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### Three Science Fiction/Comedy Short Stories

Jerome P. Morgulis  
*Buffalo State College*

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Three Science Fiction/Comedy Short Stories  
by

Jerome P. Morgulis

An Abstract of a Project  
in  
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2006

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies

## Abstract of Project

### *Three Science Fiction/Comedy Short Stories*

This project was about creative writing and describes the process that I used to develop my stories. It contains three short stories that I wrote for an imaginary magazine called *Creative Galaxy*.

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Date

Buffalo State College  
State University of New York  
Department of Creative Studies

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Dates of Approval:

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Dr. Mary Murdock, Advisor  
Associate Professor of Creative Studies

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Jerome P. Morgulis  
Candidate

## Dedication

To all the people that listen to the late night radio talk show *Coast to Coast*.

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## Background to the Project

The purpose of my project was to develop my talent as a creative writer. I took a creative writing course as an undergraduate student, and the stories that I wrote made everyone in the class laugh. The professor wanted the stories to be dramatic. In every class he shouted ... "What's the Conflict!"

I actually wrote a story called *What's the Conflict*. It was a fantasy/comedy about a character that kept having someone call him on the phone shouting ... "What's the Conflict!" After reading my story in class, many of the students said they wanted to be my publishing agent.

Pop culture had a great influence on my writing style. I grew up watching the original *Star Trek* on TV. I loved the characters and the stories. The writers and actors were incredibly creative. Another show that I never missed watching was the *X-Files*. Watching the show gave me many ideas about plot and character development. I'm also a big fan of the late night radio talk show *Coast to Coast*. The shows host interviews UFO investigators/researchers, conspiracy theorists and parapsychology experts.

When incubating on my project, I wanted to put together an imaginary magazine called *Creative Galaxy*. The magazine would contain three science fiction/ comedy short stories that I wrote. In developing the plots and characters, I wanted to stretch my imagination and take a risk with my writing style.

In putting together my project, I hope to allow my creative juices to flow as a writer and to give a better understanding of my creative process to others.



## Pertinent Literature

I found the following books in the Creative Studies Library. They gave me more insight into the process of writing stories.

### Expanded CBIR Abstracts

Rishel, M. A. (2002). *Writing humor: Creativity and the comic mind* [2010]. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.

Rishel defines humor and outlines simple techniques for writing humor. The author goes into detail on various types of humor, such as, slapstick, irony and wit, grotesque and absurd, nonsense, light verse, and parody. The book outlines ways to overcome writer-s block. It also gives insight on how to write scripts and create monologues.

Call Number:

LC: PN6149.A88 R57 2002; DDC: 808.7

Bennett, H. Z. (1995). *Write from the heart: Unleashing the power of your creativity*. Novato, CA: Nataraj Pub.

This book is a practical and inspirational guide to writing. The book discusses the writer's motivations, blocks, and sources for material and also includes information on getting published. The author uses stories and anecdotes throughout.

Call Number:

LC: PN151 .B514 1995; DDC: 808:02

## Bibliography

- Lowry, B. (1995). *The truth is out there: The official guide to the x-files*. New York: Harper Paperbacks.
- Lowry, B. (1996). *Trust no one: The official third season guide to the x-files*. New York: Harper Paperbacks.
- Marinaccio, D. (1994). *All I really need to know I learned from watching Star Trek*. New York: Crown Publishers.
- Roddenberry, G. & Whitfield, S.E. (1968). *The making of Star Trek*. New York: Ballantine Books.

## Process Plan

I began to think about my project in late January. I had no idea what I wanted to do. After gazing into endless cups of coffee for inspiration, I decided to develop my skill/talent as a creative writer.

My first two concept papers were very vague. I talked to my sounding board partner, and he gave me more insight on how to put it together. Finally, after adding more substance to it, it was approved by Dr. M on Feb. 13.

Suddenly it was March, and I was still gazing into endless cups of coffee for inspiration. Why was I procrastinating? I just couldn't seem to get it together. "I'd advise people not to kid themselves into thinking that they'll stimulate their creativity by avoiding working on a complex problem until the last minute. It's probably best to get started as soon as possible, laying out the problem in all its complexity and mapping out some strategies for tackling it" (Amabile, n.d., para.2). I decided to follow Amabile's advice and start mapping out some strategies before it was too late.

Spring was here. Yikes! The only strategy I had was to consume massive amounts of coffee. I started to go to the CRS library on a daily basis. I could use the computers to type up my project and was close to a variety of books about the creative process.

I began to lose track of time. It's the first week in April, and I'm putting my draft together to send to Dr. M by April 17. "You can also try to acquaint yourself with the need for urgency in the project—helping yourself to get motivated by the urgency and accept the mission" (Amabile, n.d., para.5). Thanks for the advice. I think I need another cup of coffee.

Hours incubating on ideas: 264 Hours typing and putting project together: 60

My incubation process evolved around staying up late at night listening to *Coast to Coast* on the radio (1 a.m.-5 a.m.). From February to early April, the total amount of hours that I listened to was 264. Listening to the shows generated many ideas for my stories.

When April came along, I was prepared for action. I wrote my stories in the afternoon. The ideas just ~~flowed~~ gushed out of my head as I typed away on the computer in the CRS library. I did some slight editing and took a bunch of coffee breaks. Throughout the process, I kept reminding myself that I wasn't writing the next *The Da Vinci Code*.

#### Outcomes

I put my stories into an imaginary magazine called *Creative Galaxy*. The magazine focused on stories written by science fiction/fantasy writers. Inside issue number two were three short stories by J. P. Morgulis.

My stories were a satire about writing my CRS Master's project, UFOs, extraterrestrial/ inter-dimensional aliens and global conspiracies. The magazine was only \$4.00 ... and anyone interested in strange fantasy stories would probably buy it.

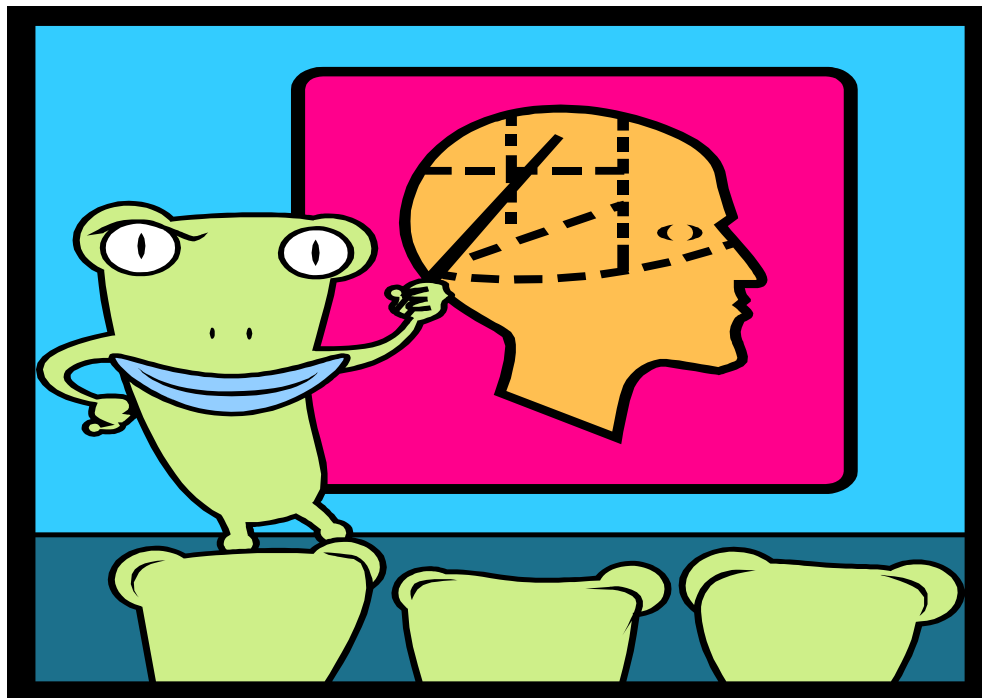
On the following pages is the cover of my magazine and my three stories.

# CREATIVE GALAXY®

#2

SPRING 2006

\$4.00



**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:  
THREE SHORT STORIES BY  
J.P. MORGULIS**



## IT'S ALL ABOUT MOON ROCKS

1:13 a.m. ... I was plugging away on my Creative Studies Master's Project. The late night talk show *Coast to Coast* was on the radio. A caller called up and said that we never landed on the moon.

The movie *Hercules vs. the Moon Men* was on TV. I continued to type away, listen to the radio and watch TV at the same time.

Sipping on my organic coffee, I began to contemplate on the synchronicity of what was happening. Did it mean something? Were the cosmic forces of the universe trying to send me a message?

I needed a break and took my dog Spock for a late night walk. Gazing into the sky, I noticed a strange glowing object flickering on and off. Spock began to growl nervously. In an instant, two rocks came out of the object and landed a few feet from Spock. The UFO mysteriously vanished.

I picked up the rocks and noticed that they had something written on them. The words appeared to say BA BA BOO EE. Spock continued to growl. I took the rocks back to my apartment and began to contemplate on the significance of what just happened.

I drove over to my favorite café to have coffee with my friend Xena. I showed her the rocks and asked her what she thought the words on

them meant. "I think the language is Klingon," she said. "It says put these rocks in your car's gas tank."

My car was almost out of gas so I took Xena's advice. It was unbelievable; my car's gas tank was suddenly full. I began to contemplate... could I have found the answer to the world's energy crisis?

RINGGGGGGGG. I picked up my cell phone. A mechanical sounding voice said, "If you know what's good for you, you'll hand over the moon rocks to us!" Xena and I saw two strange men sitting in a lime green Cadillac watching us. We jumped into my car and took off.

The Cadillac began to follow us. RINGGGGGGGG. It was them again. "Just give us the moon rocks and forget that you saw the UFO in the sky," the voice said.

"Who are you, why do you want the moon rocks," I responded nervously. The voice shouted back, "Every country on the earth wants the moon rocks!"

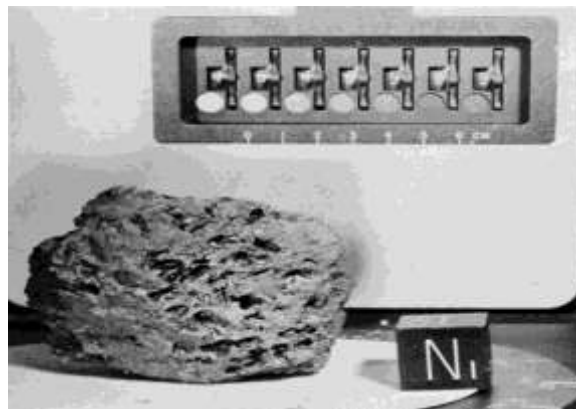
Xena began to freak out. "Why don't you just give them the moon rocks and maybe they'll stop bugging us," she screamed. "They're just a bunch of dumb rocks!"

My car came to a screeching halt. The Cadillac pulled up along side. "You can have the @\$% moon rocks," I yelled. "I never want to see another moon rock again!"

The men in the Cadillac took the moon rocks out of my gas tank, and their car zoomed away. Xena and I felt relieved; I could go back to working on my project and drinking coffee in peace.

5:13 a.m. ... I turned on my TV to watch instant headline news. There was a report about the United States wanting to return to the moon as soon as possible. The reporter stated that China, Russia, Iran and Outer Mongolia already had plans to go to the moon within the next three years.

I gazed into my coffee and began to contemplate on the report. Was there any connection to what happened to me? Did it mean anything to the cosmic flow of insignificance? Why was Spock growling as he dug into his huge bowl of Gravy Train? I continued to stretch my thinking as I typed away on my project.





## IT'S NOT A CHOCOLATE CHIP

1:13 a.m. ... I was still plugging away on my project. The late night talk show *Coast to Coast* was on the radio. A caller called up and said that soon everyone would have identification verichips implanted in the palms of their hands.

The movie *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* was on TV. I was typing away, listening to the radio and watching TV at the same time.

I needed a break and drove over to my favorite café to have coffee with my friend Xena. Xena was perplexed as she showed me a strange mark on the back of her neck. "It looks like some sort of alien implant," she said. "Do you know how I can get rid of it?"

We finished drinking our coffee, and I drove Xena over to the office of Dr. Zclops. He was an expert at surgically removing alien implants. When we arrived at his office, we discovered that he was sprawled over his office desk. Someone had removed his brain.

Xena began to scream hysterically as I tried to calm her down. I saw a note on a post-it on the wall. It read ... The aliens are working with a company called ABR Technologies. "We got to find out more about this company," I said. "I think it stands for Advanced Brain Research."

After a few more cups of coffee, we drove over to ABR to investigate what was going on. When we arrived at the gate, a guard screamed, "Flash the palm of your hand for ID."

We ignored him ... and drove around the back of the building and looked into the windows. Three small grey aliens were handing over the secrets of alien technology to the chief executive officers of ABR. They all shook hands and the aliens dematerialized.

"We've got to report this to the proper authorities," I said in a low voice so no one could hear me. Xena and I jumped into my car and sped away.

We arrived at the local FBI office and told the agent in charge what we saw. He laughed ... "You guys are a bunch of nuts. You must be listening too much to that radio talk show *Coast to Coast*."

When I got home, I turned on my TV to watch instant headline news. There was a report about ABR Technologies just signing a major contract with the Department of Global Security for twenty billion dollars.

5:13 a.m. ... I brewed another pot of coffee and continued to type away on my project.



## THEY LIKE STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM

1:13 a.m. ... I was still plugging away on my project. The late night talk show *Coast to Coast* was on the radio. A caller called up and said that the aliens were visitors from another dimension.

The movie *Morons from Outer Space* was on TV. I was typing away, listening to the radio and watching TV at the same time.

RINGGGGGGG. It was Xena. She wanted me to go out for a late night cup of coffee.

When I arrived at the café, Xena was sitting with a guy wearing a Yankees cap and sunglasses. He kept rambling about UFO bases and strawberry ice cream. "The aliens love strawberry ice cream," he mumbled. "Some of them are malevolent, some are benevolent, and some don't give a @#\$% about us.

I asked him who he was. "I use to work at an ice cream parlor near a top secret military base in Pahrump, Nevada," he said. "The aliens would disguise themselves as humans and come in all the time for strawberry ice cream."

Xena and I continued to listen in amazement. "Some of them made an alliance with government officials," he rambled. "If we would supply them with strawberry ice cream, they would give us their advanced technology.

I began to feel spaced out as I gulped down my seventh cup of coffee. The stranger continued to ramble about the aliens and their secret alliance with the government. "The truth about their existence will never be disclosed," he mumbled. "Too many people will freak out."

The stranger got up and slowly walked out of the café without even saying goodbye. Xena and I continued to sip our coffee while gazing at the clock on the wall. "It's getting late, maybe we better get going," she said.

When we exited the café, we saw the body of the stranger lying on the pavement. Someone had removed the brain from his head. "I can't believe it," Xena screamed. "Every time I hang out with you somebody gets their brain removed from their head!"

When I got home, I turned on my TV to watch instant headline news. There was a report about a massive UFO sighting in Buffalo, NY.

5:13 a.m. ... I brewed another pot of coffee and continued typing away on my project. To be continued ...



## NOTES

These are links to recaps of some of my favorite *Coast to Coast* programs that I listened to (Feb.-early April) while incubating on ideas.

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/02/10.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/02/03.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/30.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/24.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/18.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/15.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/14.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/11.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/03/08.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/04/09.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/04/03.html>

<http://www.coasttocoastam.com/shows/2006/04/01.html>



## Key Learnings

I actually had fun putting my project together. Staying up all night listening to *Coast to Coast* on the radio and drinking coffee gave me a better insight into the process of idea incubation. I began to stress out a little during the end, but I was able to get it together on time.

According to my concept paper, some of my personal learning goals were to let my creative juices flow and take risks with my writing style. I just let the ideas gush (another word for flow) out of my brain as I typed away. I felt like I was in an altered state as the ideas kept gushing and gushing on to the paper.

At first I couldn't figure out who would be the major character in my stories. For some reason, I decided to make myself the main character. The stories would be about me working on my project and taking a break by putting myself into a fantasy world. I could be writing about the process of developing my project, while at the same time being involved in a story about aliens and UFOs.

I also liked the idea that I had about creating an imaginary magazine called *Creative Galaxy*. I think it gave my project a little bit more credibility. In my mind, I was actually meeting a deadline to get the stories finished so they could be published on time.

I typed my paper on the computers in the Creative Studies Library. It's a designated quiet area (most of the time). I also could look at other student's projects on the book shelves.

As I gaze down on the number of the next page, I'm beginning to realize that it says number sixteen. How could I have made my paper a little longer?

Was it scholarly enough? Was my bibliography (books about writing for TV) long enough and relevant to creativity? Did I have enough references? Did I actually have a process plan, or did I rely on the cosmic forces of the universe to guide me?

My project was about exploring my creative skills as a writer. I allowed my creative juices to flow, I took risks with my writing style, I stretched my thinking process beyond my threshold for creative insight, I enjoyed what I was doing, and I knew when to take a coffee break.

Now ... how do I explain what I just said so that it doesn't sound like a random thought that popped out of head? How can I explain what I learned about creativity?

According to my MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Report), I'm an INFP (Introverted Feeling with Intuition). I like quiet for concentration, enjoy working alone with no interruptions and develop my ideas internally. I follow my inspirations and provide connections and meanings. I use values to understand and decide. I like to be spontaneous, feel restricted by structure and schedules, leave things open as long as possible and focus on enjoying the process.

I also was intrinsically motivated by the interest, enjoyment and challenge of my project rather than by outside pressures. In putting my project together, I did quite a lot of incubating (prolonged period of creative thought) and brewed a lot of organic coffee.

I'm starting to feel uncomfortable in explaining my process. Basically ... that's all I did was incubate on ideas, drank lot's of coffee and flowed with my

writing. That was my creative style. I hope who ever reads this will now have a better understanding of my process.

Change leadership is a little bit more difficult to explain. The only thing I can say is that I think that I have the emotional intelligence to not go nuts when people critique my project.

What I see myself doing next is to continue to develop my creative writing and send in scripts to TV show producers. When I finish my project, I want to take a mini-vacation and incubate on my plans on how to do this.



## References

Amabile, T. (n.d.). *How to develop more creative thinking*. Retrieved March 29, 2006 from <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item.jhtml?id=3030&t=innovation>

## Appendix A

# Three Science Fiction/ Comedy Short Stories

**Name: Jerome Morgulis**  
**2/13/06**

**Date Submitted:**

**Project Type: (Develop a Skill/ Talent)**

**What is This Project About?**

I will write three science fiction/comedy short stories. The main character/characters will come up with creative solutions to solve various problems in their lives.

My project will be called Creative Galaxy

**Rationale for Choice:**

I want to develop my talent as a creative writer; particularly in the genre of science fiction/comedy. I grew up watching *Star Trek* on TV and was influenced by its commentary on human nature and current events. I also listen to the late night radio talk show *Coast to Coast* which keeps me informed about UFOs, aliens and strange phenomena. The years of processing information about bizarre events that influence the lives of people is my rationale for developing my stories.

**What will be the Tangible Product(s) or Outcomes?**

The product that I will bring into existence will be three short stories in a magazine format called *Creative Galaxy*.

**What Criteria Will You Use To Measure The Effectiveness Of Your Achievement?**

The effectiveness of my achievement will be judged by my project advisor, other students in the class and my ability to influence people with my writing.

**Who Will Be Involved or Influenced; What Will Your Role Be?**

I will be the only one involved. I will write, edit, re-write and develop the main characters and story plots.

**When Will This Project Take Place?**

I will begin writing my stories as soon as my project is approved. Once it is approved, I will develop my characters and plots over period of eight weeks.

### **Where Will This Project Occur?**

The project will be written in Butler Library/ Buffalo State College.

### **Why Is It Important to Do This?**

I feel that my most creative skill is writing bizarre/humorous stories.

### **Personal Learning Goals:**

- Letting my creative juices flow
- Taking risks with my writing style
- Developing a functional environment that stimulates my creativity
- Stretching my thought process beyond my threshold for creative insight
- Breaking Away From the Problem (Knowing when to take a break)
- Enjoying what I'm doing and not getting overwhelmed by it

### **How Do You Plan to Achieve Your Goals and Outcome**

I will write, edit and rewrite my project until I have achieved my goal and reached my desired outcome. The finished product will be *Creative Galaxy*.

### **Evaluation:**

My project will be evaluated by my project advisor, fellow students and a variety of critics who read my stories.

### **Prepare Project Timeline:**

- February: Develop stories in my mind.
- Early March: Get approval from advisor.
- Middle/Late March: Begin writing
- Late April: Finish project

### **Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:**

http:// [www.coasttocoastam.com/](http://www.coasttocoastam.com/) Web site of late night radio talk show that I listen to that stimulates my creative process.