

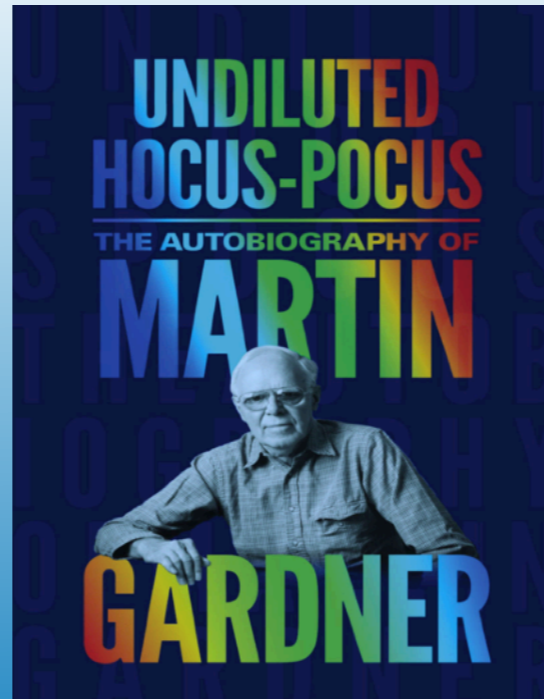
13 Parallels
between
Martin Gardner
and **Stan Freberg**

JoHN MiLLeR (1949), Portland Oregon

dialectrix.com/G4G
G4G13

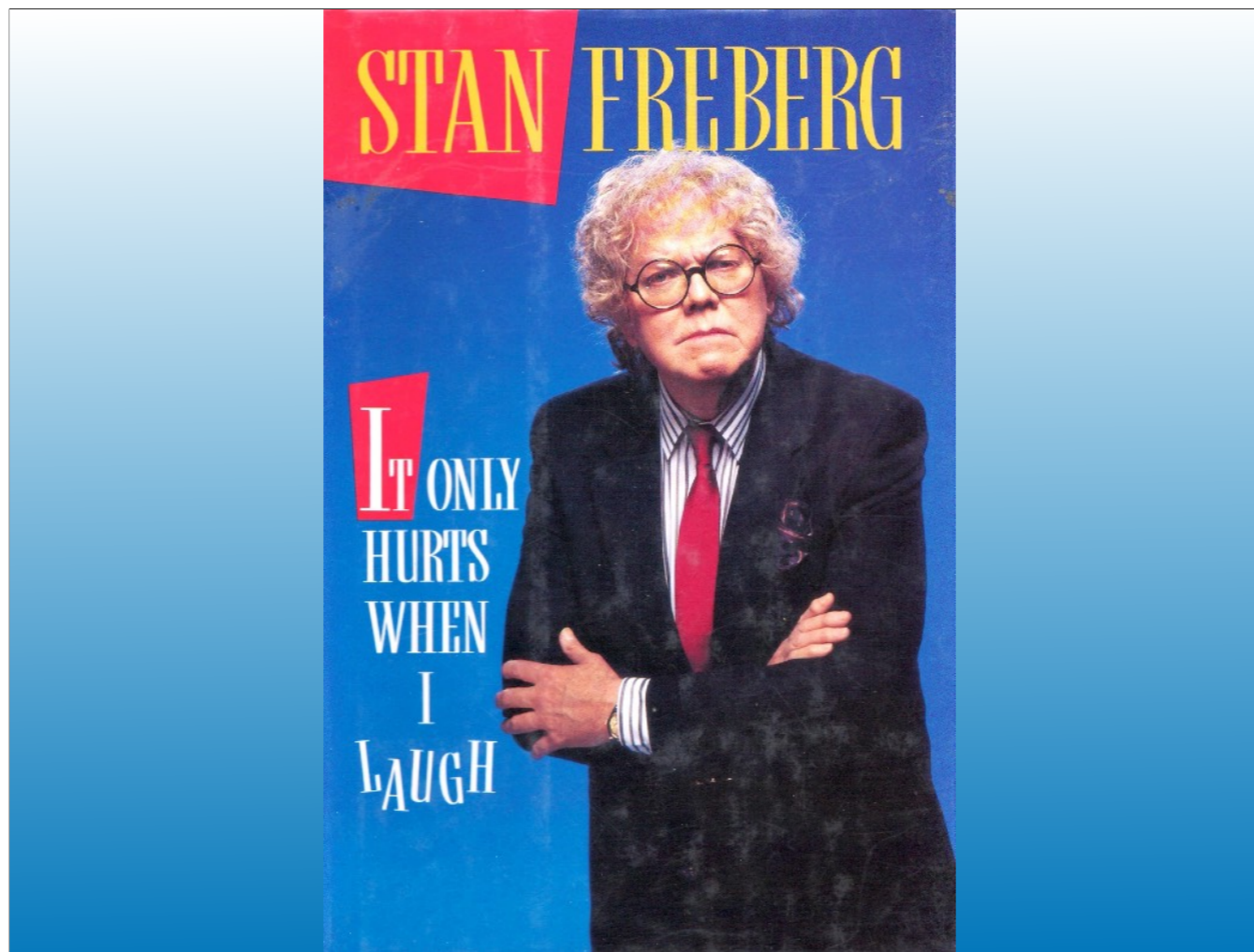
How many of you have heard of Stan Freberg? How about Martin Gardner?

I don't know if Gardner was aware of Freberg.



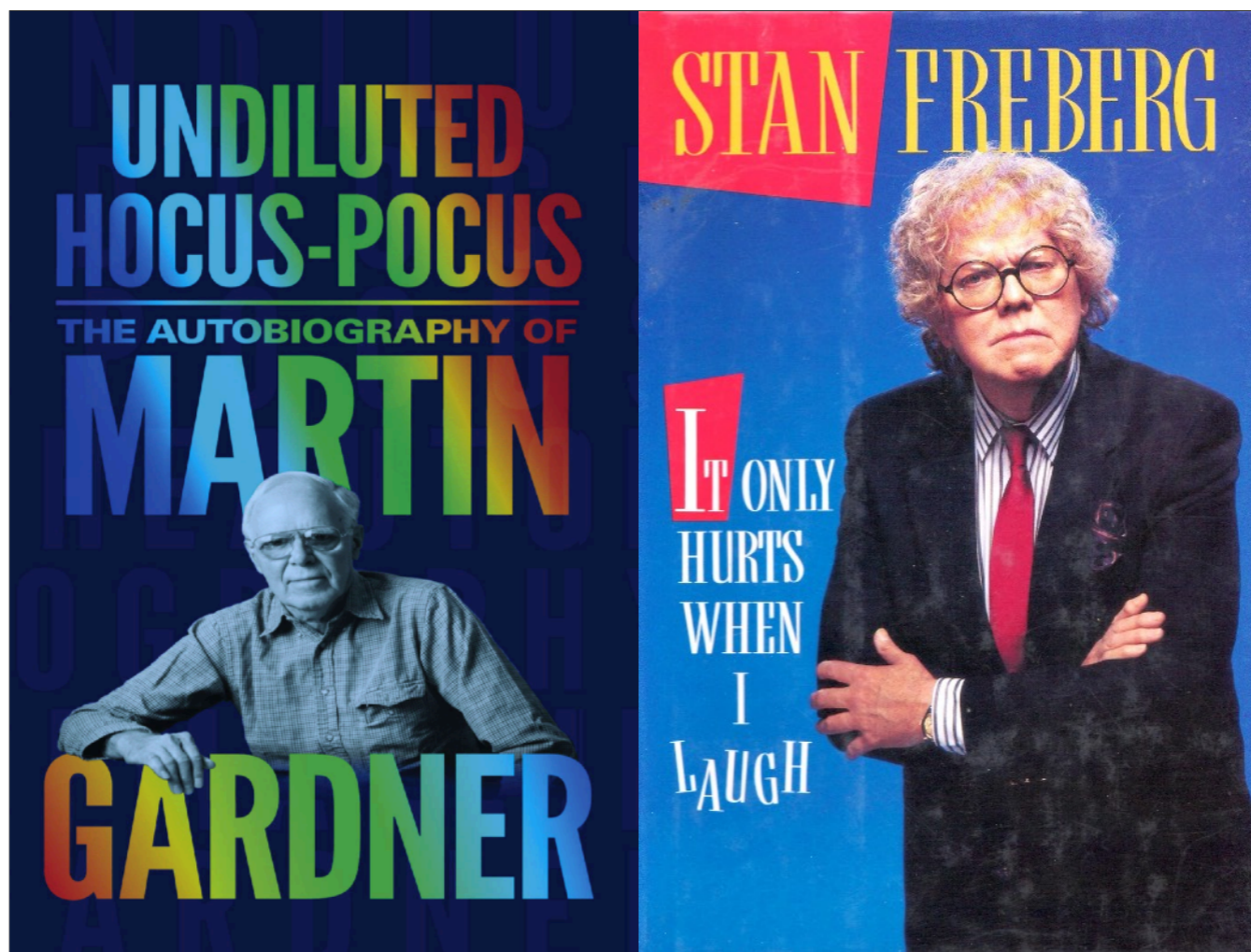
Martin Gardner's autobiography

During the Centennial, Colm & I read and gleaned U-HC for things to Tweet on @MGardner100th, so I noticed lots of details.



Stan Freberg was one of my Heroes.
Don't worry if you don't know who Freberg was.

I discovered his auto-bio after reading Martin's Hocus-Pocus. I was struck by all the parallels..

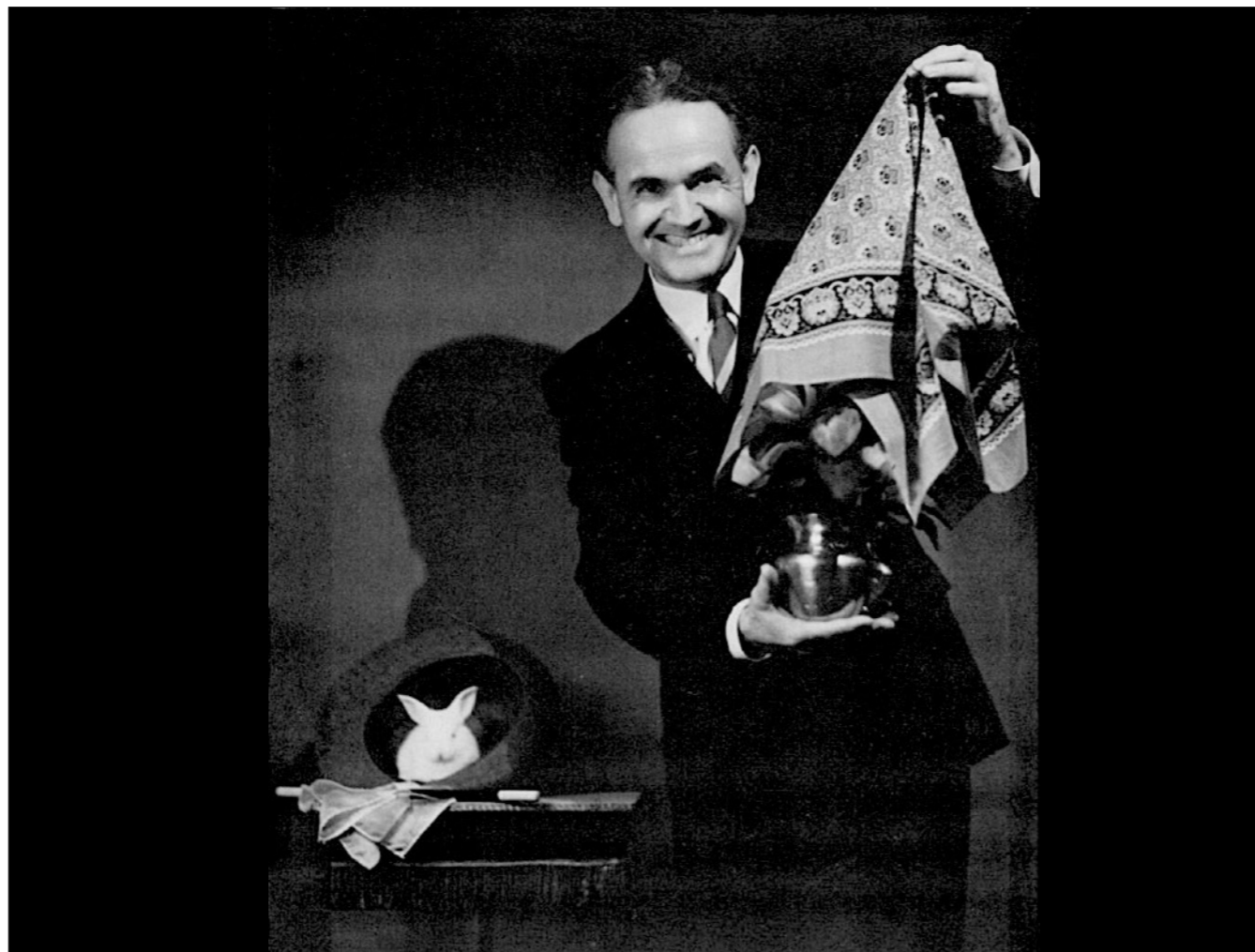


Please join me, as we discover one thing after another these guys had in common.

BTW - These covers perfectly show their differences:

Gardner, the introvert, vs Freberg, Leaning into you.

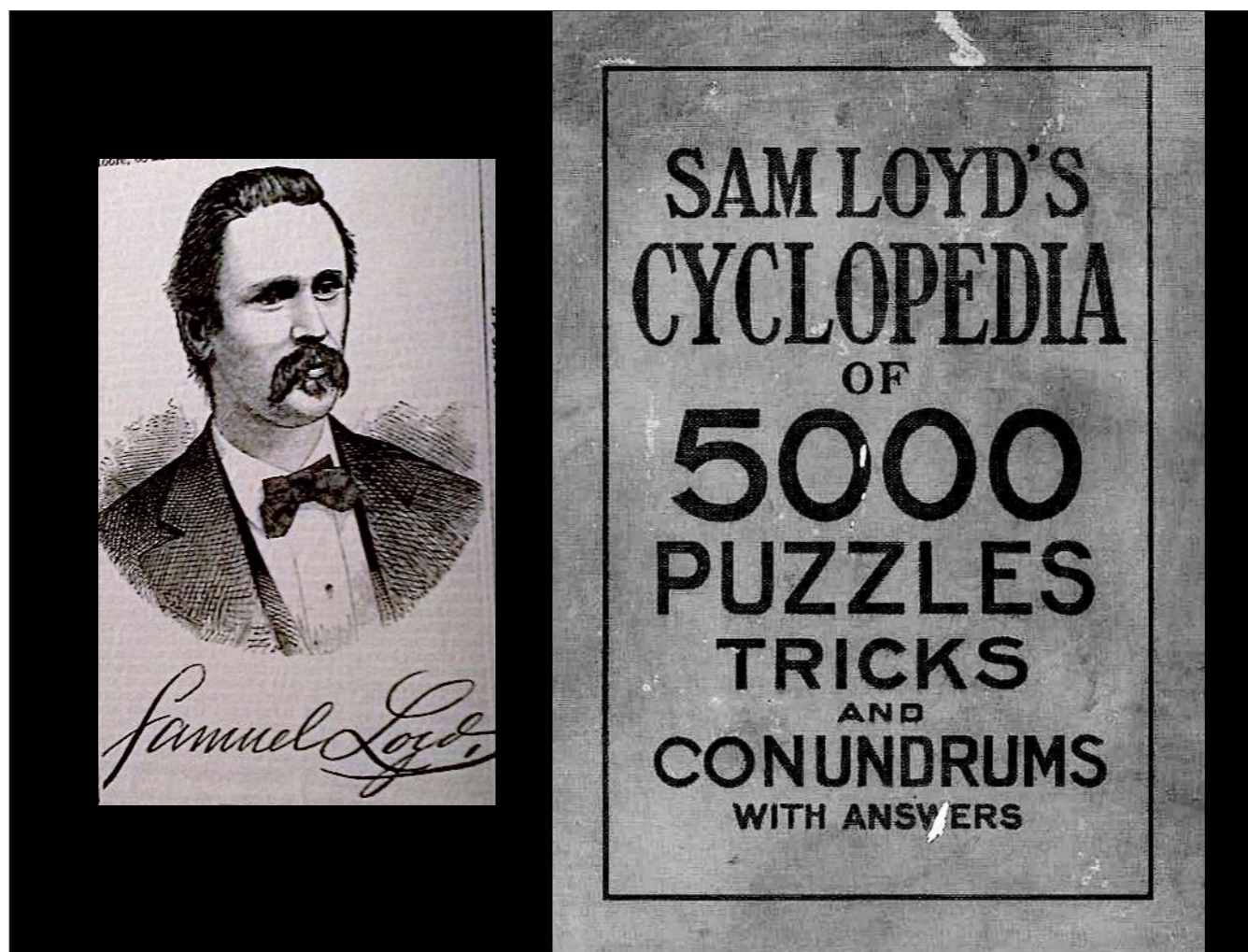
(SKIP: Martin was 12 years old when Stan was born.)



As a boy, STAN's live-in Uncle Raymond was "ConRay the Magician".

Stan raised rabbits for ConRay to pull out of a Hat on stage. ...

MARTIN's father showed him a magic trick. (What was it? Anyone know?)



Early influencers.

Martin's father gave him a copy of Sam Loyd's Cyclopedia of 5000 Puzzles Tricks and Conundrums



Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking War Drama as Fact

**Many Flee Homes to Escape 'Gas Raid From
Mars'—Phone Calls Swamp Police at
Broadcast of Wells Fantasy**

A wave of mass hysteria seized thousands of radio listeners throughout the nation between 8:15 and 9:30 o'clock last night when a broadcast of a dramatization of H. G. Wells's fantasy, "The War of the Worlds," led thousands to believe that an interplanetary conflict had started with invading Martians spreading wide death and

and radio stations here and in other cities of the United States and Canada seeking advice on protective measures against the raids.

The program was produced by Mr. Welles and the Mercury Theatre on the Air over station WABC and the Columbia Broadcasting System's coast-to-coast network, from 8 to 9 o'clock.

His first time eating alone in a Diner, Stan heard Orson Welles' War of Worlds, on the Radio, Live.

He realized "it was just another marvelous use of radio".

[MG in Tulsa]

Martin Gardner's math teacher:

You'll do Math in my class!

(Not Tic-Tac-Toe)

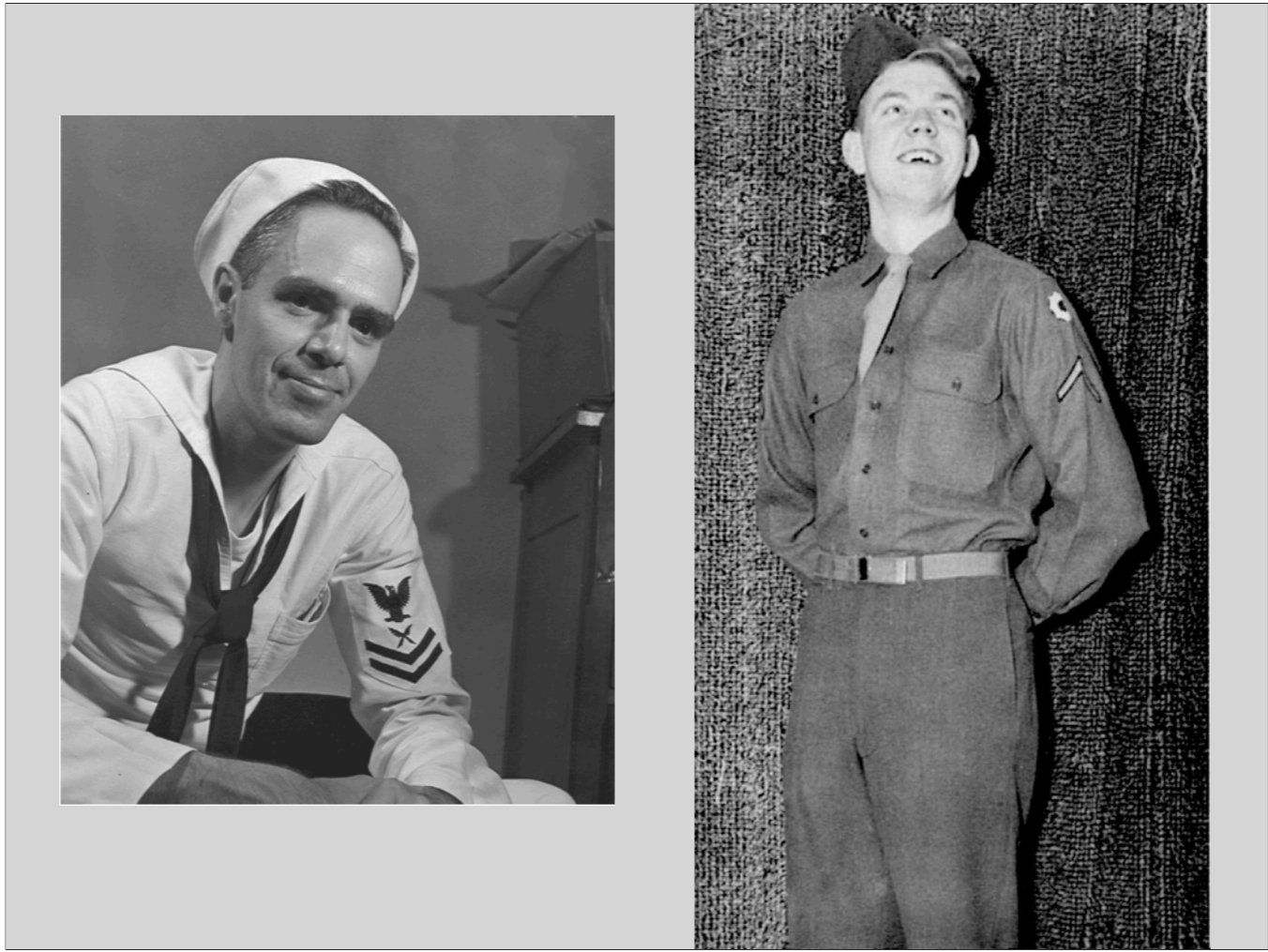
Stan Freberg's writing teacher:

Creative, but Bombastic!

Teachers.

Martin's math teacher Pauline found him working on the game tree for T-T-T, and scolded him for not doing Math!

Freberg's teacher said his writing was bombastic.



Martin did PR for the RADIO Signaling school in Wisconsin.

Freberg entertained troops at a hospital, stationed in Pasadena, CA.

Both edited NEWS papers while in service.

Yeoman Gardner: Badger Navy News

In Wisconsin before shipping out to USS Pope..

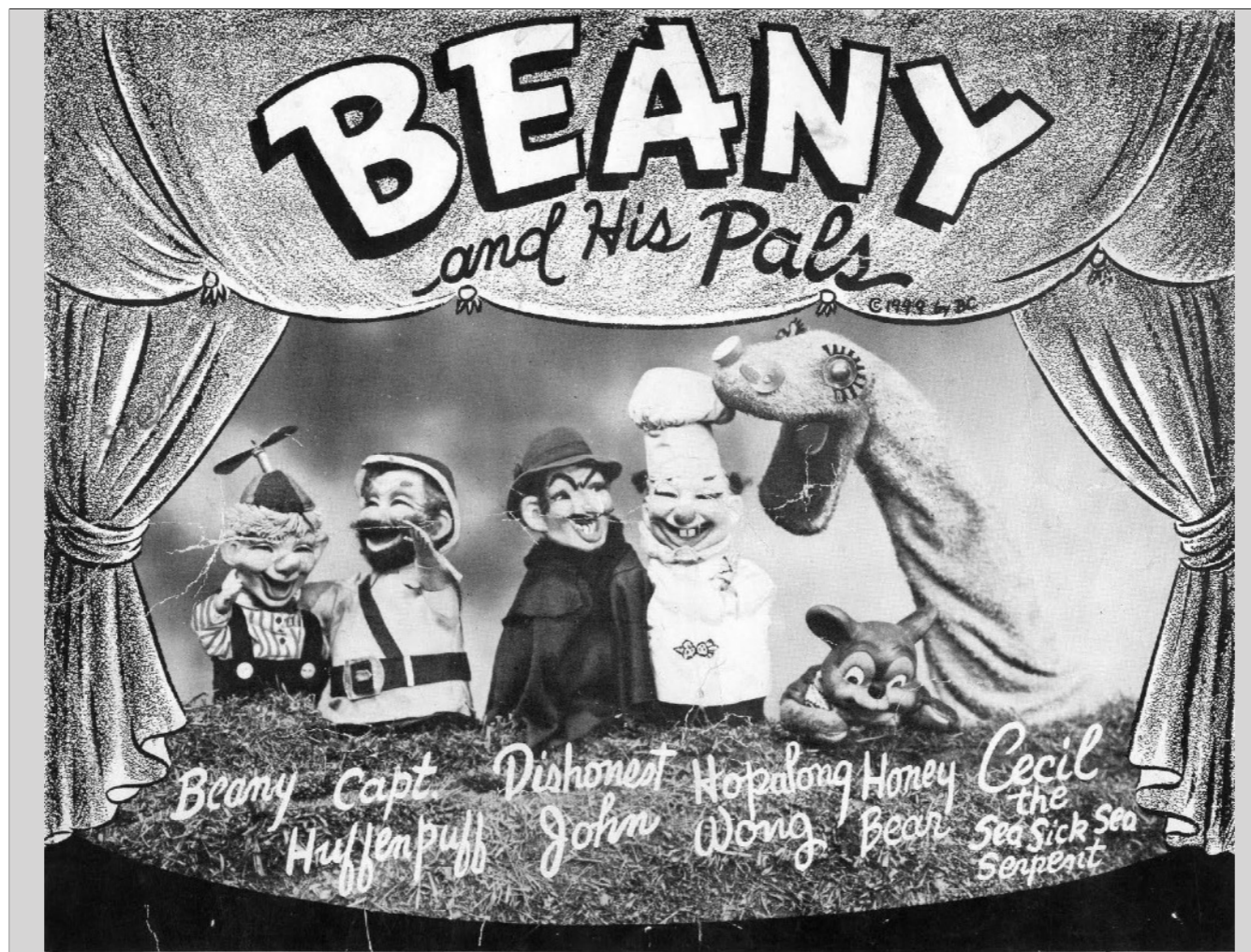
Corporal Freberg - The Needle News

At Fort McArthur, then McCornack Hospital, Pasadena

Chosen for their Aptitudes, both men edited newspapers as part of their Military Service.



Martin edited 10 issues/year of HUMPTY DUMPTY for 8 years, from 1952-1960



Freberg & others started 'Time for Beany', a TV puppet show in 1949.

Beany was the #1 children's show, with a 70 share, for 5 years.



After a crewman dropped the Cue Cards, Freberg's crew invented a crude Teleprompter. (Not shown.)



Here is an Escher-like FLAT backdrop. (That's not a set!)



Einstein was a fan of Beany, and once left a meeting saying:
"You will have to excuse me, gentlemen. It's Time for Beany!"

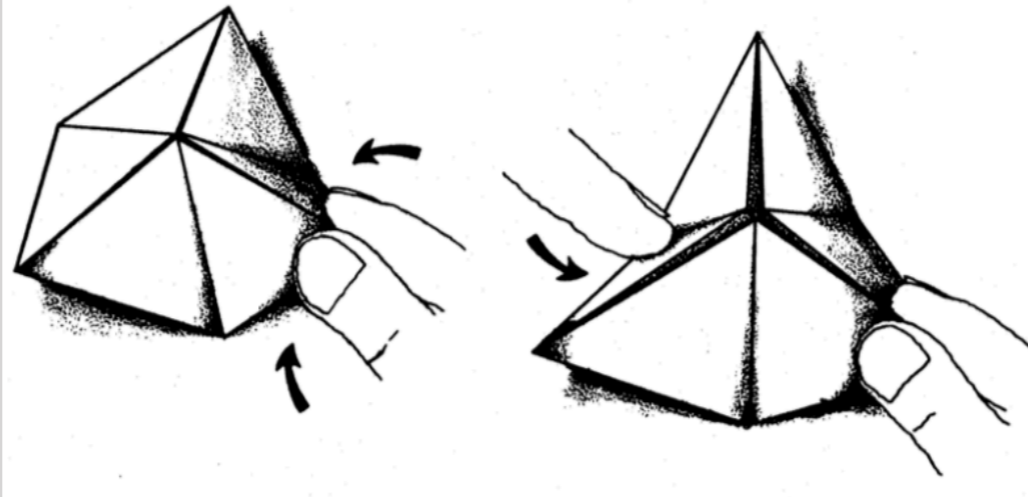


On the Left, Martin's "Annotated Alice" was a success in 1960...

On the Right, back in time - 1951, Walt Disney animated "Alice in Wonderland".

Freberg & Company did The Jabberwock Song, but it wasn't included in the final cut.

Hexaflexagons



Martin's Scientific American article HEXAFLEXAGONS caused a lot of Flexing and Folding in December 1956 !

This illustration is from that article.



Dragonet was an Audio spoof of the TV show **Dragnet**, substituting a knight for Detective Joe Friday. It sold over a million records in 3 weeks, in 1953.

DRAGONET and FLEXAGONS put both men on career paths... they gained many followers.



Freberg came up with a crazy vocal recording that went viral in 1957.

Some radio stations refused to play "John & Marsha," believing it was a passionate exchange between two real people.

There's more on all this stuff in magistrates Book paper.



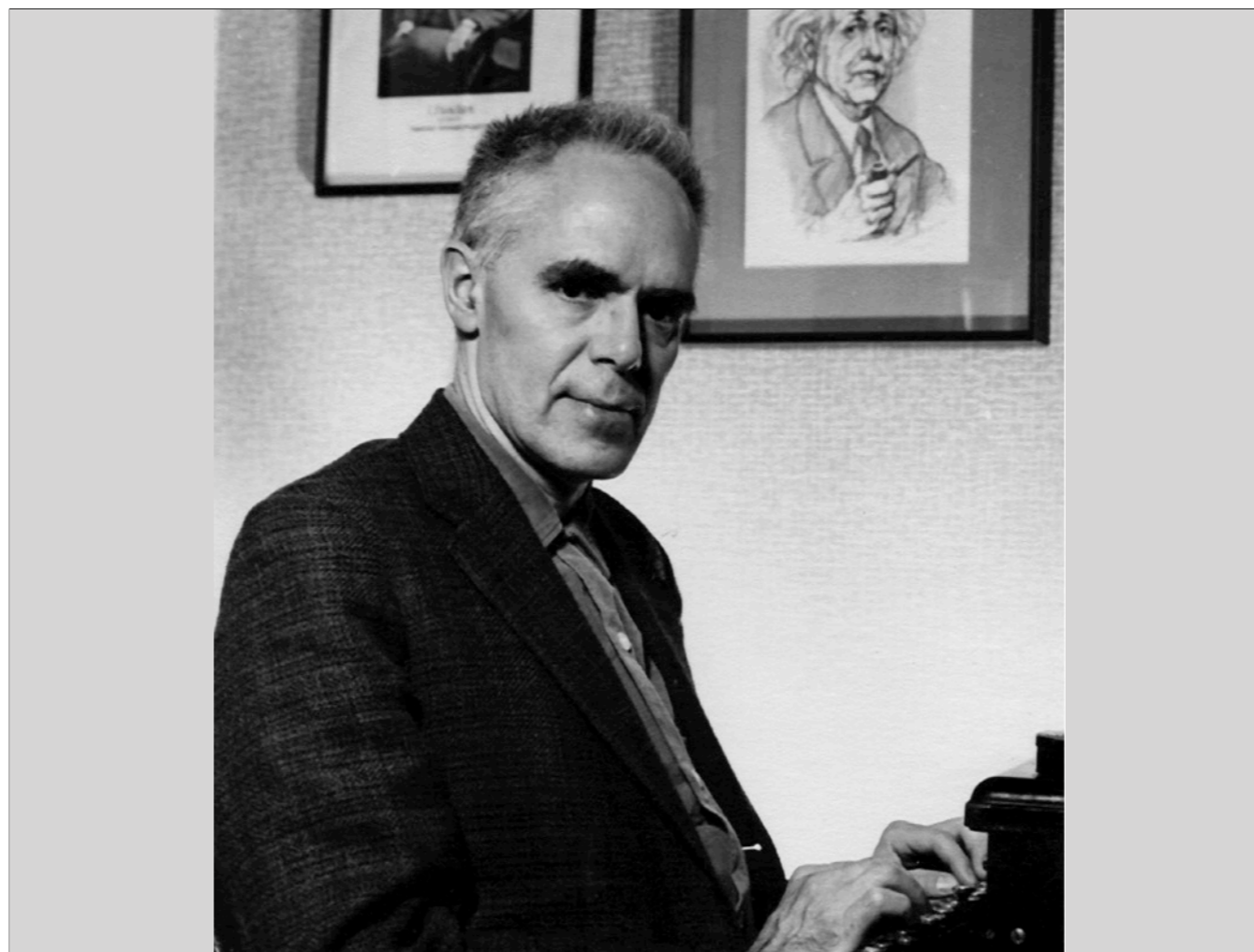
This Snowdrift commercial with "John & Marsha" was not Freberg's!



Freberg frequently appeared on The Ed Sullivan Show with a puppet, a moon man named Orville.

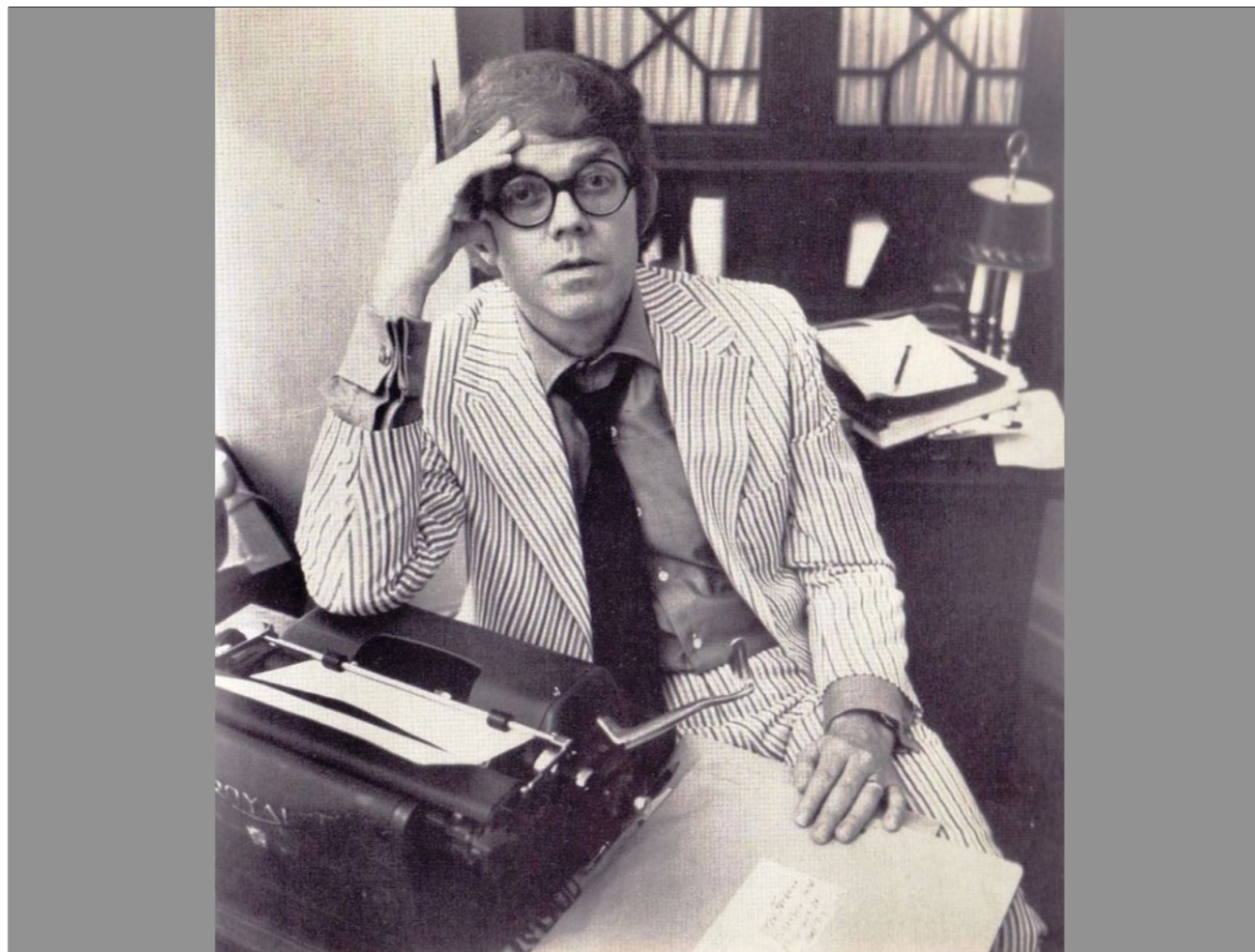
They chatted about earthlings, smog, war, ...

Freberg was blacklisted for live TV after Talking about the threat of Nuke War.

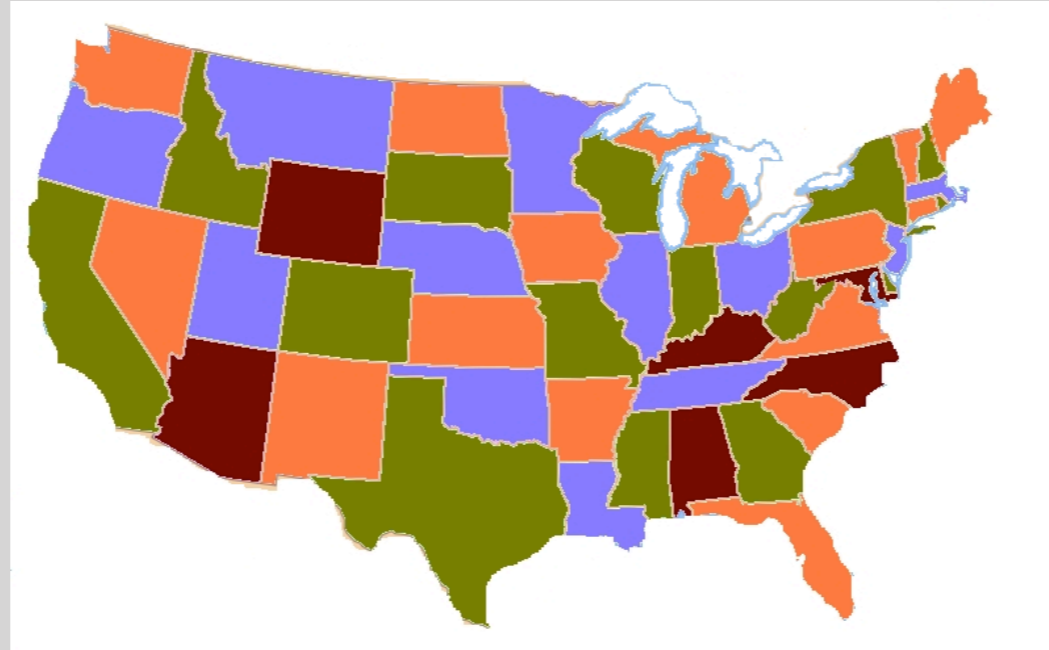


Both men used Typewriters.

Martin, Hard at Work here. Note Einstein on the wall.

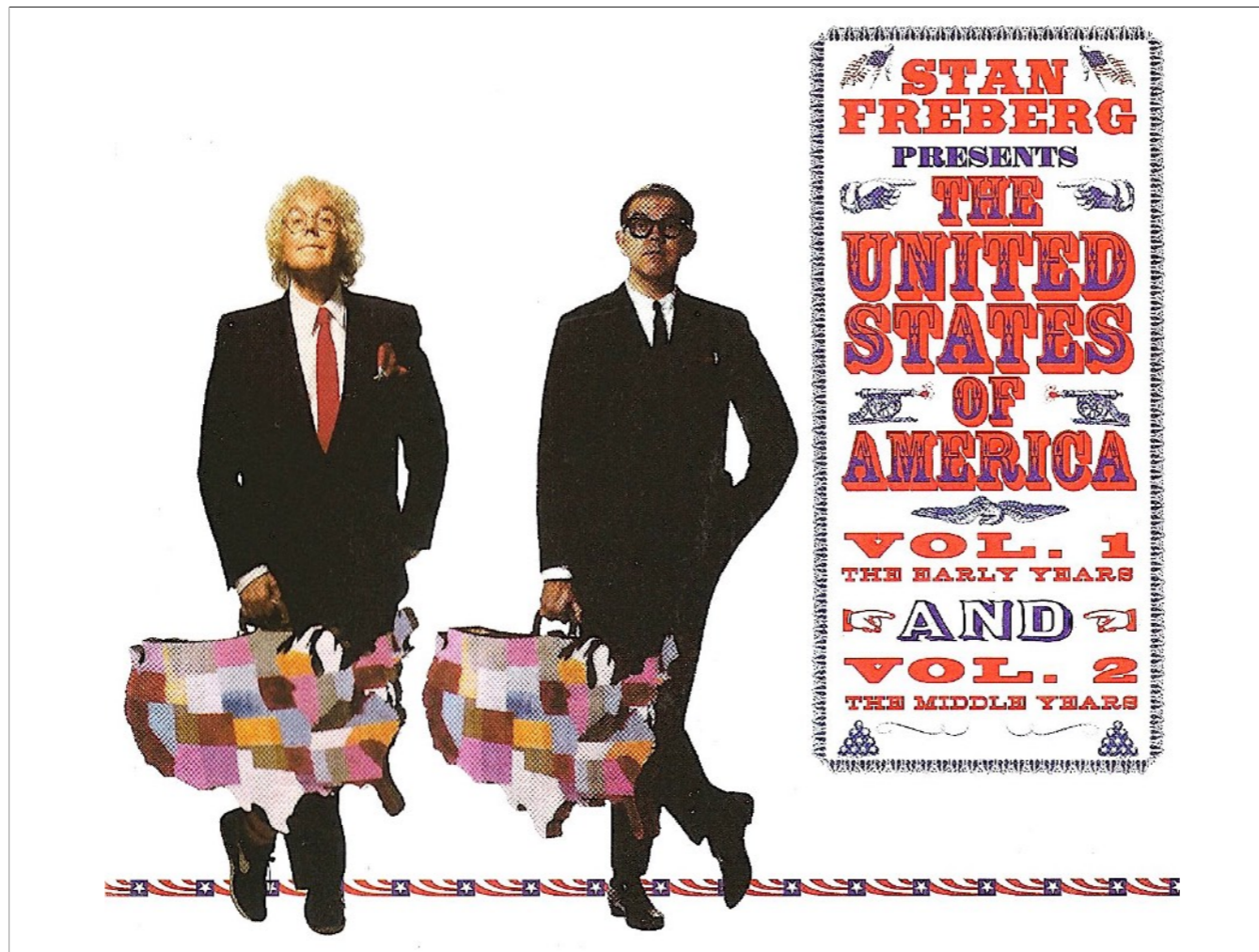


Stan in 1968, NYC



Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0

Martin began Mathematical Games in 1957. Map coloring appeared from time to time.



"Stan Freberg presents The United States of America" was a "Satirical Revue"--with ten skits, from Columbus to the Battle of Yorktown, complete with voice actors, narration, a musical score, and sound effects.

It sold millions.

I bought the record album for \$3.75 in the 1960's.

This is a much later CD with Volumes 1 and 2.

GARDNER

**The best way ...
to make mathematics interesting to students and laymen
is to approach it in a spirit of play.**

Intro to Mathematical Carnival

Martin believed in the power of play. People were skeptical of Having Fun with Math.

FREBERG

**... Why should people be bored out of their skulls by advertising?
If We have to live with it, why not make the commercials at least, if not
more, entertaining than the show itself?**

**What if people were afraid to leave the room for fear that they might have
missed one of the entertaining commercials? Wouldn't that be the best of
all possible worlds for the sponsor?**

It Only Hurts When I Laugh - p126

Freberg poked fun at the "Hard Sell".
He thought commercials should be Fun, that
you needed to entertain people in exchange for their time.



Here's an example from 1962:

9 out of 10 Doctors recommend CHUN KING chow mein.

Can you guess which Doctor doesn't?

OK, now we are going to sprint to the finish...

MARTIN

**"Several years ago I read about a man who was so annoyed
by the drivel on his television set
that he blasted the screen with a shotgun."**

—first line of MG's negative review of Jerry Mander's
Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television

(p 361, Science - Good, Bad and Bogus)

Martin read about a man who was so annoyed by the drivel on his TV he blasted it with a shotgun.



Freberg, was likewise incensed with TV programming, particularly commercials.

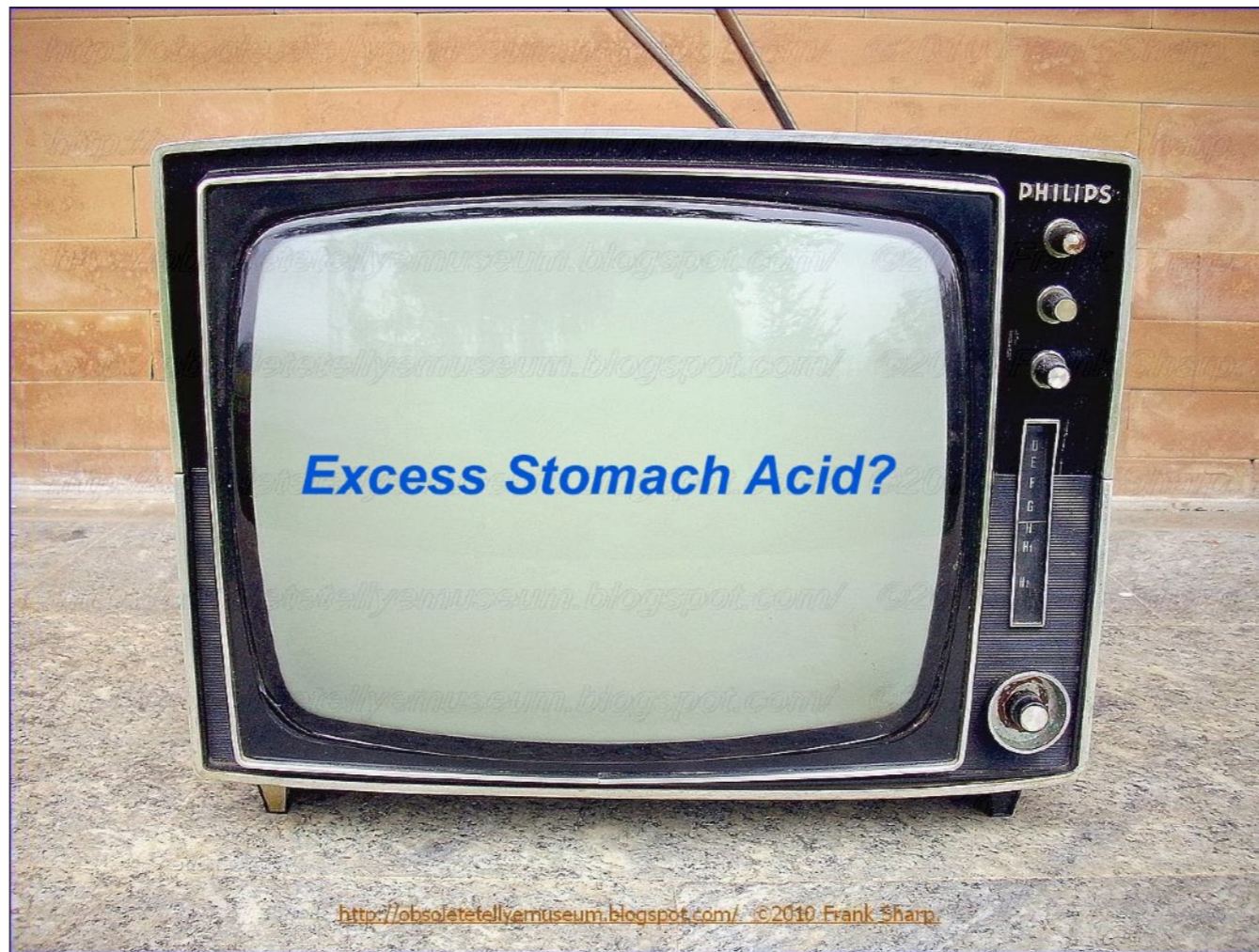
When CBS wanted Freberg to do a show, he scripted an opening with him holding a shotgun, facing a Shooting Gallery, with TVs in place of ducks...



When Headache Strikes, you need **fast Fast FAST** relief!
BANG! CRASH!



I tried everything for my constipation...
BANG! CRASH!



Stomach acid burned a hole right through this handkerchief, See?
BANG! CRASH!

Freberg would then turn to the camera and say: **Good evening, I'm Stan Freberg...**

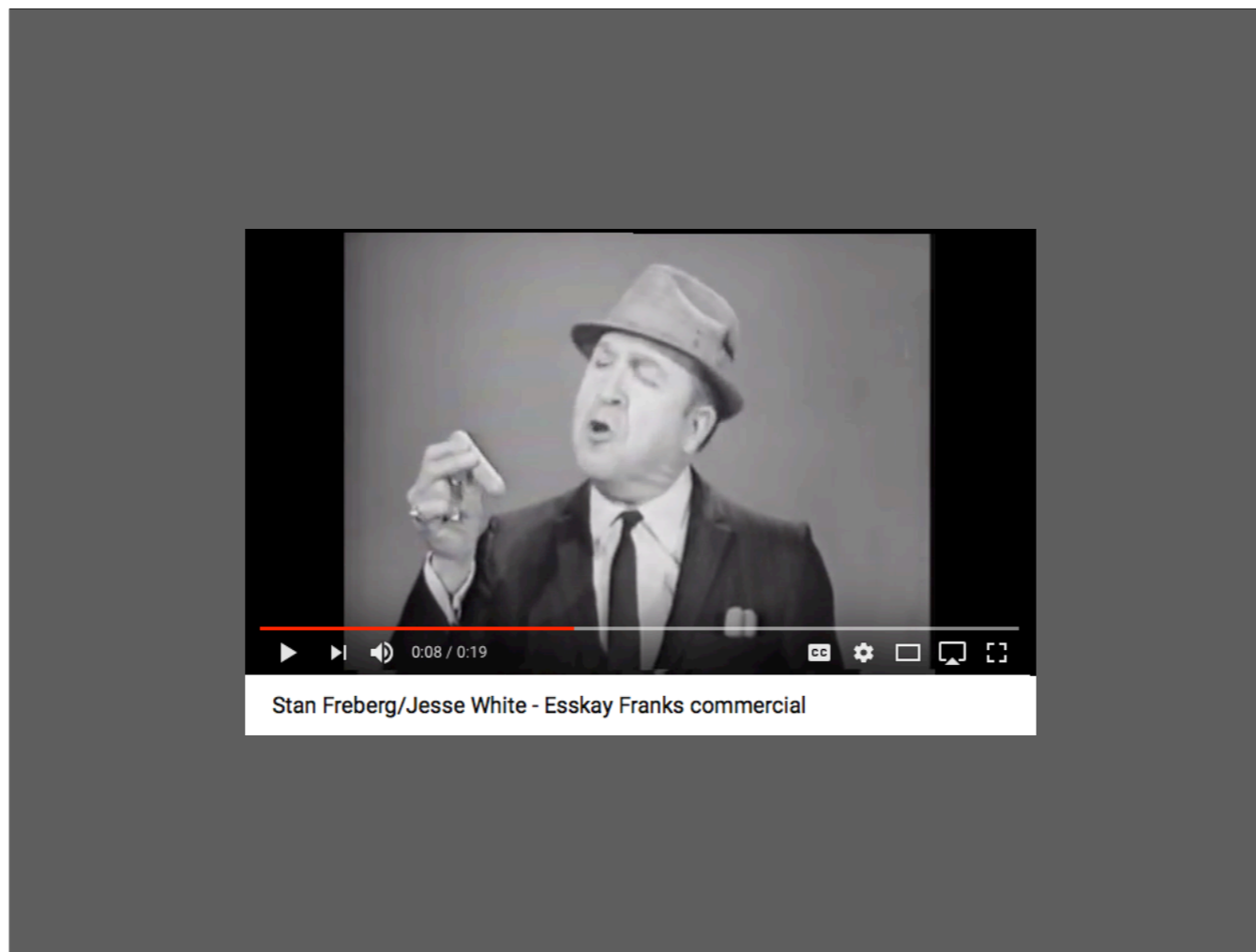
CBS said: **You can't do that.**

That show didn't last long, so Freberg turned to making commercials.

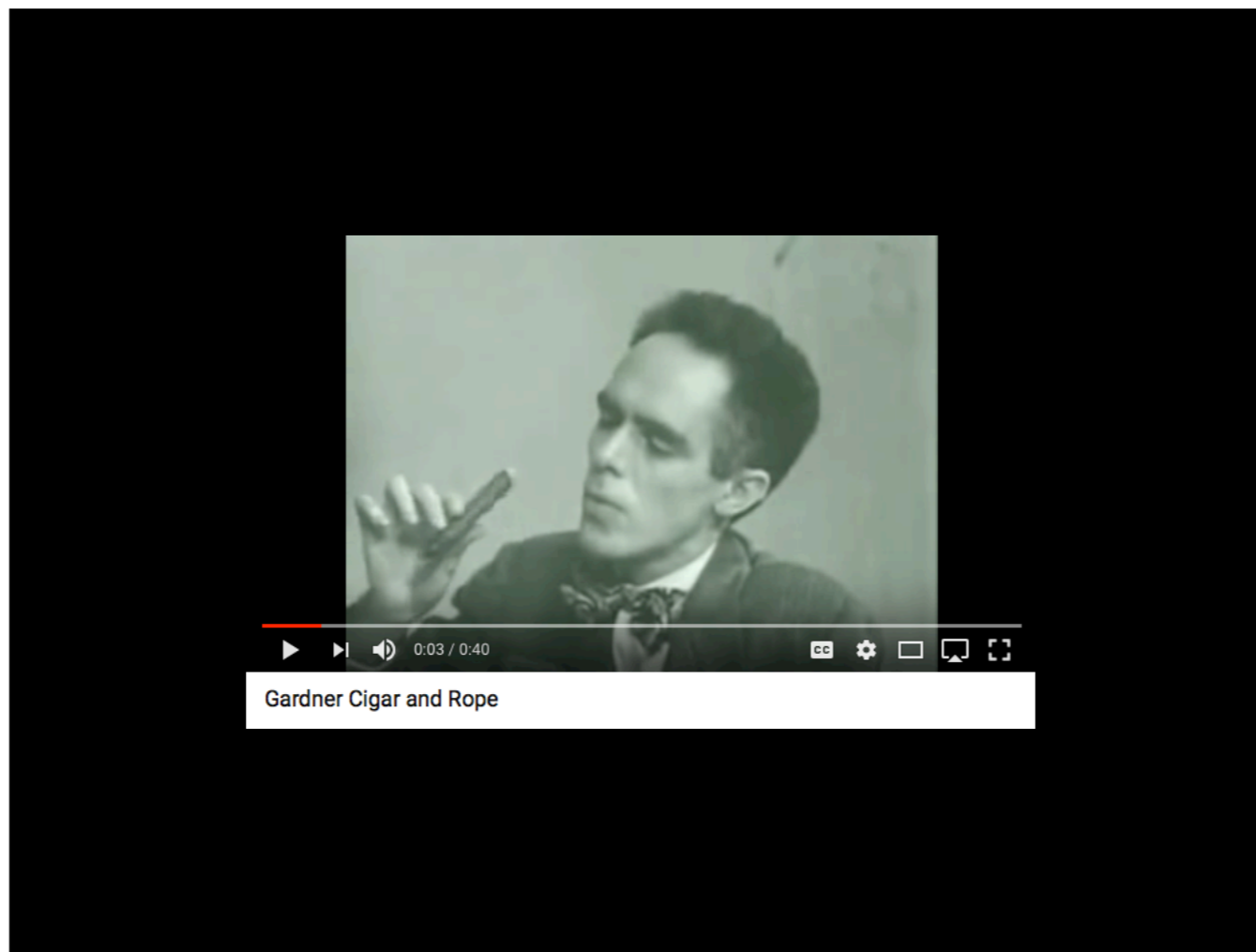


Freberg refused to do commercials for cigarettes or alcohol, but he did for everything else.

Here's Cheerios, the '*Terribly Adult Cereal*'



Enjoy a **Smoked Frank** (that's a hot dog in Jesse White's hand)

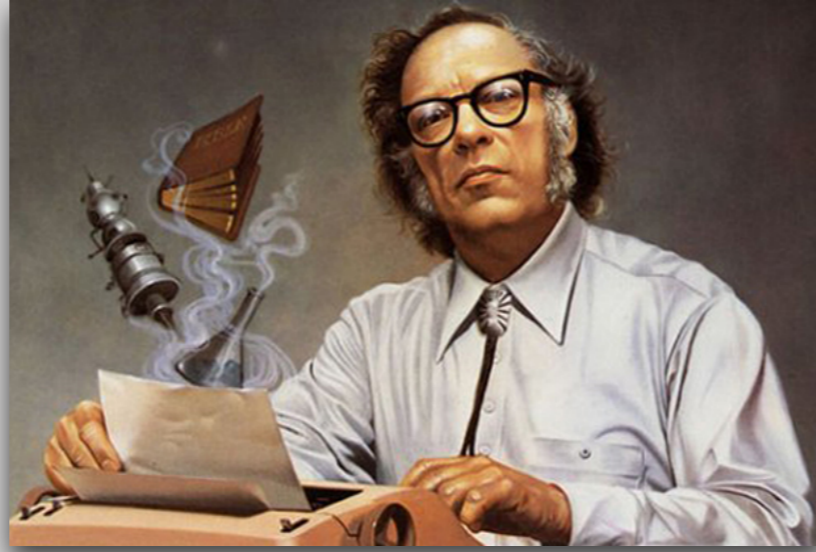


Here's Martin in 'Cigar and Rope' a venture into early TV, called "MiniTrix".



1992 Encyclopedia Britannica Commercial

Freberg's son Donovan got a nerdy reputation for his part in this Encyclopedia commercial.



Science Fiction writer Isaac Asimov and Martin were members of the Trap Door Spiders group.



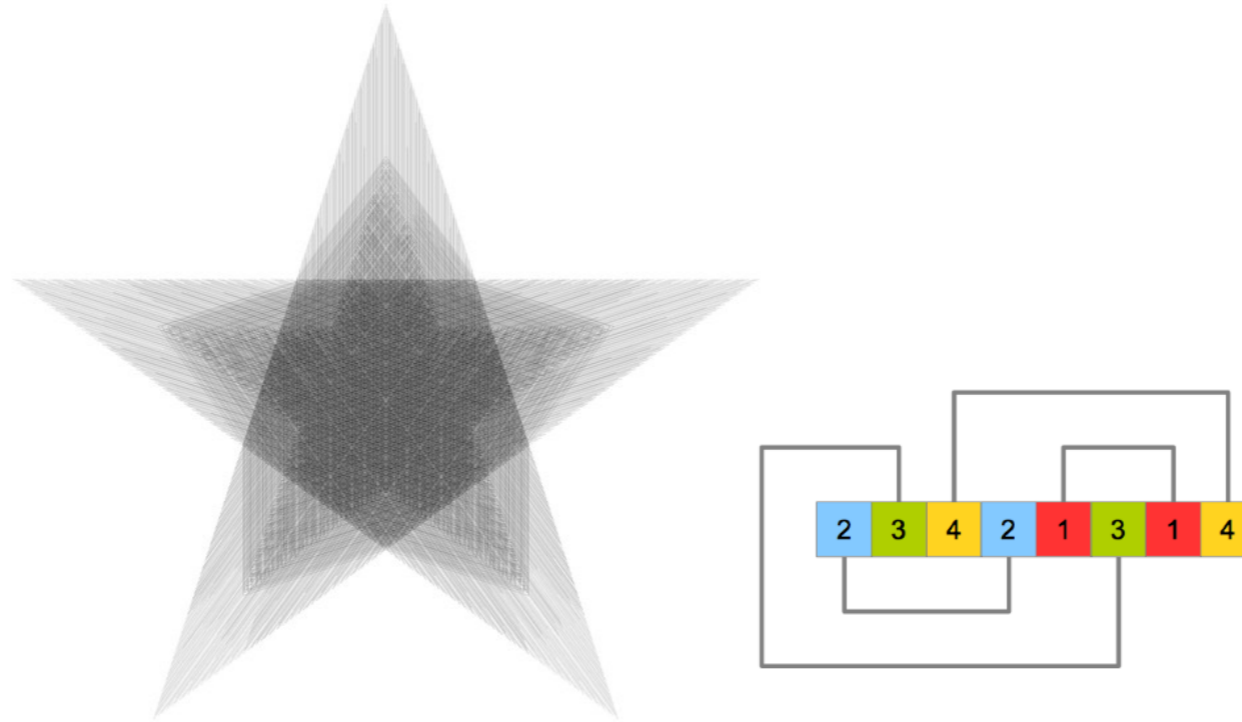
Ray Bradbury and Freberg were friends.

Bradbury introduced Stan to Orson Welles. By then, Orson Welles was a fan of Freberg's!



Stan Freberg died three years ago, on April 7.

JoHN MiLLeR
dialectrix.com/G4G



This page has all my G4G papers. The paper for this talk has links you can click.

There is also a Story about this Star which is actually a Ternary Tree... and an Update on Langford's Problem... Martin always liked to get updates.

Thank You for ... oops! Times up.