

Disk Jockey Writes Book To War on the 'Day People'

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NEW YORK (UP)—A whimsical disc jockey is tossing a new book—frankly labelled as a hoax—square into the laps of the "day people," the squares who work all day and sleep all night.

The book was written and published because the fans of all night radio announcer Jean Shepard have been asking for it. The hoax which promises to turn into a profitable one, is the opening shot of Shepard's personal war against the overly organized day in some 25 Eastern states. Besides playing records he holds forth on such subjects as the vital role of the "Flexible Flyer" in America's cultural renaissance.

One day he stayed up long enough to stop off at a Fifth Avenue book store and ask the clerk for a copy of "Twelve Against The Gods," by the late William Bolitho. The clerk steadfastly maintained there was no such book and Shepard left in a philosophical tizzy.

A few days later he asked the same clerk for a copy of a collection of old "Vic and Sade" radio serial scripts. The clerk informed him that his book didn't exist either. He told Shepard he knew it didn't because it wasn't on the publishers lists.

The Plot Thickens

"I got mad," Shepard said. "I got furious, especially when I later saw the book at a friend's house."

That night Shepard hatched his plot against the day people, who, he said, are so well organized that they'll lose out to electronic brains one of these days. He proposed a hoax against publishers and book store clerks and asked for ideas.

One listener suggested a fake book to be called "I, Libertine," and written by Oxford graduate Frederic Ewing, a retired Royal Navy commander "well remembered" for his series of British Broadcasting Company talks on "Erotics of the 18th Century."

Immediately listeners began to deluge book stores with requests for "I, Libertine." College students wrote reviews of it for English classes. The book turned up on spuriously typed library catalogue cards. Book store owners sent publishers frantic requests for the book.

"Some people started claiming

they had bought the book and read it," Shepard said. "We in the underground knew that these guys were phoney. Victims of the era of creeping meatballism."

Tow Of A Kind

One student reported that he got a B-plus on a review of "I, Libertine" and his professor wrote on the bottom of the page, "Excelsior," the password of the night people.

"Both clearly are night people," Shepard said "...people with imagination who do not rely on machines and card catalogues to do their thinking."

Finally, the word got to publisher Jan Ballantine and he decided to capitalize on the hoax. He teamed Shepard with science fiction writer Theodore Sturgeon and the two wrote "I, Libertine" to fulfill the demand.

The book concerns a duchess named Elizabeth Chudleigh and is a "turbulent, turgid, tempestuous, novel of 18th century English court life." The hero is a man with distinctly "day person" characteristics, Shepard said.

"He is defeated by the world because of this tragic flaw," he added.