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Reaction

Rocket City Astronomical Association

Space Enterprises, Inc.

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REACTION



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Dear Editor,

Upon reading the fall, 1958, issue of SPACE Journal, I noted that there was no part III to Dr. Stuhlinger's "Life on Other Stars." Is the series complete in two parts or are there more parts forthcoming in future issues?

Takoma Park, Md.

Ronald Chiabotta

There is a third and concluding part to Dr. Stuhlinger's series. We hope to have it ready for the spring, 1959, issue. Needless to say, Dr. Stuhlinger has been very busy lately; but he has promised us the remainder of his series very soon.
Editor.

Dear Editor,

Mr. Kumagai has incorporated something new in his village on the Moon, slanting floors in several buildings 18 degrees (comparable to a 3 degree slope on Earth.) It's quite conceivable that the Moon's $1/6$ gravity will not give a man much of a feeling of "up" and "down"—to the extent that he might have trouble standing up straight, actually catching himself toppling over before he realized that he was off-balance. Of course, he would topple slowly with plenty of time to react; but that slow motion would be as much harder to sense, perhaps not until he was leaning over to quite a sharp angle. In handling equipment, placing tools where they wouldn't roll off, even in such common tasks as eating, it could be rather irritating.

Certainly, a sloping floor will enhance anyone's sense of "up" and "down", and any actor who has performed on Europe's sloping stages (where "upstage" and "downstage"

VOX POPULI

originated as terms with definite physical meaning) will confirm that. . . .

In fact, I don't believe it is the best way—and that Mr. Kumagai has overlooked at least two conditions of lunar village life in his proposed plan. His designs show utilization of horizontal floorspace exactly as any architect would consider it on Earth; but you'd virtually have no upstairs or downstairs on the Moon. Stepping up on a chair two feet high on Earth is equivalent to stepping up to the next floor, 12 feet overhead, on the Moon. Thus it would be as easy, or easier, to enter a room upstairs as to walk into an adjoining room on the same floor. You can "stack" any department vertically as well as spread it horizontally on one floor. With that you'd probably have ramps extending upward in every room; they're as sensible as having a door to every room!

Secondly, there will be a pressure of one atmosphere (or even half an atmosphere) inside the village dome—with only the Moon's $1/6$ gravity. Air resistance to the human body becomes a definitely noticeable factor when one wants to drop down three or four floors to visit someone else's office.

When these factors are considered, it seems that the villagers will have considerable opportunity to enhance their sense of "up" and "down" without slanted floors; also, they will be constantly practicing and developing their sense of balance to a degree known on Earth only to tight-wire performers. . . .

Berkeley, Calif.

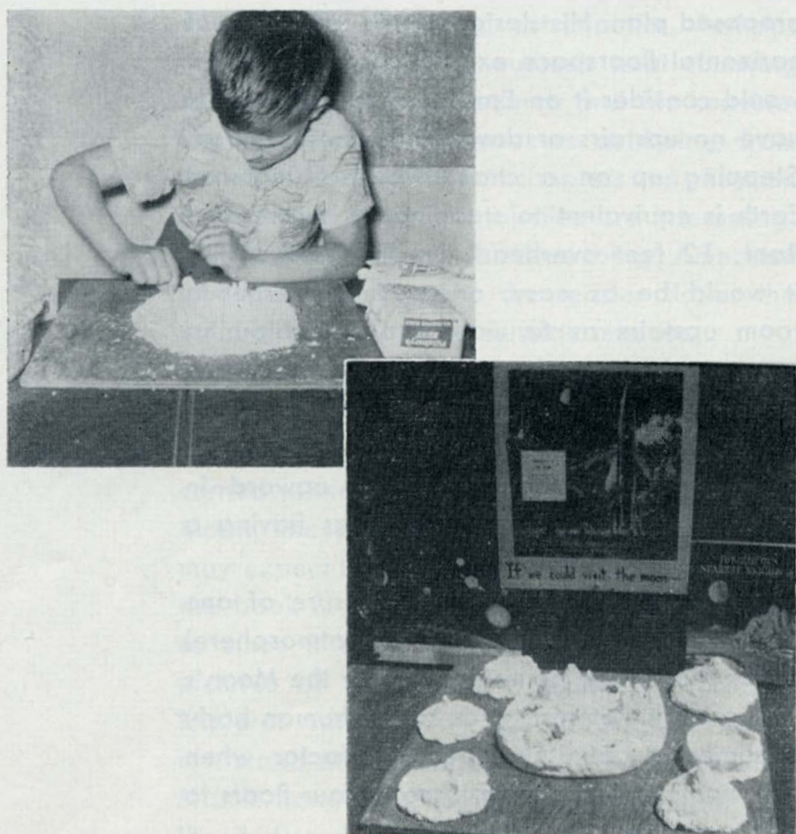
Joe Gibson

Reader Gibson has some interesting and relevant points. Added to those which Dr. Rinehart puts forth in his article in the current issue, our readers should get some idea of the complexity of the problem of building a structure of the Moon which will offer its occupants both comfort and some degree of orientation

akin to that which they knew on Earth. With Dr. Rinehart's basic design criteria and the Wonder Building Corporation's scale model, we have taken a positive step in solving the problem. Perhaps other readers, particularly architects, would like to add to our growing knowledge of what must be done to place a village on the Moon. Editor.

Dear Editor,

. . . These photos show some in-school attempts by early-grade students to model their impressions of Moon features. I hope you find them of interest. . .



The models were done in clay or salt-flour-alum medium. They represent one project for the children in expressing their ideas about the Moon in order the better to understand it.
Cockeysville, Md. Ruth K. Stroh

Considering the fact that the models are made by third graders, we are surprised at their realism; and we wholeheartedly endorse the project. Imaginative projects such as this one used in conjunction with well-disciplined courses in the three R's can do much to reclaim American primary education from the Dark Ages into which it has fallen during the past 30 years. Such projects, too, must

certainly serve as a stimulus to youngsters with a latent interest or inclination for the sciences. Editor.

Dear Editor,

Let me thank you for the opportunity of reading your magazine. It is a great pleasure to share the views and thoughts of our Space scientists about the physical and philosophical aspects of coming Space travel. . . .

I am one of those unfortunate individuals who is able to criticize the objectivity of an article like Dr. von Braun's ["The Acid Test", summer, 1958]—since I have recently come from Soviet Hungary. Between 1941 and today I had the opportunity to make comparisons between the German and Russian dictatorship and Western democracy. I might add perhaps some more explanation to Dr. von Braun's, because in our case none of the tyrannies were even our own, though we enjoyed a flowering—if not free—scientific life.

I have to say frankly that after a certain time, under those circumstances, there is hardly any individual resistance. The will to survive, the old instinct for self-preservation takes over—up to a point. There was a saying in Hungary, at the beginning of the war, "Somebody is going to eat us. The German at least washes his teeth; the Russian does not." This attitude and the totalitarian state's first-preference policy toward science are the explanation.

Naturally there is a breaking point, depending upon a nation's pride, patience, and temperament, where something snaps and the nation just simply must kick out some of those teeth regardless of the consequences. That happened in Hungary but because of the lack of any help the only highly negative result was the new caution with which Russia readjusted its grip individually to each satellites' tolerance level.

That is why I agree with every word of "The Acid Test". I do hope that the Western world will make full use of the experience of people like us.

Toronto, Canada

Steven L. Simon