

The World According to Stan (Part III)

by [Eldon Cene](#) (June 2020)



Max Ernst Showing a Young Girl the Head of his Father, Max Ernst, 1927

“The Mind Wars: The Complete Trilogy” by Eldon Cene and published by Magic Bean Books is now out after many years in the making. This is a chapter from the mid-section of the book.

You need to know how 'black ops' are run," Stan continued.

"Yes, I do," Nancy Gillis said.

"Yes. We certainly need to know about *that*," Agent Hailey said sarcastically.

"You are so sexy when you're pissed." Stan winked, or tried through a bruised face.

Leland gave him another roundhouse.

"Jesus. That felt good." Stan laughed, spitting out another tooth. "You keep this up Sheriff and you're gonna having to cut up my food."

"Maybe we'll puree *you*? Perhaps by running him through a hog?" Merlin suggested to Leland.

Leland was getting the feeling that this guy really genuinely *liked* pain. He smiled each time Leland punched him, which was an experience that aggravated Leland even more.

"You were lisping?" Agent Hailey nodded and smiled.

"Yeth. I wath." Stan nodded. "So ath I wath thaying . . ." He joked.

"Black ops aren't anything real mysterious. They are just government operations which we don't know anything about. Hell, the garbage collection around here is something I know nothing about." He indicated the need for a cigarette to Leland, and Ruth gave him a smoke. Merlin lit it. Stan nodded his thanks, and continued. "So, to me, your Sanitation Department hosts black ops operations. But, if I wanted to I could find out, just by going on the internet. So to me they

are really grey ops; a very light grey ops.”

“Now the sorts of ‘black ops’ you read of in the news are the darkest grey of the grey ops. The identities of the people involved in these operations are kept secret from most of our citizens, as is the financing, which is recorded under some very creative accounting schemes deep within the corridors of the CIA, or the NSA, or any of the other acronyms the public is vaguely aware of like EDGAR, and SAM, etc. But they are all responsible and accessible to known Senate committees and known public officials, like the CIA Director, etc. And, with the proper clearance, their budgets and operations can be known, by their legal overseers.”

“A *true* black ops is *all* black, because it doesn’t exist. And therefore it can’t be ‘found out’. It is a true guerrilla organization excepting that the ones which concern us don’t want to take over power. They are something like dark matter. They are just *there*. All they want is to remain invisible and to keep on doing what they are doing.”

“Which is *what*?” Leland asked.

“Which is *whatever they want to do*.” Stan smiled. “I mean, that’s the point, isn’t it?”

This had the group flummoxed.

Stan continued patiently. “We are talking about little domains which various parties have carved out within the bureaucratic infrastructure which suck their financing and operational needs and utilities and clearance from the government—but which the government as we know it, knows nothing of. There may be a lot of them. There may be a few of them. They may be doing good things. Or they could be doing bad. We don’t know. They are totally black. Like a parasite which takes a little food from the host, without harming it in any measurable way is never detected—so these black operations go undetected. Actually, we might even call it commensalism,

because it's in the best interests of all of these black ops to stabilize and grow the bureaucracy. Which by virtue of their very proliferation, they do. So they really stimulate the growth of our animal, the government. They are very pro-government."

"So running around the country murdering women and cutting off their heads isn't a problem for our government?" Agent Hailey asked sarcastically.

"When they are isolated events like this? Not at the Federal level." Stan nodded.

"I don't know why you are so shocked by all of this, Leland," Merlin spoke up. "Because what our serial killer here is detailing is just the logical extension of what I have been trying to tell you for years! You've got this huge, well-fed bureaucracy. It's just a petri dish for every sort of chicanery."

Leland sighed. He waved his hand at Stan. "You know what, just keep going."

So Stan did.

"It all starts, like anything, with someone who thinks outside of the box." Stan took a deep drag of the cigarette. "And it isn't very long before *thinking* something outside of the box leads to wanting to *do* something outside of the box. And this person is either already *within* the government and wanting to do something a little irregular. Or this person is *outside* the government and wants to do something a little irregular. But, whichever way it is, this person often has difficulty generating support."

"So, to illustrate how this support is arranged, let me begin with the simplest, warmest example I can bring to mind. There is this older matronly woman named Sylvia Phillips who loves to paint kittens. But she can't afford to. She has

no time. She has lost her life savings due to a bad divorce and then medical bills, so she has to work a ten hour day behind the deli of a small grocery just in order to make ends meet. But she has a friend who thinks she is a genius, loves her paintings and who works for the government. So this friend gets her a job to serve as an outreach worker for a transient population in the area. She gets a car, a salary, medical care, and the chance to paint kitten portraits all day long. The friend gets bumped a salary upgrade since she is now supervising 20 people rather than 19. It's a win win."

"That's simple corruption," Agent Hailey countered, "and misdirection of federal monies. All of which are prosecutable felonies."

"Yup," Stan admitted. "*if* you ever get caught. But then lots of things are prosecutable. Did you know that the average citizen commits *three* felonies a day? And then there are things which the prosecutor won't prosecute, for any number of reasons, including that his bosses want it so."

"Or there are things done which the people elected like, and so eventually, instead of being prosecuted for an offence, you end up with a pension and a position or are given a medal, or end up a professor with tenure. I mean, there is no end to the good things which can come from subverting the law." Stan laughed.

"See!" Merlin nudged Leland. "What did I tell you?"

"You're a damned murderer," Agent Hailey said.

"The law is only the law for the people who have to pay attention to it. You trespass on the freeway, and you're going to get either chased off or hauled away. You trespass on the freeway because you're against *racism* with 10,000 other people who say they feel likewise—and the mayor of the city will come out and shake your hand!"

"This sort of thinking is so *corrosive*," Ruth festered.

"People can only stand so much reality," Merlin clucked.

"Ruth, he's a *serial killer*," Nancy Gillis reminded her.

"Well, yeah!" Ruth snorted.

Ramey hadn't anything to say. So Leland figured he was probably kept busy keeping the Muffin Lady's front door shut.

Stan smiled. "So you've got some interesting research you'd like to do, but the University committee has put the kibosh on it? Sell it to the Department of Defense, or the NSA, or the CIA—or even the Chinese. Whoever will help you to do what you want to do!" Stan smiled. "If it all works out, they can create some sort of serendipitous research back story in order to bring it out legally. And if it doesn't work out . . . well, it never happened."

"Because, in the end, this is what we all want. We all want to get to where mankind is eventually going to get to like it or not—except sooner! And this is why all of this can go on. *Because secretly all of us want this to happen.*"

Stan glanced around the room. "We all want to be safe and secure. We all love our conveniences. And we all want our little Herby to be able to walk again, or to breathe again, or to live again—and if ten thousand people have to die or several have to be murdered to make these happen, we can live with it, if it's conducted in the proper manner and out of sight. Kind of like butchering cattle or killing chickens."

"I am actually, I would suppose, a free-lancer,

tacitly employed by other institutions altogether . . . but whose activities are all coordinated on a server. So that if the shit ever hits the fan, I never existed. And you?" Stan regarded Leland. "Depends I would suppose on how much you know, and how good you can make the man *who runs me* feel about that."

It took a while for people to chew this over.

"So . . ." Leland was the first to speak. "Whose bright idea were *you*?"

Stan finished the cigarette and ground it out.

"In my case it was somebody over in the sandy climes of Pakistan working on 'synesthesia'."

Leland shook his head, as if the shit just wouldn't stop. And Stan didn't stop.

"There is no *there, there*. All of these black ops entities are only hierarchies in a server somewhere. All of their employees are hired elsewhere, though other government services, where they are purportedly doing something else. So there is no budget. There is no payroll. And there is no *there, there* or here!" Stan laughed. "Who am I? Why, I'm *nobody*. Or perhaps I'm somebody, supposedly up a river in Africa taking water samples."

"The government is just honeycombed with shit like this," Merlin agreed.

"It's a fine story," Leland said. "How many people here think it's time to shoot him?"

Most everybody raised their hand including Ramey.

But Merlin objected.

"Just wait a minute Leland," Merlin demurred. "He

mentioned synesthesia.”

“Yeah?” Leland removed the big Anaconda from its holster on his hip. He placed the big gun on his knee and began loading it with bullets. “That’s a real thing? Like a real word?” He laughed.

“Yes it is.” Merlin scrutinized Stan, moving closer, examining Stan’s cranium. “And I’d be interested in whatever our serial killer here has to say about it. It *looks* as though he might have been experimented on himself.”

“Which would give him grounds for an insanity plea.” Agent Hailey nodded.

“This weapon will blow holes in any insanity plea,” Leland said.

“Now just hold on a minute, Leland,” Merlin said, looking up from the scar he was tracing through the back of Stan’s scalp.

“Leland, you know that I can’t let you just execute a wanted fugitive,” Agent Hailey replied.

“We’ll just see how the thing plays out. How’s that?” Leland said, gripping his loaded Anaconda.

“You need to think this through,” Stan said. “If you shoot me, how does this affect the chances of the other people in this room?”

“Were you experimented on?” Merlin asked.

Stan gazed around at the room of them, most of whom wanted him dead.

“Yes,” Stan replied.

“Well?” Leland raised the tip of the gun.

“As it happened,” Stan said. “We ran over an IED in Afghanistan, and I took some shrapnel in the old rock. They airlifted beyond our base hospital to a facility which was a lot newer, and cleaner and technologically quite superior—from what I could make of it—from any of the outpost facilities I was used to. Bunkered inside of a hill I discovered later. Lots of money put into this, and a low profile.”

“I wasn’t thinking at my best and worried about the possible outcome of my injury. It was hard to do certain things. And they weren’t very optimistic about my outcome either. Until one day this new doctor walks in and says he thinks he can fix it so that I’ll be an even better soldier than before. I said that was kind of hard to believe. But what kind of soldier doesn’t want to hear this?” Stan glanced around. “So I say, ‘Sounds like just the thing.’”

“He says it will involve a bit of an operation. But hell, they’re going to be digging around in my head anyway for that shrapnel, so I couldn’t see as how a little more could be that bad. He explains a little bit about it, and the word ‘synesthesia’ plays a large part. As he told it, in ‘synesthesia’ parts of the brain can either increase in abilities when other parts are eliminated, or they can take over the jobs of those other portions . . . which can lead to many unforeseen conditions—or *unleash unknown abilities*, as he explained it to me. And he told me about autistics and idiot savants, and a lot more than I could grasp. But what I did grasp was that if I signed all these papers, that at the end of it all I’d have a shot, which was all I wanted. So I signed. And in I went.”

“And what happened?” Merlin needed to know.

“Well. Here. Let me show you,” Stan said, putting his hands out. “You got a toothpick?”

As Stan began flexing his hands, pumping his fists

actually, Merlin looked to Leland. Leland considered the gun in his hand and nodded Merlin his assent. Merlin gave Stan a toothpick.

Stan took the toothpick between his thumb and forefinger and spoke, as he poked one end of the toothpick into the handcuff keyhole. "There's something very interesting about having an ability that far exceeds whatever the current reach of that ability is." Stan's fingers began to move very quickly and then to vibrate. "Most of our defenses are unknowingly crafted from within our own existing parameters. So for example, you want to keep deer out of your garden? You erect an 8' hogwire fence. But what if a deer comes along who can leap 20'?" The toothpick vibrated almost imperceptibly with a high pitched faint hum like a dentist's drill, until, suddenly the handcuffs sprung apart. "See?"

Everyone shrunk back as Stan thrust his freed hands forward.

Except for Leland who held the 45 in a very steady gun hand with it trained on Stan.

"You think it would be a good idea for me to shoot him now?" Leland asked Agent Hailey.

"These handcuffs cannot be 'picked'—but they can be 'vibrated'." Stan tossed them off to the side. "Just a bar trick." Stan rested his hands on his knees. "But you get my point?"

Merlin nodded.

"This seems to be solving my moral problem Leland," said Agent Hailey, who had her gun drawn also.

"Yeah." Nodded Leland who slowly increased the pressure on the trigger as he backed and encouraged the others to back away also.

“So whatever they did caused you to be able to move very fast?” Merlin ventured.

And in that moment, Stan leapt. He was already clear of that spot on the wall where Agent Hailey’s bullet embedded itself. And before Leland could squeeze off a shot, Stan had knocked the gun barrel upwards. The massive bullet plowed through the floor/ceiling. Then by twisting the barrel, Stan tossed Leland as he stepped in and wrenched the gun free at the same time. Leland somersaulting onto his butt with his back to the wall. Stan had the big gun trained on Agent Hailey before she could complete her turn. “No!” Leland screamed.

Agent Hailey froze in mid-thought expecting death. She let her hand on the gun relax. It fell to the floor.

Stan smiled.

“Yes.” Stan nodded to Merlin, as he sat back down after collecting Agent Hailey’s gun. “The operation was a great success! I got amazing speed. I just love pain. It’s almost a sexual thing, though it’s a little creepy when put like that. And I don’t mind killing people, at all. It’s strange. It’s like I have this bookish description of how the remorse should feel. But it’s just not there. If anything, it’s like a phantom limb which almost begs you to scratch it.” He spoke thoughtfully as he swept the gun sight over them all and little beads of sweat broke out on his forehead. “Perhaps you can sense now, how hard of a time I’m having not pulling this trigger,” Stan added.

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Eldon Cene's final book, *The Mind Wars: The Complete Trilogy*, is published and out there after many years in the process. You may find it under his editor's [link](#). The book is available in both print and Kindle editions. If you like the book, Eldon would be pleased if you would write a nice review.

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