**FADS AND FALLACIES IN THE NAME OF SCIENCE**

**BY MARTIN GARDNER**

**Gardner begins with a discussion of pseudoscientists, and what traits they tend to have in common.**

**Next he tackles flat-Earthers and hollow-Earthers. Most of these are religious-based, but not all.**

**Gardner has a chapter on flying saucers followed by the story of the incredible Alfred Lawson. Gardner described Lawson as a 19-year professional baseball player who later, redefined the laws of physics. He was the ultimate megalomaniac whose followers worshiped him as a god.**

**But I had something that Gardner likely did not have access to - a baseball encyclopedia. Lawson did make it briefly to the big leagues for one season where, as a pitcher, he managed to lose all 3 games he started. I guess he spent the next 17 years trying to get a second chance. He had considerably more success as a cult leader. The stories about his ego are hysterical.**

**Next Gardner deals with dowsing and abiogenesis - both are areas of interests to pseudoscientists. Then Gardner shows his Achilles Heel. Rationalists have always been puzzled how people who can apply reason and the scientific method to most concepts, usually have a pet belief that they refuse to apply those same skills to. In Gardner's case it is God. His defense of the Bible is that God created everything with "the appearance of great age." It is hard to understand how someone as sharp as Gardner could accept such a pathetically weak argument when he is so adept at exposing that same fallacious reasoning in others. It shows just how powerful the threat of eternal torture can be - even to the most powerful of minds.**

**GRADE A-**

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