in a large measure on the perceptions of the individual. If an individual can recall things he has heard by simply hearing them again (audio imagery), if he can recall things he has seen simply by seeing them again, in color, in his mind (visio imagery), if he can imagine in terms of color-visio and tone-audio (imagine in terms of color motion pictures with sound) and if he can recall his father and mother as of early childhood, the chances are very good that he will

prove to be a very stable man. Additionally, he should prove to be, within the limits of his intelligence and physical being,, an able man. Unfortunately, such persons are quite rare.

If a man has definite anger patterns, worries about things and has unthinking prejudices, he may prove difficult, for these are the outward manifestations of a large reactive mind.

Taking a man back into a geographical area where he has many times been may be profitable from an experience standpoint, but a record of accidents and misadventures in that area would be a definite point of consideration. While it would not mean entirely that a man was a bad risk, there is a double factor involved. He might have had his accidents because he contained a variety of *comanomes* which commanded that he have accidents (the accident prone is the extreme case) and having had accidents in the area he probably gained several *comanomes* there which would reduce his efficiency in that area.

A man whose service in point of experience would be invaluable to an expedition might be, in point of potential aberration, a risk to that expedition. There is a remedy for such a valuable man: he can be cleared of his *comanomes*, in which case his past record of accidents and failures becomes entirely invalid as a criteria for future conduct.

Dianetics has been variously tested and has been found to work uniformly and predictably in all cases. There are many more aspects to it than have been elucidated here, but it is possible to use just these facts to obtain excellent results. In a true, complete erasure of past moments of unconsciousness, the *comanome* disappears utterly. In the above case it will probably only alleviate, return slightly in three days and then reduce to a null level of reaction and stay that way, no longer affecting the patient. The science has the virtue that it can be worked by any intelligent man after only a few weeks of study. That is, for the entire art of clearing a case. An intelligent man could learn all he needed to know about alleviation of a case in a few hours of reading. The original goal was to provide expedition commanders and doctors with a therapy tool which would increase the efficiency of personnel and reduce incidence of personnel failure. Dianetics, after eleven years of research and testing, bit off a trifle 9 more than it had bargained for. There had been no intention to go holistic and solve the ills of mankind. That it began to cure psychosomatic illnesses such as arthritis, migraine, ulcers, coronary, asthma, frostbite, bursitis, allergies, etc., etc., that it did quick things about mental derangement on the institutional level and began to replace that strange barbarism, the prefrontal lobotomy, was entirely outside the initial scheme of research. That it would now sail off on a new course to chase down the cause of cancer and cure it was not on the chart.

If it does these things, as it appears to be doing, it is in the medical and psychiatric province. No such intentions existed when the Terra Incognita of the mind was explored for its answers. It was intended as a tool for the expedition commander and doctor who are faced with choosing personnel and maintaining that personnel in good health. It is hoped that to these it will be of good value. If it is not, then despite acclaim, it will in some measure have failed.