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JAN HAROLD BRUNVAND

## A CLASSIFICATION FOR SHAGGY DOG STORIES

THE FOLLOWING TYPE INDEX for shaggy dog stories was begun as a classification job in the Indiana University Folklore Archives while I was archivist from September 1958 to June 1960. Although approximately 300 Indiana University texts constitute the largest single collection represented, they make up only about half of all the jokes that were finally indexed. After hearing by chance about a large collection of shaggy dog stories preserved by the Columbia Broadcasting System from a 1958 radio contest,<sup>1</sup> I decided to expand the project and also include analogous materials from print. The Bibliography of Texts shows the wide range of publications that was sampled; some references came from folklore journals and anthologies, but many were from miscellaneous popular works. A survey of a dozen years of the monthly joke page in *Boys' Life* yielded some three dozen shaggy dog stories. A series of articles in *Esquire* in 1937 and 1942 contained twenty examples. From many joke books available, those of Bennett Cerf were selected and found to be rich in shaggy dogs; one pocket-sized anthology of shaggies from England was also found. Two collections of shaggy dog stories used in advertising were indexed, and miscellaneous personal reading, plus jokes heard during the course of the project, provided further scattered references.

Altogether, the finished classification includes more than 200 types and subtypes of shaggy dog stories, which are organized in six sections. The sections are lettered and individual stories are numbered after the manner of Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* so that new material can be added any place. Numbers have been skipped frequently to facilitate additions. A joke from one printed work and not attested from oral sources was included only if it constituted a subtype of a known folk joke or was similar to other oral material.

As the original basis for selecting shaggy dog jokes, it was assumed that they were ridiculous in setting, long and drawn-out in style, and likely to be followed by more groans than laughs. A detailed definition of the shaggy dog story emerged after excerpting such jokes from the archives (along with all stories labeled by collectors or informants as "shaggy dogs"), examining the jokes designated as shaggy dogs in printed collections, and then working out a system to classify them all. Therefore, a survey of the sections of the classification must precede a formal definition of the genre.

Section A of the index, "The 'Original' Shaggy Dog Story," is a concession to the widely held idea that the *first* such joke must have been about a dog that was shaggy.<sup>2</sup> It is fruitless to inquire whether any given joke was the forerunner of all the current shaggy dog stories, but probably some form of the joke in Section A gave us their popular name. The use of the term "shaggy dog" has been extended to cover three main groups of jokes. The first two sections of the index constitute one such group, for the principle behind the jokes in Section A is exactly the same as in B, what Eric Partridge has called "the psychological non sequitur."<sup>3</sup>

Partridge's term admirably describes "The Ordinary Shaggy Dog Story." He

points out that the conclusion of this kind of story is "a non sequitur, not of faulty logic, but of attitude and response."<sup>4</sup> The characters in ordinary shaggy dog stories do not respond to the fantastic things happening around them, but to the commonplace things going on simultaneously. Another writer, identifying the same device from the point of view of listeners, says that we are tricked "by making normal reflex shortcuts between an opening situation and the sort of conclusion one would expect in normal life."<sup>5</sup> The bizarre reactions of characters in these stories do not follow, psychologically speaking, from the situations and from what we expect of human behavior. (A few jokes based on non sequiturs of *logic* are grouped in Section F by way of contrast; these stories are not strictly shaggy, though they border on the shaggy dog story.) Every shaggy dog story is essentially a trick which is pulled on the listener after he has endured a drawn-out, ridiculous, seemingly pointless narrative; in this first group of stories, the trick consists of distorting basic human psychology.

Animal characters and blasé bartenders, waiters and theatrical agents are stock characters in the ordinary shaggy dog story. The plots of them can be divided generally into those about animals with humans (B0.—B499.), those about animals alone (B500.—B599.), and those without animal characters (B600.—B1199.). The animal-with-human stories group themselves easily into three main cycles, one about drinkers (B0.—B199.), one about talkers (B200.—B299.), and one about clever performers who have a single flaw (B300.—B399.). The stories about humans alone fall into a main cycle of "Inane Reactions and Answers" (B600.—B799.) and a smaller group of stories based on impossible occurrences (B800.—B999.).

In the stories of Section C, the action is usually somewhat less bizarre and the listener is tricked not by a lapse of normal human responses, but by means of a verbal double-cross—an outrageous pun, usually resulting in a perversion of a proverb or other popular saying which is used as the punch line. The organizing principles for this section are groupings by the types of sayings involved, and alphabetizing within these categories by the words on which the puns are based. Proverbs, proverbial phrases and other miscellaneous sayings are sources of the punch lines in about half of these stories; another quarter of them use familiar expressions not in the forms of set sayings, and the remaining stories draw on songs, poems, axioms of science, advertising or mock moral lessons for their punch lines. The ease with which such stories can be invented probably accounts for their increasing popularity lately. One needs only to take a familiar phrase (like "fate worse than death"), twist it into a new form—perhaps a spoonerism ("date worse than Feth")—and make up a silly story to lead to the saying (like one about a couple of coeds who have met a fellow that is even duller to go out on a date with than is one Mr. Feth).<sup>6</sup> A series of roadside signs borrows the trick from this cycle of stories by proclaiming, "Drunken driver, nothing worse. He puts the quart, before the hearse . . ."<sup>7</sup>

The third main group of shaggy dog stories, Section D, is labeled "Hoax Stories," since these jokes defraud the listener into believing that he is hearing a true narrative and then suddenly turn out to be all nonsense. About half of these tales are told as personal experiences and tend to be quite realistic in tone; many are in the form of "Catch Tales" (Aarne-Thompson Type 2200) which lead the listener to ask a certain question to which he gets a nonsensical reply. The second group of hoax stories are more fantastic in tone but still have a ring of truth in them that turns out to be purely counterfeited. A couple of classics from this section, "The Kush Maker" (D500.)

and "The Mysterious Letter in French" (D510.), lend themselves especially well to the longwinded delivery style typical of shaggy dog stories.

A class of hoax story which the student-collectors called the "No Point" joke is put into Section E, since here we move one more step away from the verbal joke and towards the practical. A completely nonsensical story with a wholly unrelated and pointless punch line is told to a group containing some dupes who believe that they are hearing a genuine joke. When those in-the-know laugh, the suckers wonder what's wrong with their sense of humor; whether they laugh or frown at the punch line, they are funny to behold. Two examples of another class of pointless story showed up in the CBS collection and also seemed at home in Section E.

Relating all the main sections of the index, then, we arrive at the following definition of a shaggy dog story: a nonsensical joke that employs in the punch line a psychological non sequitur, a punning variation of a familiar saying, or a hoax, to trick the listener who expects conventional wit or humor. Such jokes usually describe ridiculous characters and actions and often are told (to heighten the effect of the final letdown) in a long drawn-out style with minute details, repetitions and elaborations.

Although probably few listeners nowadays would fail to anticipate a shaggy dog story and expect "conventional wit or humor," this does not invalidate our definition. For though the principles behind "shaggy" humor seem to assume the naive listener who can be taken in, in practice listeners tend to fall in with the trick which they know is coming and to relish the pointless verbosity of shaggy dog stories just as much as they do the pointed gag lines of straight jokes. Still, as Martin Armstrong observed as long ago as 1928, this kind of joke (speaking here of "The Man with Food on his Head" story) "divides listeners into two camps—those who laugh and those who find it just silly and who get indignant at the first group."<sup>8</sup>

Several opportunities for research in modern joke lore are suggested by the annotations to some of these stories. The interrelationships of folklore with other aspects of popular culture are indicated by the appearance of shaggy dog stories in oral tradition, in advertising, on radio and TV (see B100.), in political cartoons (see B10.7. and C425.), comic strips (see C45., C220. and C425.), and in magazines as widely different as *Boys' Life*, *Esquire* and *Woman's Day*. Certain of these modern funny stories are analogous to traditional folktales with ancient roots. Number B501., "The Lion and the Mouse," has some resemblance to a Sumerian fable; B655., "The Man who Wouldn't Give the Time of Day," has the same humorous twist as Aarne-Thompson Type 1450, "Clever Elsie." Such tales as B810., "The Man who Bit Himself on the Ear," and C1675., "You Can't Please Everyone," are based on narrative motifs with long recorded histories. On the other hand, several shaggy dog stories are obviously of quite recent invention; in B302., "The Shopping Dog," we find trading stamps. C825., C855., and C1025. allude to space flight. C475., "The Civilized Native," and C830., "A Blanket for the Pope," echo popular songs of the last few years. C840., "The Tailor Turned Soldier," and C841., "Sergeant Dye's Retirement," go back to General MacArthur's homecoming from Korea in 1951. (It is interesting to note, however, that C860., "The Rarey," a great current favorite, refers to a World War I song.) Several stories have interesting early American connections—B420., "The Horse that Sat Down on Grapefruit," to Abe Lincoln; D500., "The Kush Maker," to both Lincoln and Davy Crockett; and B801., "The Girl with the Ribbon Around her Neck," to Washington Irving. B800., "The

Golden Screw in the Navel," was possibly invented by an early humorist, Captain George H. Derby (pseud. John Phoenix, Esq.). Our early national love of elaborate punning humor, very much like that found in Section C, is demonstrated by B. J. Whiting's article on "American Wellerisms from the Golden Age" (ca. 1840-1860).<sup>9</sup>

The examples from Partridge and Waller show that shaggy dog stories are known in England and, in the case of B500, in Australia. A recent interview with a Soviet visitor proves that B508, "Fleas and Dog," and B652, "Lion Powder," are known in Russia.

The answer to the question of the origin and rise in popularity of "shaggy" humor as a type must await more indexing of jokes from early sources and comparative studies of some individual items. The Indiana University collection reveals little about the age and popularity of the genre. Some 245 stories were dated from 1942 to 1956 (the dates informants could remember hearing them). An upsurge in stories turned in after 1952 could easily be due to increased emphasis on jokes in the classroom lectures. (Only 70 shaggy dog stories were dated from 1942 to 1951. For the following years the totals, in order, run 13, 33, 38, 56, and 35.) Esar offers a rather plausible theory on the origin of shaggy dog stories, but his ideas are insufficiently documented. He suggests that "shaggy dog" was derived from "shaggy" in the sense of drunk or alcoholic. Esar's theory is that "nonsense souse gags"—jokes about drunks—from the 1920's became confused later with other nonsense jokes about animals; the great popularity of these stories in the 1940's, he maintains, led to the incorrect use of the term for all sorts of absurd humor. Partridge's contribution of a key term for indexing shaggy dog stories is not matched by a serious history of the form, though he does give some useful hints in his brief and playful treatment. He says he heard some prototypes of current shaggy dog stories as early as 1905, but recalls the first genuine example from the year 1939. Partridge cannot remember hearing the term "shaggy dog" before 1946, though he quotes a friend who heard it in 1943;<sup>10</sup> the three *Esquire* articles used here, however, antedate this by one and six years. (The Indiana University examples dated 1942 were numbers A20., "The Shaggy Dog Contests," and B202., "The Dog that Stopped Talking"; the former was labeled a shaggy dog story.) Several early British publications mentioned by Partridge as containing shaggy dog stories were not available to me; they would help in determining age and national priority. It is not really clear whether Partridge considers England or America as the home of the shaggy dog, for he gives examples of preceding joke types from both countries. Vance Randolph, it is worth noting, reports a completely unrelated use of the term "shaggy dog" from the Ozarks; he writes, "A *shaggy dog* means either a bitch in heat or a male looking for female companionship. In Fayetteville, Arkansas, I once heard a man designate obscene tales as *shaggy-dog stories*."<sup>11</sup>

Two psychological studies making use of shaggy dog stories have been noted. A pioneering application of Gestalt theory to jokes in 1933 used the story of the man ordering an S-shaped cake as a model for subjects in the study to diagram; Max Eastman, writing on humor, further supported this researcher's findings.<sup>12</sup> A Freudian analyst has turned attention on other shaggy dog stories; some of her suggestions on the "Did you ever see a moth bawl?" story are summarized in the note to number C635.

Whether approached geographically, historically, comparatively, psychologically, or in terms of typology, joke cycles and relationships to other categories of folk

and popular culture, the shaggy dog story suggests many problems for folklorists. It is hoped that the following preliminary bibliography and type index will stimulate and facilitate research.

## NOTES

1. I am indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Hoffman of Bloomington, Indiana, for calling my attention to this radio contest and also to the Miles Kimball Company catalog.
2. Another candidate for "the original," however, is number C425. See the note to this story.
3. See Eric Partridge, *The 'Shaggy Dog' Story; Its Origin, Development and Nature (With a Few Seemly Examples)* (London, 1953). An early short article by Eric Partridge, "The Shaggy Dog," in *The Sydney Morning Herald* was reprinted in *A Charm of Words* (London, 1960), pp. 13-17.
4. Partridge, *The 'Shaggy Dog' Story*, p. 87.
5. *Esquire* 1, p. 237 (See bibliography following).
6. I heard this story worked out on the spot, at least so my informant told me.
7. Seen posted on Rt. 43 between Michigan City and Lafayette, Ind.
8. See the note to B651.
9. *American Speech*, XX (1945), 1-11 (esp. pp. 5-6).
10. See Partridge, *The 'Shaggy Dog' Story*, pp. 37, 44, and 53.
11. *Down in the Holler* (Norman, Okla., 1953), p. 111.
12. See the note to B653.

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- IU: Indiana University Folklore Archives.
- Miles Kimball: Catalog, *Miles Kimball of Oshkosh*, from The Miles Kimball Company, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Vol. 4 (1957), 40 pp. Sent to me in June 1959 courtesy of Alberta (Mrs. Miles) Kimball, president of the company.

\*Sources of only one or two texts are cited in full under the types. The designation "Oral Tradition" is used for jokes heard while the research was in progress, but never found in other sources. The numbers following the citations, CBS and IU indicate the number of versions found. Doubtful items are marked with an asterisk.

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- "Sir Bagby": The comic strip drawn by R. B. Hackney which I read in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. (Dates given are for that newspaper.)
- Waller: John Waller, *Shaggy Dog and other Surrealist Fables* (London, 1953).
- WD: "What Goes on Here," *Woman's Day* (May 1957), 6-8. A description of the Shaggy Dog story collection of C. M. Olson of Swift and Company, Chicago. (See "Pard.")

## SYNOPSIS OF THE INDEX

- A. The "Original" Shaggy Dog Story
- B. The Ordinary Shaggy Dog Story (Psychological Non Sequitur)
- Bo.—B599. Stories About Animals
- Bo.—B199. Drinking Animals
- B200.—B299. Talking Animals
- B300.—B399. Clever Animals with One Flaw
- B400.—B499. Stories About Animals and Humans—Miscellaneous
- B500.—B599. Stories About Animals Alone—Miscellaneous
- B600.—B1199. Stories Without Animals
- B600.—B799. Inane Reactions and Answers
- B800.—B999. Impossible Occurrences
- B1000.—B1199. Miscellaneous Stories Without Animals
- C. Stories With Punning Punch Lines
- Co.—C199. Proverbs
- C200.—C399. Proverbial Phrases
- C400.—C599. Miscellaneous Popular Sayings
- C600.—C799. Punch Line With a Pun on a Word or Words—No Set Saying Involved.
- C800.—C999. Punch Line From a Song
- C1000.—C1199. Punch Line From a Poem
- C1200.—C1399. Punch Line From an Axiom of Science
- C1400.—C1599. Punch Line From Advertising
- C1600.—C1799. Punch Line States a Moral to Story—Comic Advice
- D. Hoax Stories
- Do.—D499. Hoax Stories Told as Personal Experiences
- D200.—D499. Supposed Personal Experiences Told as "Catch Tales" (Aarne-Thompson Type 2200).
- D500.—D999. Hoax Stories Told as Real Happenings, Though Not Personal Experiences
- E. "No Point" Stories
- F. Logical Non Sequitur

## A. THE "ORIGINAL" SHAGGY DOG STORY

- A10. *The Lost Shaggy Dog Returned*. Brought, with great effort, from U. S. to England. Wrong dog: "My dog wasn't *that* shaggy."  
—IU 1; CBS 5; Waller, p. 28; Partridge, pp. 54-56; *Esquire* 1, 237; Cerf, p. 324; Esar, p. 256; Leach, p. 190.
- A10.1. "My shaggy dog had short hair."  
—Oral tradition, 24 April 1959.

- A10.2. *Man travels world over to see famous shaggy dog.* "Oh, he's not so shaggy."  
—CBS 1.
- A20. *The Shaggy Dog Contests.* A series of contests held to find the shaggiest dog in the city, county, state, country, world, universe etc. Final judge says, "He's not so shaggy."  
—IU 16; CBS 11.
- A20.1. *Dog wins final contest too.*  
—IU 1.
- A20.2. *"No point" ending.* (See section F), "Peanut Butter!"  
—IU 1.
- A20.3. *Dog throws final contest.* Allows female competitor, his sweetheart, to win. She jilts him and he goes off to cry.  
—CBS 1.
- A30. *The Shaggy Dog Collector Searches for a Better Specimen.* After a long search, he finally finds it.  
—IU 2.
- A30.1. *Collector says, "Sorry, too shaggy."*  
—CBS 1.
- A40. *Pilot and Copilot Discuss Shaggy Dog.* Dog seen at several airports on the flight. One man thinks this is strange; the other says, "Oh, he's not so shaggy."  
—IU 2.
- A50. *The Remarkable Returning Shaggy Dog.* Man on boat trip tries several times to kill his dog; it always shows up again. He decides to keep the "remarkable dog." Another passenger considers this and says, "Oh, it's not so shaggy."  
—CBS 1.

#### B. THE ORDINARY SHAGGY DOG STORY (PSYCHOLOGICAL NON SEQUITUR)

Bo.—B599. *Stories about Animals*

Bo.—B199. *Drinking Animals*

- B10. *The Drinking Dog.* It is remarked that a drinking dog is a wonder, but the bartender thinks otherwise: "No more until he pays." (Cf. B600.—B650.)  
—IU 2; CBS 1.
- B10.1. *"He usually orders beer."*  
—IU 1; Partridge, p. 66 (whiskey).
- B10.2. *"He forgot to eat the olive."*  
—IU 1.
- B10.3. *Horse drinking.* Bartender says, "I often forget the olive."  
—Partridge, p. 74.
- B10.4. *Horse drinking martini with horseradish.* Bartender says, "I like them that way too."  
—Esar, p. 258; Downs, p. 47; Cerf, *Stock*, p. 104 (with catsup).
- B10.5. *"How he stands mint julep with olives is beyond me."*  
—CBS 1.
- B10.6. *"He usually takes out the stem and seed."*  
—CBS 1.
- B10.7. *"He usually leaves a tip."*  
—CBS 1.

(Note: A political cartoon from the *Minneapolis Tribune* which I saw reprinted 17 Dec. 1958 in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* is entitled "Talking-Dog Story." A bartender labeled "West Berlin" is registering shocked surprise as he looks across the bar at a dog, labeled "East Germany" and his master Khrushchev. The latter is saying, "You heard what he said! Give us a drink!")

B11. *The Bartender's Reward for Serving the Dog.* He is given a live lobster by the dog's owner. "I'll take him home for dinner." "Never mind dinner, he's eaten; take him to a movie."

—IU 2; *BL* (Dec. 1958), 84; *BL* (May 1954), 86; Partridge, pp. 64-66; *Pard*, pp. 2-3.

B30. *The Horse that Drank Whiskey.* Man and horse enter a bar. The horse has whiskey, but the man beer because, "I have to drive."

—Partridge, pp. 74-75.

B40. *The Intoxicated Mouse.* A man stands in a bar drinking and pouring drinks into his pocket. When the bartender wants to throw him out he offers to fight any man in the place. A mouse comes out of the pocket and says, "That goes for your cat too."

—IU 3; CBS 1; Partridge, pp. 76-78; Norris Yates, "Some 'Whoppers' from the Armed Forces," *JAF*, LXII (1949), 173-180—"The Angry Sailor," 175; Cerf, *Stock*, p. 37.

(Note: In the popular college folksong "The Little Mouse," the mouse gave forth with a similar challenge after he "lapped up the liquor on the barroom floor.")

\*B41. *The Rat and the Drunken Mouse.* A rat, looking for a new home, asks a mouse who is running about gaily whether his house is safe; he is assured that it is. When a large cat almost catches him, the rat confronts the mouse again. "You shouldn't listen to me, I've been drinking all day."

—Partridge, pp. 77-81.

\*B41.1. *Mouse in a vat of beer.* Promises cat he can eat him if he'll save him. Then he runs off saying, "I was drunk."

—Waller, p. 66.

B50. *The Drinking Kangaroo.* A kangaroo enters a bar and drinks a whiskey. The bartender remarks that this is the first time he has served a kangaroo. "It'll be the last unless you charge less."

—Partridge, pp. 75-76.

B50.1. *Reindeer.* Orders a hamburger, says, "You're not likely to serve another reindeer at these prices."

—*BL* (Oct. 1952), 74.

#### B100.—B199. *Animals in Bars, Miscellaneous.*

B100. *The Dog Fight.* Strong dog is beaten by a large yellow dog in a bar. Bartender says, "You should have seen him before I cut off his long yellow hair."

—IU 2; CBS 1; used on the Jack Paar TV show, winter 1958-59.

B100.1. "Before I cut off his tail and painted him yellow, he was an alligator."

—CBS 1; *BL* (March 1960), 78.

B101. *The Law-Abiding Dog.* A dog enters a bar and the bartender points to a sign, "No Dogs Allowed." The dog says, "I'm not smoking."

—CBS 1.

B120. *The Horse as Bartender.* A man is surprised to find a horse tending bar. "What happened to the cow that used to run the place?"

—CBS 1; Cerf, *Life*, pp. 350-351.

#### B200.—B299. *Talking Animals.*

B200. *The Performing Talking Dogs.* A man has a large dog which plays the piano and a small one which sings. He refuses to sell the act or he sells it for a very low price (swaps it for a drink, etc.), because it is a fake: "The little one can't sing a note; the big one is a ventriloquist."

—IU 1; CBS 1; Waller, pp. 16-17; Esar, p. 257.

B200.1. *Dog and parrot*, latter a ventriloquist.

—Partridge, pp. 66-70.

- B200.2. *Canary and Mouse*, latter a ventriloquist.  
—IU 3; CBS 1 (The winning joke of the contest).
- B200.3. *Boa Constrictor and Alligator*, latter a ventriloquist.  
—Oral tradition, 18 April 1959.
- B200.4. *Cat and Mouse*, latter a ventriloquist.  
—CBS 1.
- B200.5. *Snake and Dog*, latter a ventriloquist.  
—CBS 1.
- B200.6. *Mouse and dog*, latter a ventriloquist.  
—CBS 1.
- B200.7. *Two mice*.  
—CBS 1; Botkin, #16.
- B200.8. *Monkey and Dog*, latter a ventriloquist.  
—*Pard*, pp. 4-5.
- B201. *The Singing Mouse*. A man who has a singing mouse is willing to sell it for a very low price. The mouse only knows one song.  
—Partridge, pp. 78-79.  
(Cf. Motif B214.1.9. *Singing mouse*.)
- B202. *The Dog that Stopped Talking*. A ventriloquist pretends his dog can talk and sells it to a bartender for \$200. As he leaves, the dog says, "If you'll sell your old pal for \$200, then I'll never talk again."  
—IU 1; CBS 4; Botkin, p. 255.
- B203. *The Dog that Could Answer Questions*. A man claims his dog can answer any question put to him. Bartender offers him free drinks if true. Dog is asked, "What's on top of a house?" (sometimes, "What are lengthwise threads in weaving?") and "Who was the greatest baseball player?" He answers with a bark which is interpreted by his master to mean "roof" (or "woof") and "Ruth." Man and dog are thrown out into the street; the dog asks, "Who was it then, DiMaggio?"  
—IU 4; CBS 1, *Pard*, pp. 12-13.
- B203.1. *Dog refuses to talk when the bets are laid*. Later says, "Think what odds you'll get next time."  
—*WD*, 8; *Pard*, pp. 14-15.  
(Cf. Motif B210.2. with reference to American Negro tales.)
- B204. *Talking Dog Bought at Auction*. Man is surprised to find dog he has bought at an auction described as a talking dog. "Who did you think was bidding against you?"  
—*WD*, 7; *Pard*, pp. 16-17.  
(Note: This is the story, from another cycle of modern joke lore, about the man who buys a parrot at an auction and asks if it can talk; see Cerf, p. 326.)
- B205. *Talking Animals and Theatrical Agents*.
- B205.1. *The Anonymous Phone Call from a Dog*. A theatrical agent is called late at night and offered an act in which "I just talk," the voice says. The agent protests. The answer comes: "You don't understand; I'm a dog." (Also told as a seal.)  
—Waller, p. 25; *Esquire* 2, 31.  
(Note: Walt Disney's motion picture "The Shaggy Dog" made use of a gag similar to this joke in one scene—the only reference to a genuine shaggy dog story in the whole picture.)
- B205.2. *Auditioning dog*. Can add, subtract, mambo and recite "Casey at the Bat," but the agent says, "Let's see her legs."  
—Cerf, *Life*, p. 349.
- B205.3. *The Mouse that Looked Jewish*. A mouse can sing, play a piano, tap dance; but a theatrical agent will not book him. "He looks a little Jewish."  
—IU 1.

- B210. *The Talking Horse and Dog*. A man on horseback hears a dog talk and says, "I didn't know dogs could talk." Horse answers, "Neither did I."  
—CBS 2; *BL* (March, 1954), 78; *HFB* II, 19; *Pard*, p. 9 (Dog comments on horse talking).  
(Note: This story is apparently derived from a well-known Negro tale about a talking mule and dog. See the version in Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men* [Philadelphia, 1935], pp. 217-218; cf. Leach, pp. 239-240 and note. A rooster and a hog talk also in the version from St. Helena, South Carolina, in *JAF*, XXXVIII [1925], 225-226. Dorson in *Negro Folktales in Michigan* [Cambridge, Mass., 1956] gives another form of the tale involving a prophecy of Old Marster's death; see "Charlie and Pat," pp. 72-73. This whole cycle of tales is represented by Motif B210.1.)
- B210.1. *Two Horses Talking*. They discuss their racing and are overheard by a dog who comments on their remarks. One horse says to the other, "Hey, look at that, a talking dog."  
—IU 2; CBS 1; *BL* (July 1958), 78; Waller, pp. 26-27.
- B220. *The Talking Horse*. A horse tells a passer-by that his father was Man-of-War. The owner, when told about his talking horse, just laughs and says this is only a story his horse likes to tell.  
—IU 2; Botkin, #22.
- B220.1. *Horse claims he won the Derby*. Owner says he only came in second.  
—Waller, p. 71; Partridge, pp. 68-70; *HFB* II, 19.
- B220.2. *Horse Complains that his Feet Hurt*. Owner says that there's nothing wrong with his feet.  
—CBS 1.
- B220.3. *Horse Advises Man—Car Trouble*. Horse tries to tell him how to start his stalled car, but owner says he doesn't know a thing about cars.  
—*BL* (Feb. 1957), 78; *Louisville Courier-Journal* (12 March 1961), Magazine section, 6.
- B220.3.1. *Horse Advises Man—Racing Tips*. When orangade-stand owner looses heavily from bad racing tips, horse advises further, "Just put more water in the orangeade the rest of the season."  
—CBS 1.
- B220.4. *Circus Horse*. Barnum offers to buy a talking horse that says he was once in a circus. Owner says that he is lying and was never off the farm.  
—CBS 1.
- \*B221. *The Teetotal Ghost*. A man promises to haunt his son if he ever takes a drink. The son eventually does so and the father speaks to him through his old milk-route donkey. "But don't tell anyone I can talk or I'll be doing eight performances a week in variety."  
—Waller, p. 57
- \*B221.1. *Reincarnation as Ice-Wagon Horse*. Says, "Don't let him know I can talk. He'll have me hollering 'Ice!'"  
—Cerf, *Stock*, pp. 4-5.
- B222. *The Horse Singing in the Bathtub*. (Cf. B425.) This is not thought strange because, "Everyone sings in the bathtub."  
—*BL* (July 1959), 66.
- B230. *The Talking Fish*. A man regularly orders sardines on toast at the same restaurant. The fish speaks to him and he can't eat it. Finally he changes eateries and orders the same meal. Same fish is served and it says, "Fancy meeting you here."  
—Partridge, pp. 84-85.
- B230.1. *Talking Flounder*. Man habitually orders flounder at Finkelstein's restaurant.

Changes place, orders same, gets the same fish: "Oh, Finkelstein's ain't good enough for you now?"

—Cerf, p. 331.

(Note: Richard M. Dorson has recorded this as a Jewish dialect story. A man orders lobster three days running at Hackney's Restaurant in Atlantic City, but he sends it back each time when it gives him a sad-eyed look. The fourth day he orders lobster at Kornblau's and his meal asks, "Hey, Jake, how come you're not eating at Hackney's any more?" See "Jewish-American Dialect Stories on Tape," *Studies in Biblical and Jewish Folklore*, Ed. D. Noy, R. Patai, F. L. Utley, IU Folklore Series, No. 13 [Bloomington, 1960], pp. 147-148.)

B300.—B399. *Clever Animals With One Flaw.*

B300. *The Checker-Playing Dog.* His owner says, "He's not so smart; I've won three out of four."

—IU 1; CBS 3; Dorson, p. 10 ("I've just double-jumped"); *Pard*, p. 6.

B300.1. *Chess-Playing Dog.* Owner says, "I've won two out of three."

—CBS 3; Partridge, pp. 57-58; Cerf, p. 328; Esar, p. 258; Downs, pp. 46-47.

(Note: This story is analyzed in Freudian terms by Martha Wolfenstein in *Children's Humor* [Glencoe, Ill., 1954], pp. 151-152.)

B300.2. *Poker-Playing Dog.* "He wags his tail every time he has a good hand."

—CBS 1; Partridge, pp. 58-59; *WD*, 7; *Pard*, p. 15.

B301. *The Piano-Playing Dog.* The owner says he is not so clever since, "He can't orchestrate."

—Partridge, pp. 60-63.

B302. *The Shopping Dog.* Dog cycles to supermarket and brings home groceries but, "He forgot to ask for Green Stamps."

—CBS 1.

B302.1. *The Dog that Squandered his Money.* A man's dog daily buys meat for his master. When given a tip for his cleverness by a bystander, he goes off down the alley with it. "That's the first time he's squandered his money that way."

—IU 1.

B302.1.1. *Dog given a quarter to buy his master cigarettes.* Found in a bar drinking a martini. "I could always depend on you before." "But you never gave me money before."

—CBS 1; Cerf, *Stock*, p. 66.

B303. *The Typewriting Dog.* A writer's dog is seen typing. It is explained that the dog is not really so remarkable: "He's just typing up what I write out in longhand."

—CBS 1.

B304. *The Milking Dog.* The dog milks the cows, takes them back to the pasture, separates cream, loads cans on the truck, but he can't make butter.

—*BL* (July 1950), 50.

B305. *The Sportsman's Dog.*

B305.1. *Dog walks on water to retrieve game.* Owner says he is not so remarkable; "He can't even swim."

—IU 3; CBS 4; Partridge, pp. 59-60.

(Note: This story is also told as a tall tale.)

B305.2. *Dog Shoots, then Retrieves Game.* Owner says, "He's not so hot. He missed perfect shots just before you came along."

—CBS 1.

B350. *The Horse that Played Baseball.* A horse joins a baseball team—pitches, catches and bats wonderfully. When asked why he doesn't run after making a hit, he answers, "Who ever heard of a horse running bases?"

—IU 1; Bernard Cohen, "The Talking Horse," *Hoosier Folklore*, VI:3 (1947), 108;

BL (April 1954), 78; Partridge mentions the story [p. 74], quotes the next one; Downs, p. 46; *Esquire* 2, 30; Cerf, p. 330; Esar, p. 257.

B350.1. *Horse Plays Cricket*. It can't bowl.

—CBS 1; Waller, pp. 40-41; Partridge, pp. 70-74.

B350.2. *Dog Plays Baseball*. It can't pitch (or can't answer phone).

—CBS 2.

B355. *The Smart Cow-Pony*. Cowboy's horse picks up drunken master, carries him to ranch, pulls off his boots, gets him into bed, brings coffee and digs post holes the next day so he can have time to sleep it off. Horse is gotten rid of because he put cream and sugar in the coffee; cowboys drink it black.

—Stan Hoig, *The Humor of the American Cowboy*, A Signet Book, The New American Library, D1830 (Caldwell, Idaho, 1958), p. 47.

B375.—B399. *Clever Animals—Miscellaneous Stories*.

B375. *The Driving Dog*. Ticketed since he cannot read the road signs.

—CBS 1.

B376. *The Animal at the Movies*. It is remarked that the dog (horse, or bear also appear) seemed to enjoy the movie. Owner says, "That's funny, because he didn't like the book."

—IU 5; CBS 3; BL (Nov. 1957), 106; WD, 8; *Pard*, p. 20.

B400.—B499. *Stories About Animals and Humans—Miscellaneous*.

B400. *The Dog that Wanted to Send a Telegram*. A dog sends a telegram consisting of "Woof" nine times. When told he can send one more "Woof" for the same price, he answers, "But that would be silly."

—IU 1.

B400.1. *Man Sends Telegram with "Wooky" Nine Times*. He refuses the tenth as "silly."

—*Esquire* 2, 30; CBS 1.

B401. *The Rescue by a Shaggy Dog*. A man tells a long story about a near disaster when he and his wife were saved from drowning by a valiant little shaggy dog. His listener's comment reverts to the first sentence of the story; he says, "But a woman couldn't get dressed in ten minutes."

—IU 1.

B420. *The Horse that Sat Down on Grapefruit*. A man buys a horse and is warned that it has a bad habit of sitting down on grapefruit. The first time his wife rides it, the horse sits down in the middle of a stream. Seller says, "I forgot to tell you; the horse also sits down on fish."

—CBS 1; Waller, pp. 14-15; *Esquire* 1, 59.

(Note: James N. Tidwell reprints a version "The Horse Who Sat on Eggs," in *A Treasury of American Folk Humor* [New York, 1956], 396-397; it is from Donald Ogden Stewart, *The Crazy Fool* [New York, 1925], 148-151, which I have not seen. As Richard M. Dorson points out in *American Folklore* [Chicago, 1959], on p. 71, Abe Lincoln told a similar story about a horse, praised as a good bird hunter, which squatted in a stream. Its owner cried out, "Ride him! Ride him! He's as good for fish as he is for birds." For this version see Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years*, The Sangamon Edition, Vol. II [New York, 1940], p. 300.)

B425. *The Dead Horse in the Bathtub*. (Cf. B222.) A man is hired or coaxed to help another man move a dead horse into the latter's bathroom. He wants to put it into the tub and tell his know-it-all wife (sometimes brother-in-law or roommate) when the horse is spotted there, "I know; I know."

—IU 5; BL (April 1951), 50; *HFB* II, 20; Botkin, #17.

(Note: There is also a riddle: "What do you do if you find a horse in your bathtub?" Answer: "Pull out the plug."—*BL* [April 1959], 78.)

B430.—B439. *Animals and Analysts.*

- B430. *The Neurotic Leopard.* A leopard complains to a neurologist that he sees spots before his eyes whenever he looks at his wife. The neurologist thinks this to be quite normal for a leopard. "But you don't understand. My wife is a tiger!"  
—CBS 1; Cerf, *Life*, p. 348 (wife a zebra).
- B431. *The Neurotic Dog.* Neurotic dog not able to see a psychiatrist. Reason: "You know I'm not allowed on couches."  
—*WD*, 6-7; *Pard*, p. 18.
- B432. *The Nervous Kangaroo.* He complains, "I haven't been feeling jumpy lately."  
—*BL* (May 1959), 78.

B440.—B449. "Not a Real Animal."

- B440. *The Mongoose.* A man says he has a mongoose for the snakes which his friend sees whenever he drinks. "But those aren't real snakes." "Yes, but this isn't a real mongoose either."  
—Waller, p. 44; *Esquire* 1, 56.
- B441. *The Turtle.* A man in a railroad carriage keeps feeding sandwiches into a cardboard box. He explains that he is feeding ham sandwiches to his turtle. Another man looks in, says, "But there's no ham in these sandwiches—only bread and butter." "Yes, and it's only a mock turtle too."  
—Waller, p. 62.
- B450. *The Hefty Kittens.* A man is hitching up two little kittens to pull his car out of a ditch. A passer-by comments that they won't be able to do it. "They'd better; I've got a whip!"  
—IU 1; CBS 2; *Esquire* 3, 46; Cerf, *Stock*, p. 86 (Pekinese pulls truck).
- B450.1. *Mice hitched to drag piano up stairs.*  
—"Greetings" (6 Jan. 1960).
- B451. *The Pigeons on the Subway.* A man is sitting on the subway with a pigeon on each shoulder. He is asked about them. He answers, "I don't know them; they must have got on at 52nd Street" (or Times Square, Trafalgar Square, etc.).  
—CBS 1; Waller, p. 12; *Esquire* 2, 30; Cerf, p. 328.
- B452. *Silver Fish in a Gold Fish-Bowl.* A man keeps his silver fish in a gold bowl. Asked why, he says, "There are no silver fish bowls."  
—IU 1.

B500.—B599. *Stories about Animals Alone—Miscellaneous.*

- B500. *The Turtle that was sent Back.* Three turtles are drinking sarsaparilla together. One is sent home for the umbrella (or out for cigarettes or back for a hat left behind). After a long wait, the other two decide to drink his sarsaparilla. The first sticks his head back into the room and says, "If you do I won't go for the umbrella."  
—IU 4; CBS 2; *BL* (Nov. 1955), 98; *BL* (Feb. 1958), 78; Waller, p. 51; Partridge, pp. 82-83 (wombat, goannu and bandicot—Australian version); Cerf, *Stock*, p. 59.
- B501. *The Lion and the Mouse.* The lion roams through the jungle asking all of the smaller animals, "What's wrong with you?" The mouse (or ant) answers, "I've been sick."  
—IU 2; CBS 3; *BL* (Nov. 1951), 66; *BL* (June 1958), 80; Waller, p. 13; *Esquire* 3, 46; Cerf, p. 328; *HFB* III, 68; Botkin, #18.
- (Note: A Sumerian fable has been found in which the elephant appears similarly as a boaster who is squelched by a small animal. He boasts "There is nothing like me in existence!" The wren answers, "But I, too, in my own small way, was created

- just as you were!" See Samuel Noah Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer*, Doubleday Anchor Books, A175 [Garden City, New York, 1959], p. 132.)
- B501.1. *Boasting Lion Squelched*. The lion asks, "Who's boss man around here?" The elephant picks him up and dashes him to the ground for asking. Lion: "Just because you didn't know the answer, no need to get sore."  
—BL (August 1954), 62.
- \*B502. *The Anteater and his Reflection*. The anteater offers his reflection in a stream some ants. He says he prefers fish.  
—Partridge, pp. 81-82.  
(Note: This story, of course, is based on the fable of the dog dropping his meat for his reflection, Motif J1791.4.)
- B503. *The Hippos in the Mud*. (Cf. stories in section E.) Two hippos are sitting in a mud puddle on a very hot day. One says to the other, "I don't know why, but it has seemed like Thursday all day to me."  
—IU 1; Waller, p. 49; Partridge, p. 84.
- \*B504. *The two Goldfish*. Two goldfish swim about in their bowl, one after the other. Finally one day one fish catches up with the other and asks, "I say, Miss, what are you doing on Thursday?"  
—Waller, p. 56.
- \*B506. *Babies Can't Count*. Three bats are flying home from a picnic. The baby remarks that now the four of them can rest. When his father tells him they are only three, he says, "You know very well that I can't count."  
—Cerf, p. 324.
- \*B506.1. *Centipede that can't count*. Centipede can't tell which foot was trod on since he can't count above ten.  
—Waller, p. 11.
- B507. *The Ostrich Party*. Five hundred ostriches are invited to a party; one is late. They bury their heads in shame. The last arrives and says, "Hey, where is everybody?"  
—Esquire 2, 30; Cerf, p. 330.
- B508. *Fleas and Dog*. Two fleas going home say, "Shall we walk or take a dog?"  
—Pard, p. 19; As told by a Russian, "I'm going to get very rich—and then I'll buy us a dog!" See *Saturday Review* (12 March 1960), 4 (told by Leonid Leonov, visiting Soviet novelist and playwright).

B600.—B1199. *Stories without Animals*.

B600.—B799. *Inane Reactions and Answers*

- B600.—B650. *Bartenders*.
- B600. *The Man who Walked on the Walls and Ceiling*. A man in a bar walks up a wall, across the ceiling, down, and out the door. Bartender comments: "I never saw a man drink Tequilla straight like that before." (Or, "He never says goodnight," or "He usually orders coffee.")  
—IU 1; CBS 3; BL (Sept. 1952), 74; Partridge, pp. 90-92.
- B600.1. *Dog Walks Ceiling in Bar*. Bartender says, "He usually orders beer."  
—IU 1; CBS 1.
- B601. *The Man who Ate Cocktail Glasses*. A man orders cocktails, drinking them and munching the glass, but always laying the stem aside. The bartender comments, "You're leaving the best part."  
—IU 1; Esquire 2, 30; Waller, p. 23; "Greetings" (21 March 1960).
- B601.1. *Dog Eats Cocktail Glasses*. He leaves stem. Similar comment to above.  
—Pard, p. 1
- B602. *The Pearls*. A small-town Hoosier visits New York City. In a Greenwich Village bar he sees a man come in wearing a tight black shirt, tight black trousers and ropes of pearls around his neck. The tourist comments, "That's strange; he's wearing pearls

around his neck." The bartender says, "Well, what would *you* wear with basic black?"  
—IU 1.

B603. (*Waiter*). *The Woman who Talked to an Umbrella*. An old woman is in the habit of talking to her umbrella as she drinks tea in a restaurant. An onlooker comments to a waiter that she must be queer in the head. He answers, "Not at all; her conversation is often quite intellectual."

—Waller, p. 37.

B651. *The Man with Food on his Head or Stuck in his Ear*. A man rubs potatoes, succotash, parsnips or other food on his head; or he has a carrot or a piece of celery in his ear. Asked about it, he answers, "Oh, I thought they were mashed potatoes." (Or, when he wears celery, "I couldn't find a carrot today.") Sometimes he pours food on another's head and gives a like answer.

—IU 11; CBS 4; *BL* (July 1957), 80; Waller, p. 46; Partridge, pp. 44-46; *Esquire* 1, 236; Cerf, pp. 325, 331-332; Martin Armstrong, *Laughing, An Essay* (New York, 1928), p. 42.

B651.1. *The Man with Spinach Growing from his Head*. His wife says, "I can't understand it; I planted cabbage."

—*BL* (March 1954), 78.

B651.2. *The Man with a Banana in His Ear*. He explains, when questioned, that he cannot hear well, having a banana in his ear.

—IU 2; CBS 1.

B652. *Lion Powder*. A man is continually dusting "lion powder" around him. He is told that there are no lions in the vicinity. He says, "Thank heavens, this powder is no good anyhow."

—Waller, p. 19; Cerf, *Stock*, pp. 60-61.

(Note: This story is known in the Soviet Union. The Soviet novelist and playwright Leonid Leonov, when being interviewed by John G. Fuller for *Saturday Review* [12 March 1960], 4-6, told this variant through his interpreter: "[this story] concerns two travelers on a train going to a small provincial town. One passenger reveals that he is headed toward the place of his birth, and then proceeds to take a small box of powder from his pocket, throwing a pinch of it out the window without explanation. After the fourth time, his companion asks for an explanation of this mysterious ritual. 'It's simple,' comes the reply. 'I'm protecting the train from tigers.' Informed that there were no tigers for thousands of miles around, the passenger replies: 'That's all right. This powder doesn't work anyway.'" Fuller also points out that Alexander King drew his recent title *May This House Be Safe from Tigers*, from a variant tale. King's version is that a friend prayed daily that his house would be protected from tigers; his indignant answer to a query about the prayer was, "Well—been bothered by any tigers lately?" Cf. B652.1.)

B652.1. *Man Scatters Paper to Scare Away Elephants*. He is told that there are no elephants around there. His answer is, "Pretty effective, isn't it?"

—*BL* (Nov. 1957), 106; *BL* (May 1959), 78 (snaps fingers to keep elephants away and says, "See, it works!")

B653. *The Special Cake Made-to-order*. A man orders a special cake in the shape of a letter "S" which must be remade several times until it is perfect—a script "S". Then he says, "Don't bother to send it; I'll eat it here."

—IU 3; CBS 1; Partridge, p. 43; *Esquire* 1, 56; Botkin, #4; Max Eastman, *Enjoyment of Laughter* (New York, 1936), pp. 65-66, 286n.; Louis Untermeyer, *A Treasury of Laughter* (New York, 1946), p. 258.

(Note: This story was used in a study applying Gestalt psychology theory to jokes. See M. R. Harrower, "Organization in Higher Mental Processes," *Smith College Studies in Psychology*, No. 4 [Northampton, Mass., 1933], 381-444.)

- B653.1. *Man Orders Rat Poison*. Says, "I'll eat it here."  
—IU 1; Cerf, p. 324.
- B654. *The Quest for the Special Pie*. A man makes a long and difficult quest for another piece of Siberian Peach Pie (or "Bavarian Cream Pie"). Finally he gets back to the restaurant where he first had it; they are out of it. He says, "OK, I'll just have a piece of cherry instead."  
—IU 1; CBS 1.
- B655. *The Man who Wouldn't Give the Time of Day*. A man refuses to give a stranger the time of day because the latter might make friends with him, come home, meet his daughter, fall in love, marry—"And I don't want a man for a son-in-law who can't even afford a watch!"  
—IU 1; Partridge, pp. 92-94 (refuses to give a light).  
(Note: The folktale "Clever Elsie" [Type 1450] depends for its humor on a similar series of absurd worries about the future.)
- B656. *The Joke-Tellers*. Men at a joke-writers' convention, or in prison, know each other's jokes so well that they have assigned them all numbers. They tell jokes by calling out numbers, and everyone laughs. A new man observes this and tries to duplicate; he calls out numbers, but no one laughs. "Well, some people just can't tell a joke."  
—IU 5.  
(Note: This story has been told on Dr. Stith Thompson at folklore conferences. A Finnish student at IU tells me that she has heard the story both in Finland and in France.)
- B656.1. *Man Tells Jokes to Himself*. He uses sign language and has a special sign for the ones he's heard before.  
—IU 1; *Esquire* 2, 31; Cerf, *Stock*, p. 138.
- B657. *The Man who got Sick Riding Backwards*. A man complains that riding backwards on a train has made him sick. He says he couldn't change with the person opposite because, "There was no one sitting opposite me."  
—BL (June 1953), 74; BL (July 1959), 66; *Esquire* 2, 31; Cerf, p. 326.
- B658. *"It Only Hurt When I Laughed"*. A man describes horrible tortures and deaths which his wife and daughter suffered at the hands of savages; he witnessed their fates and then barely escaped with his life. "But it only hurt when I laughed."  
—IU 2.
- B658.1. *"Can't Stop Laughing"*. A farmer is raided by Indians and shot through with an arrow. Asked "Does it hurt?" he only says, "I can't stop laughing long enough to find out."  
—CBS 1.
- \*B659. *The Man Reading the Paper Upside-Down*. A man observes another reading his paper upside-down; finally he tells him. "Do you think it's easy," the reader replies.  
—Cerf, p. 331.
- B660. *Nude in a Silk Hat*. A man startles people by wearing nothing but a silk hat when they come to call. He says, "Nobody ever comes to see me anyway." Asked then, "But why the hat?" he says, "Somebody might!"  
—Cerf, *Stock*, pp. 15-16; *Esquire* 3, 46.

B800.—B999. *Impossible Occurrences*.

- B800. *The Golden Screw in the Navel*. A little boy has a golden screw in his navel and because of it, he loses all of his friends. Finally he is persuaded to remove it and his buttocks fall off.  
—IU 4.  
(Note: Legman, p. 60, points out that this joke was probably originated by the early American humorist, John Phoenix; see George R. Stewart, *John Phoenix, Esq.* [New York, 1937], pp. 157-159. Phoenix, really Captain George H. Derby [1823-

- 1861], around 1855 or 1856, drew a cartoon series, which is preserved only in the scrapbooks of his friends, "The Ingenious Boy, or the Bad Effect of Ill-directed Mechanical Genius. A Tale for the Young." The Ingenious Boy unscrews the screw head he has found in his stomach; when his buttocks fall off, his grandmother screws them back on upside down and thus invents the first bustle.)
- B801. *The Girl with the Ribbon Around her Neck*. When the ribbon is finally removed, her head drops off.  
—IU 6; CBS 2; Leach, pp. 203-204.  
(Note: Leach suggests that this is "the offspring of an old European folk motif featuring the mysterious red thread around someone's neck. The mystery is solved when it is revealed that the thread marks the line at which he was once decapitated." This is Motif E12.1. *Red thread on neck of person who has been decapitated and resuscitated*. As Leach also mentions, Washington Irving developed this motif into his story "The Adventure of the German Student," in *Tales of a Traveller* [published 1824]. Here a German student in Paris during the revolution sheltered in his room a beautiful girl he found sorrowing at the foot of the guillotine. She wore "a broad black band round her neck, clasped by diamonds." He finds her to be lifeless the next day and when the black band is removed, her head rolls to the floor; she had been decapitated the day previous. Concerning the source of this tale, Irving says in his opening word "To the Reader": "It is founded on an anecdote related to me as existing somewhere in French; and, indeed, I have been told, since writing it, that an ingenious tale has been founded on it by an English writer; but I never met with either the former or the latter in print."  
Henry A. Pochmann, in his article "Irving's German Tour and Its Influence on His Tales," *PMLA*, XLV [Dec. 1930], 1150-1187, shows how Irving deliberately sought to exploit legendary and other folklore materials in this book. Pochmann can find no printed German source for "The Adventure of the German Student," and suggests that we should take Irving's statement about the source at face value.)
- B810. *The Man who Bit Himself on the Ear*. A man explains to his doctor that the wound on his ear (or forehead) is where he bit himself. He explains, "I stood on a chair."  
—IU 1; CBS 3; *BL* (Nov. 1955), 48; *BL* (Sept. 1948), 36; Cerf, p. 325; Dunny Sims, "Moron Jokes," *Pub. of the Texas Folklore Society*, XIX (1944), 160.  
(Note: This is a variant of the old tale represented by Motif J2376. *Testing the evidence by experiment: biting the ear off*. See, e.g., W. A. Clouston, *The Book of Noodles* [London, 1888], 86-87.)
- B810.1. *Horse Bites Self*. (As above.)  
—CBS 1.
- B815. *The Wrong Man Awakened*. A man, wearing blackface makeup so he can stay in a Negro hotel, asks the porter to awaken him early. When he is refused service in a restaurant the next morning, he discovers that the wrong man was awakened—the makeup will not rub off.  
—IU 1; CBS 1; Dorson, p. 10 (The wrong man is thrown off a train by the conductor); Cerf, *Stock*, pp. 93-94.  
(Note: See Herbert Halpert, "Folktales and Jests from Delaware, Ohio," *Hoosier Folklore*, VII:3 [Sept. 1948], #8, 70-71 for a text and references [Motif J2013.]. Also see in John R. Bartlett, *Dictionary of Americanisms*, 4th ed. [Boston, 1877; repr. 1896], "To wake up the wrong passenger.")
- B820. *The Day Off—Tom Thumb*. A reporter calls on Tom Thumb and finds that he is nine feet tall. "It's my day off."  
—*Esquire* 1, 56; Cerf, p. 331.
- B820.1. *The Day Off—The Fascinated Rubber*. A zoo keeper spends his days rubbing a small coin against the walls of the lions' den. He explains that his regular job is feeding

the crocodiles, "But this is my day off."

—Waller, p. 67.

B825. *The Hole*. Men with truck are delivering a hole. It falls from the truck and they accidentally back into it and are lost.

—CBS 2; Partridge, pp. 99-104.

B1000.—B1199. *Miscellaneous Stories Without Animals*.

B1000. *The Soda Without Flavoring*. A man orders a vanilla soda without the vanilla. Since the soda fountain is out of vanilla, he must take a strawberry soda without the strawberry.

—BL (July 1957), 80; Cerf, p. 327.

B1000.1. *Banana Split Without Nuts*. A man orders a banana split without the chopped walnuts. Since the soda fountain is out of chopped nuts, he must take it without peanuts.

—Esquire 1, 56.

B1010. *The Sensational Diving Trick*. A man applies for a circus job diving from a high platform into a small pool. He demonstrates that he can do it, but then refuses the job despite a high salary offer. He admits, "That's the first time I tried it and I don't like it."

—Esquire 3, 47; Cerf, p. 328.

B1010.1. *Man Dives from High Place into a Cup of Tea*. When he injures himself he explains that someone forgot to put sugar into it.

—Waller, pp. 52-53.

B1020. *The Man with the Choking Sensation*. A man seeks a cure for his bugged-out eyes and choking sensation. After a long search, he is told this is incurable. As a last gesture before death he orders some tailor-made shirts in size 15. He is measured and told that he must wear size 15½ or he will experience a choking sensation and his eyes will bug out.

—IU 1.

\*B1030. *The Little Voice*. A man is guided to larger and larger successful gambling bets by a little voice that whispers instructions into his ear. Finally he loses; then the voice says, "Tough!"

—IU 2; CBS 2.

C. STORIES WITH PUNNING PUNCH LINES.

Co.—C199. *Proverbs*.

C10. *The Bird-Watcher*. A man becomes very proficient at identifying birds. He tells a friend that a hovering speck in the sky is a rook. The friend challenges him. He says, "You can't always tell a rook by its hover."

—Miles Kimball, p. 26.

C15. *The Bad Little Gnu*. Baby gnu misbehaves and mama gnu tells papa to punish him. "No, you paddle your own gnu!"

—IU 1; *Louisville Courier-Journal* (6 Nov. 1960), Magazine section, 6.

C15.1. *Bad Little Gnu, Number Two*. Same story as C15. but with "no point" ending (see section E). The obvious punch line is not used, but instead, "You do your own reprimanding."

—IU 1.

C20. *The Retreating Basques*. During World War II the Basques all left their homes on a single bridge over a chasm. This was "putting all the Basques in one exit." (This joke suggested, on the spot, to the person who told it, that if you combine many charities under one fund-raising drive, you are "putting all your begs in one ask-it.")

—Oral tradition, spring 1958.

- C25. *The Cure*. A man goes hunting in hopes of curing his hangover. A dog leaps out of the brush with a rabbit biting its leg; the man shoots the rabbit and takes it home to make stew. At the first bite of stew, he is cured for "That was the piece of the hare that bit the dog."  
—CBS 1.
- C30. *The Rabbit that was Changed into a Goon*. (This story is told with motions which the listeners must imitate.) A rabbit (sometimes called "Rabbit Fluff") likes to run through the fields, catch little field mice, and hit them on the head. His fairy godmother threatens to change him into a goon. He persists, so she transforms him. The moral: "Hare today; goon tomorrow."  
—IU 4.
- C35. *You Can't Lead a Whore*. A man offers to show a beautiful girl he has met his rare flower which he keeps in his bed. She thinks she is being seduced and leaves when she sees that there really *is* a flower in the bed. The moral: "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't lead a whore-to-culture." (Or "You can lead a whore-to-culture, but you can't make her think.")  
—IU 3.
- C40. *The Microbes*. Two microbes living in the lymph stream of a horse decide to move over to his blood stream. But when they do, some penicillin comes along and kills them. The moral: "Don't change streams in the middle of a horse."  
—CBS 1; *BL* (August 1952), 50; Miles Kimball, p. 20.
- C45. *Thrones in a Grass House*. An African native king keeps several thrones sitting or hanging around in his grass hut. One day they all come crashing down. The moral: "People who live in grass houses shouldn't stow thrones."  
—IU 2; CBS 3; *BL* (Nov. 1954), 86; Miles Kimball, p. 38; "Sir Bagby," 15 June 1959.
- C45.1. *Bones of the Cross Horse*. A man kills his vicious horse and must dispose of the corpse. He sells flesh and skin, but is left with the bones. Rowing them out to dump in the middle of a lake, he is upset by a storm and drowns. The moral: "People who live with cross horses shouldn't row bones."  
—IU 1.
- C50. *The Boy who Wanted Eternal Youth*. An ancient Greek Don-Juan type boy named Benny is granted eternal youth by Zeus on the condition that he does not shave; if he shaves, he will turn to ashes and be placed in an urn. He lives through the centuries up to the 20th century when he finally does shave and the curse is carried out. The moral: "A Benny shaved is a Benny urned."  
—Oral tradition, 25 April 1960; *BL* (Sept. 1957), 92.
- C55. *The Foo Bird*. An explorer in Africa ignores the advice of natives to leave the excrement of the Foo (or "Flu") bird on him. He stops to wipe it off and is caught by pursuers, or he wanders in a river and is eaten by a crocodile. The moral: "If the Foo shits, wear it."  
—Oral tradition (two informants), 10 Nov. 1959; IU 1.
- C60. *The Man with a Secret Mission*. A man spent months chipping a boulder on a mountain top into a perfect sphere. Then he dislodged it and cycled next to it down into the valley. It came to rest in a pub. The man said, "Just as I thought, no moss." The bartender asks, "What do you want in my pub?" The answer is, "A drink, of course; do you think I can get water out of a stone?"  
—Waller, pp. 22-3.
- C65. *The Stolen Roan*. A man who collects dental floss has a roan trained to help him gather it. Another collector steals the beast, but it won't help him: "A stolen roan gathers no floss."  
—Oral tradition, October 1960.

C200.—C399. *Proverbial Phrases.*

C210. *The Bride*. Twin princes marry twin sisters. They decide they want to trade brides and agree to meet on a river bank to make the exchange. But one prince did not remember which side his bride was bartered on.

—IU 1.

C210.1. *Farmer's Bride*. A farmer's bride is butted by a goat. The farmer is so upset that he can not even remember which side his bride was butted on.

—IU 1.

C220. *Stoning Sea Birds—Painting Baboons*. A man keeps throwing stones at sea birds because he "doesn't want to leave one tern unstoned." Another man paints the back-sides of baboons so as not to "leave one stern untuned." (These two jokes recall one another and are often told together, says my informant.)

—Oral tradition, spring 1958; "Sir Bagby" (6 Oct. 1960), "tern unstoned."

C221. *Get on the Ball*. A poor golfer misses his ball each time and kills all the ants around it except two which were directly underneath the ball. One tells the other, "Brother, if you want to stay alive around here, you'd better get on the ball."

—BL (July 1959), 66.

C230. (*Biblical phrase*) *The Herring Brothers*. Two herrings, brothers, come to a bar regularly for refreshment. One day only one herring brother shows up and the bartender asks about his brother. "How should I know where he is; am I my brother's kipper?"

—Cerf, p. 325; Miles Kimball, p. 32.

C400.—C599. *Miscellaneous Popular Sayings.*

C410. *The Strong Baby Bull*. Mother, father and baby bull are taking a long walk. Father tires and stops, then mother, but baby keeps trudging on: "A little bull goes a long way."

—IU 1.

C415. *The Philandering Czech*. A Czechoslovakian philanderer had to leave by the fire escape when the lady's husband returned suddenly. Two floors down he asked a man, "Can you cache a small Czech?"

—CBS 1.

C420. *The Confused Child*. An Italian mother and Jewish father name their daughter "Carmen Cohen." The mother uses only the first name and the father her last name; thus, "She never knew whether she was Carmen or Cohen."

—Oral tradition, 23 August 1959.

C425. *The Midget Knight and his Mount*. A king searches for a large dog as a mount for a midget knight. Many are shown; none is suitable. Finally a large and very shaggy dog is shown, but the king reacts, "I wouldn't send a knight out on a dog like that."

—IU 6; CBS 15; BL (Jan. 1955), 63; BL (Oct. 1959), 86; Cerf, p. 341; Miles Kimball, p. 2 (where it is referred to as "The original shaggy dog story"); "Sir Bagby" (7 April 1959)—a knight is "dogged out" in a dragon-repelling scent: "I wouldn't dog a knight out in a scent like this." Cf. John E. Gibson, "How's Your Sense of Humor?" in *Today's Health* (March 1960), 8-9, 70-71; on page 71, there is a drawing of the midget knight mounted on his shaggy dog with the caption, "The original shaggy dog story: 'I wouldn't send a knight out on a dog like this!'" but there is no mention of this story in the text of the article. The same drawing was reprinted with a condensation of the article in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* (6 May 1960).

The *Courier-Journal* alluded to this story in a political cartoon on Sunday 30 October 1960. Candidate Richard Nixon was shown helping President Eisenhower, in knight's regalia, up onto a weary, battered old elephant labeled "The Campaign"; his banner read "Save the Day!" The caption was "Gee, I hate to send a knight out on a dog like this!"

- C430. *The Surplus of Game*. A rajah loves all animals and he forbids any hunting in his country. Finally the game is so numerous that the people revolt and overthrow his rule. "This was the first time the reign was called on account of game."  
—IU 1; *BL* (Dec. 1957), 98; *BL* (June 1956), 78.
- C435. *The Lightning Bug that Wanted to Glow Plaid*. A lightning bug is continually tiring herself trying to glow plaid. Her husband tries to convince her to give up trying, but this is impossible for her. "When you've got to glow, you've got to glow."  
—IU 1.
- \*C440. *The Bribed Race Horse*. Race horses are discussing the bribes that they have been offered to win a race. One's owner offers two extra bales of hay, "And brother, that ain't money."  
—*Cerf*, p. 324.
- \*C445. *The Ambition of the Light Manufacturer*. A manufacturer of light bulbs offers to provide a Broadway theater with marquee lights free because, "I've always wanted to see my lights up in names."  
—*Louisville Courier-Journal* (13 March 1960), Magazine section, 6.
- \*C450. *The Dog-crowded Bus*. A great dane complains to his master that his bus was crowded—full of small dogs. "That's what you get for riding during peke hours."  
—"Greetings," (21 May 1957).
- C455. *The Gossiping Snakes*. Two lady snakes discuss their uppity neighbor snake who climbed from humbler social origins. "Why, I knew her when she didn't have a pit to hiss in."  
—IU 2.
- C460. *Hard Times in the Amphitheatre*. Nero is complaining about the low profit margin in running the Roman amphitheatre. "The lions are eating up all the prophets."  
—*BL* (Dec. 1958), 84; as a cartoon in the *Louisville Courier-Journal* (5 July 1959), Magazine section, 4.
- C465. *The Dog that Swallowed a Ten-Dollar Bill*. A dog named "Rolph" swallows a ten-dollar bill (or a gold coin). No amount of medicine or waiting will make him excrete it. It must be counterfeit and "Honest Rolph won't pass a bad bill." (Sometimes told as a catch tale; cf. D220.)  
—IU 2.
- C470. *The Epileptic Shan*. Ghengis Khan's lieutenants were called "Shans"; one of them had epileptic seizures. In a battle, his men defected when he had one such seizure and when the matter was investigated, the Khan asked each man, "Where were you when the fit hit the Shan?"  
—Oral tradition, summer 1958.
- C475. *The Civilized Native*. An American gets deep into the wilds of Africa and at last meets some natives who look really wild and uncivilized. He asks, "Are you civilized?" One answers, "Yeah, now get off my blue suede shoes."  
—IU 2; *BL* (May 1956), 86: "From the highest mountain, to the darkest jungle, rings the savage cry of a cat, 'Git off my suedes.'"
- C600.—C799. *Punch Line with a Pun on a Word or Words—No Set Saying Involved*.
- C610. *The Voracious Bear*. Two bears (or lions) ask to be served in a bar and they are refused. One gets so angry that he eats the haggish-looking barmaid. Later he has a stomach ache and his partner observes, "It must have been the bar-bitch-you-ate."  
—IU 1.
- C615. *The Termite*. Termite hops on bar stool and asks, "Hey, where's the bar tender?"  
—CBS 1.
- C620. *The Walking Coffin*. A man is pursued by a white, walking coffin. It breaks through

his locked door and starts up the stairs towards him. Man rushes into bedroom, takes out a small box, removes a cough drop and throws it at the coffin, "and the coffin stopped."

—HFB III, 69.

C625. *The Hardy Sailor*. The harrowing, lengthy adventures of a sailor are described. Always he survived because, "He was young and strong and used to hardships." His last accident was falling from a high mast to the deck of a ship, but he lived, since he was "young and strong and used to hard-ships."

—Oral tradition, 22 June 1959.

C630. *The End Stinks*. (Animals get into a situation in which there can be a pun on "instinct/end-stinks" or something similar.) A bear senses by "instinct" that a hunter is nearby. Second bear says, "My end stinks too, but it doesn't tell me anything."

—IU 2.

C630.1. *Lost Skunk*. Skunk named "In" is lost and his brother "Out" finds him, because, "In-stinks."

—IU 1.

C630.2. *Moles*. Three moles coming out of one hole; the first two say they smell food, the third smells only "mole-asses."

—Oral tradition, spring, 1959.

C635. *The Guilty Moth*. A man has a very hairy fur coat which he keeps carefully safeguarded and on which he counts the hairs annually. One day he finds a hair missing and he sees a little moth fly out. He explains that he now stands to lose an allowance or inheritance, since the coat has not been perfectly maintained. The moth is sorrowful: "Did you ever see a moth bawl?"

—IU 13; CBS 3; *BL* (Oct. 1959), 86 (Baby moth reports to mother seeing a "moth bawl.")

(Note: This story is analyzed in Freudian terms by Martha Wolfenstein in *Children's Humor* [Glencoe, Ill., 1954], pp. 152-156. She states that the subconscious motives involve "a threat of castration in connection with masturbation" and that the moth represents the father which, in her version, the son threatens to squash. The final question in the story refers to what the child hears at night, i.e. the intercourse of the parents. Miss Wolfenstein concludes that "The emotional drama of the joke consists in a reenactment of oedipal renunciation.")

C640. *The Pet Corn-Borer*. A man had a pet trained corn-borer named "Motor," which he lost. After a long search, he gave up; then, when he was eating corn-on-the-cob—his last meal before killing himself—he looked and "out-bored Motor!"

—IU 4.

\*C645. *The Tired Pigeon*. Baby pigeon migrating to Florida tires, but refuses to allow its mother to pull it along by a string. "I don't want to be pigeon-towed."

—*Louisville Courier-Journal* (13 March 1960), Magazine section, 6.

C650. *The Two Cats*. Two cats attend a tennis tournament. One is fascinated by the play and the other is bored. The latter asks the former just why he enjoys the game so much. "I'm not so keen on tennis, but my father's in the racquet."

—CBS 1; Waller, p. 48.

\*C651. *The Two Rabbits*. Two rabbits talk over the latest gossip. One finally asks the other how his father is. "Not well, in fact, he's in a bit of a stew."

—Waller, p. 57.

C652. *Shortcake's Squaw*. An old Indian chief named "Shortcake" dies. The undertaker calls on his widow to arrange a funeral. "Too late; squaw-bury-Shortcake."

—Oral tradition, 20 July 1960.

\*655. *Poodle Sale*. A lady orders a freight car full of poodles to be delivered to her town in hopes of capitalizing on a current craze for them. The train is derailed and the dogs

all lose their tails. She is forced to wholesale them, not being able to retail them.

—"Greetings" (12 August 1959).

C660. *Gold, Silver and Tin Finger Nails*. A poor family lives by selling the parings of a friend's gold finger nails, until the friend is killed. Then they sell another friend's silver nail parings until he too is killed. Finally they have only the parings of a friend's tin finger nails until one day when he cuts off one finger in a meat chopper. "Now I don't have tin finger nails; I have only nine."

—IU 1.

C665. *The Rapping Paper*. A man in a hotel (or haunted house) hears a rapping sound and searches for its source. After much running around and unlocking of doors, he finds a trunk from which the sound comes, and inside finds "a great big roll of rapping paper."

—IU 1; HFB III, 69-70.

C800.—C999. *Punch Line from a Song*.

C825. *The War of Earth and Mars*. Earth and Mars have a great war. Victory comes when Earth's rockets have forced Mars' rockets to crash, and, as the reports say, "Mars is in the cold, cold ground."

—IU 1.

C830. *A Blanket for the Pope*. A visiting contingent of Vatican cardinals in the U. S. shop for an electric blanket to take back as a gift for the Pope. They finally find a royal purple one to their liking—the world's first "purple-Papal-heater."

—Oral tradition, 15 March 1960.

C835. *The Weather-predicting Communist*. Rudolph, a Communist, says that it will rain, but a man scoffs at this prediction. His wife reminds him that, "Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear."

—Oral tradition, 22 June 1959.

C840. *The Tailor turned Soldier*. During the Civil War the Union forces captured a town where they found a large supply of gray Confederate uniforms. They had a tailor dye them blue. Just then the Confederate forces recaptured the town and ordered the tailor to fade the uniforms back to gray. He gave up in disgust, joined the army, since, "Old dyers never fade, they just soldier away."

—BL (Nov. 1951), 66.

(Note: General MacArthur was recalled from Korea on 11 April 1951 and he delivered his address to a joint session of Congress on 19 April in which he gave revived currency to the words from an old song. This story and the next must have developed shortly after.)

C841. *Sergeant Dye's Retirement*. When Sergeant Dye retired, he went to a seaside resort, Faye, where he amused himself by wading in the surf. A friend commented, "Old Dye never soldiers; he just wades at Faye."

—Oral tradition, summer 1958.

C850. *The Cure with a Thong*. An African has a high fever and his witch doctor cuts a leather thong into twelve pieces and tells him to eat one part each day. It doesn't work, he reports: "The thong is gone, but the malady lingers on."

—CBS 1.

C855. *The Moon Creatures*. The first man on the moon sees a little furry creature and asks if he is the leader. "No, I'm just Furry number one." He gets the same answers from other "Furries" until he meets one with a hypodermic needle sticking out of his head. "I'm just the Furry with the syringe on top."

—Oral tradition, March 1959.

C860. *The Rarey*. A society matron, seeking a unique pet, acquires a "rarey" which is an animal that can eat anything and which never stops growing. Finally it has grown to enormous proportions and has eaten nearly everything she has. She sends it to be

dumped over the edge of Grand Canyon. The rarey comments mournfully, "That's a long way to tip-a-rarey."

—IU 19; CBS 5; Miles Kimball, p. 14.

C1000.—C1199. *Punch Line from a Poem.*

C1000. *The Teak Thief.* Teak objects are stolen from a man named Chan by a bear with feet like a boy. Finally they catch the "boy-foot bear with teak of Chan."

—IU 1; CBS 2; Miles Kimball, p. 8.

C1025. *The Missile Shot.* The Russians have developed cows only three and one-half inches long. They will send several up in a rocket nose cone and it will be "the herd shot round the world."

—Oral tradition, March 1961.

C1200.—C1399. *Punch Line from an Axiom of Science.*

C1225. *The Strafed Lion.* Men are discussing lion hunting in a South African bar. One tells of wonderful lion country up north; a listener drinks up his pint of beer, leaves and flies up to machine-gun a lion from the air. He returns shortly for another beer because, "A strafed lion is the shortest distance between two pints."

—Oral tradition, March, 1959, from R. M. Dorson.

C1250. *The Fit Cat.* Three cats named "Fit," "Fit, Fit," and "Fit, Fit, Fit," overeat on catnip. The first two eventually die, but the third survives. This demonstrates "the survival of the fittest."

—Oral tradition, 31 Dec. 1959.

C1400.—C1599. *Punch Line from Advertising.*

C1425. *The Puppy's Errand.* A dog wins a blue ribbon in a show and then leaves it behind in a bar. His son is sent to get it. "What'll you have?" the bartender asks. "Pap's blue ribbon."

—IU 1; CBS 3; Cerf, *Life*, p. 352.

C1450. *The Rabbit in the Refrigerator.* A man opens his refrigerator to find a rabbit loafing inside. He inquires about it. "Isn't this a Westinghouse?" the rabbit asks. "Yes," says the man. "Well, I'm westing."

—IU 1; Cerf, *Stock*, p. 69.

C1600.—C1799. *Punch Line States a Moral to Story—Comic Advice.*

C1625. *Don't Fly off the Handle.* Sparrows or flies are eating horse dung or baloney—one overeats. He flies to a hoe handle to rest and crashes when he tries to fly off that. Moral: "Don't fly off the handle when you're full of shit (or baloney)."

—IU 4; *BL* (June 1953), 74.

C1625.1. *Bull-eating Lion.* A lion eats a bull, roars and is shot by a passing hunter. Moral: "When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut."

—IU 1; *BL* (March 1958), 78.

C1650. *Don't lose your Head.* A little worm (or a dog) has his tail chopped off by a passing train. Turns around and has his head chopped off as well. Moral: "Don't lose your head over a little piece of tail."

—IU 2; Legman, 55.

C1675. *You Can't Please Everyone.* An old man and his boys are traveling with their mule. Passers-by criticize them when they both ride, when one or the other rides, when neither rides. The man ends carrying the mule, but he drops it from a bridge and it drowns. Moral: "If you try to please everyone, you'll lose your ass."

—IU 1.

(Note: This is a widely-known folktale on the impossibility of pleasing everyone; references are given under Motif J1041.2. The modern appeal of the story lies in the risqué double meaning of "ass.")

## D. HOAX STORIES

Do.—D499. *Hoax Stories told as Personal Experiences.*

D100. *The Encounter with a Horrible Monster.* A deformed and insane person or a monster chases the storyteller. Finally the monster catches him, reaches out a hand, and says, "Tag, you're it!"

—IU 3; *HFB* III, 68-69; R. M. Dorson, "Mishaps of a Maine Lobsterman," *North-east Folklore*, I (Spring, 1958), 4, "Curt Visits the Insane Asylum at Bangor"; Dorson discusses his Maine text and an analogue from Kentucky in *American Folklore* (Chicago, 1959), pp. 131-132.

See also Américo Paredes, "Tag, You're It," *JAF*, LXXIII (1960), 157-158 for two variants from 1935.

D200.—D499. *Supposed Personal Experiences told as "Catch Tales"*  
(*Aarne-Thompson Type 2200*).

D200. *Pulling the Leg.* A long story ends in a chase. The victim is pursued into a room and he tries to escape out a window; the pursuer grabs his leg or pulls on it with his cane. When the listener asks "What happened?" the storyteller's answer is "Nothing; he was pulling my leg just like I'm pulling yours." (The pursuer may be a Negro and the storyteller a young white girl. In other versions she is being pursued for suspected shoplifting by a store detective.)

—IU 6; CBS 1.

D210. *Feeding Baloney.* The storyteller says he dropped a dime on the bus and an old lady snatched it up and kept it. The next day he saw that the same lady had left a package on the seat, so he kept that in return for his dime. The listener asks "What was in it?" Answer: "Baloney, just like I'm feeding you." (Also told as happening in a movie—a ticket dropped.)

—IU 7.

D210.1. *Lost Ring is Found.* A girl had her engagement ring stolen from her when she hitchhiked home. The next day in a restaurant she recognized the robber as the waiter who is serving her a sandwich. "What do you think was inside it?" Answer: "Only baloney, just like I'm feeding you." (Or, apple pie served, but only apples under crust.)

—IU 2.

(Note: An early American prototype of this story is reprinted by R. M. Dorson in "Two City Yarnfests," *California Folklore Quarterly*, V [1946], 81-82. Here a "gold ear bob" is lost while fishing; years later a fish is caught in the same place. What was inside—nothing but guts. This is a reversal of the Ring of Polycrates theme, Motif N211.1.)

D220. *The Dog that Drank Gasoline.* The family dog drank some gasoline and went into convulsions and began running around in circles. Listener asks finally, "What happened?" Answer: "Oh, he finally ran out of gas."

—IU 2.

D230. *The Fortune Teller.* The storyteller searched for his sister and finally found her with a fortune teller who smiled but said nothing. So he slapped the fortune teller. Listener asks why; "one should always strike a happy medium."

—IU 1. Also on file at IU are texts of the line as a saying only; "Slap the smiling fortune teller" is used in place of "Strike a happy medium."

D240. *The Two Bumps.* (Told by a female.) The storyteller tells of a time in a restaurant when a strange man left telling the manager that she would pay his check. She was indignant, but had to pay. Shortly after, she encountered the same man and insisted that he refund her money. He became angry and suddenly struck her with his cane across the chest. At the listener's shocked response, the storyteller says, "Well, how did you suppose I got these two bumps?" (One text told by a man; the bump is his nose.)

—IU 10.

- D250. *What'd You Do?* The storyteller describes a time he was grabbed by a group of men, saddled, and had a bit thrust into his mouth. One man mounted him and headed for a race track. Listener asks, "What'd you do?" Answer: "Third."  
—HFB II, 20; Cerf, *Stock*, pp. 1-2.
- D260. *Pistol-packing Lady in a Bar.* A lady drinks two double whiskeys, but the bartender refuses to serve a third drink until she threatens him with a pistol. He serves; she drinks and runs into the rest room from whence a loud "Bang!" is heard. Listener asks, "What happened?" Answer: "The toilet seat fell down."  
—Oral tradition, 18 July 1960 from Frank Paulsen of Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan. Paulsen heard the joke and wrote it up as a short story which was published in *Joker* as "Skeleton in a Closet" in 1948.
- D500.—D499. *Hoax Stories told as Real Happenings, Though Not Personal Experiences.*
- D500. *The Kush-Maker.* A Navy man says he is a specialist, a "Kush-Maker" (also Klesh, Gluck, Gleek, Ka-Swish, Kloosch, Squish, Glug, Splooch, Blook, Kaplush, and Ding-Dong.) A great deal of time and many tools and materials are used up until he announces that he has made one. A large fantastically-shaped box is dropped overboard and it goes "Kush!"  
—IU 14; CBS 3; Wm. Hugh Jansen, "The Klesh-Maker," *HF*, VII (June 1948), 47-50 (version credited to Davy Crockett); Agnes Nolan Underwood, "Folklore from G. I. Joe," *NYFQ*, III (1947), 285-297; 'Murgatroyd the Kluge Maker,' 295-297—repr. Botkin.  
(Note: Dorson describes this story as "one of the most popular folktales of the last war" [*American Folklore*, p. 271] and points out that a comparable tale was credited both to Davy Crockett and Abe Lincoln. For two versions of the Lincoln story see Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, The War Years*, The Sangamon Edition, Vol. VI [New York, 1940], pp. 150-151.)
- D501. *The Tis-Bell.* A man searches long and hard for a tis-bell. Every time he thinks he has one, some catastrophe causes him to lose it. Finally he gets his hands on a tis-bell so he can play "My Country Tis of Thee."  
—IU 1.
- D510. *The Mysterious Letter in French.* An American acquires a note written in French. He asks various people to read it for him and they attack him, fire him from his job, kick him out in the street, or otherwise show strong disapproval of the letter, without telling him what it contains. Finally, when he meets a sympathetic soul willing to translate it (or, when he has learned French himself), he finds that the ink has faded or wind blows the note into a fire or into the sea. He never learns the contents of the note.  
—IU 14; CBS 1; Partridge, pp. 38-45; Dorson, p. 10; Botkin, #23; Legman, p. 50.
- D501.1. *The Purple Passion.* A young man somehow hears about "The Purple Passion" (or "The Sleeve Job," or "My Blue Heaven") and he tries to find out what it means. He is rejected whenever he asks and this is the cause of a miserable life for him. Just as he is about to find out what it means, he is killed in an accident.  
—IU 12.
- D511. *Barracuda in the Swimming Pool.* A man keeps a barracuda (or sharks) in his swimming pool and no one knows why. Finally he agrees to tell his reason, but in going out to the pool to explain, he falls in and the barracuda eats him.  
—IU 2.
- D520. *The Round Pool Table.* A man goes to a great deal of trouble to have a round, leopard-skin-covered pool table made for him. But on a long and adventurous trip he is killed. The storyteller asks his audience, "Do you know anyone who would like to buy a round, leopard-skin-covered pool table?"  
—IU 6; CBS 4; *Esquire* 3, p. 47.

D530. *The Prisoner and his Ant.* A prisoner has trained an ant to do tricks. At his release, he takes the trained ant with him in a little box. The first time he opens the box to show his pet, someone crushes it. (Storyteller makes an ant-crushing motion.)

—IU 9; CBS 6; Botkin, pp. 94-95; Cerf, *Life*, p. 350.

(Note: Nathaniel Hawthorne's story "The Artist of the Beautiful" in *Mosses from an Old Manse*—The Modern Library edition [New York, 1937], pp. 1139-1156—is based on a similar situation. An artist has produced a marvelous mechanical butterfly after a life's labor and it is crushed with one grip of a small child's hand.)

#### E. "NO POINT" STORIES.

E100. *No Point.* Two characters, animals or humans, are in a dangerous situation. Often they are floating on a piece of ice which threatens to split up; sometimes in a canoe or on a high perch. One looks at the other and says "Typewriter." (Or, "Radio," "Trees," or other meaningless comment.) Those listeners who are in on the joke laugh long and hard, leaving the newcomers to puzzle over the humor of the story.

—IU 7; CBS 1.

E200. *How Did You Know?* (A character makes a weird observation and elicits an even stranger response including the question "How did you know?") A man asks in a drug store for a pint of chocolate ice cream. "We have no chocolate, but I can give you an aspirin." "How did you know I had a wooden leg?" "I could tell by the rubber band around your head."

—CBS 1.

E200.1. Two men order dry martinis in a bar. "We don't serve mixed drinks." They leave saying, "How did he know we are Irish?"

—CBS 1.

#### F. LOGICAL NON SEQUITUR.

F100. *Nine Out of Ten.* Three soldiers, three sailors and three marines have a hotel room together and must share it with one WAC. The following morning the men all order coffee (or Wheaties) for breakfast and the WAC orders tea (or ham and eggs). "This shows that nine out of ten prefer coffee (or Wheaties)."

—IU 3.

F125. *The Flea-Jumping Experiment.* A man observes fleas jumping when he says "jump" and then he cuts off their legs, and they cease jumping on command. He concludes that fleas must hear with their legs.

—IU 1; Partridge, pp. 85-86.

F150. *What Causes a Hangover?* A heavy drinker suffers hangovers and concludes that the soda, not the whiskey, is causing them.

—Partridge, pp. 87-88.

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