

**COLLECTOR'S CORNER, Round 6**  
*An Occasional Item of Interest to Gardner Collectors*

*Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*  
Suggested by Jeremiah Farrell

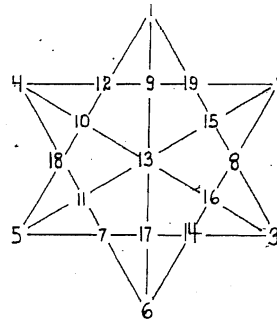
Martin Gardner wrote 111 puzzles for his good friend Isaac Asimov to include in Isaac's *Science Fiction Magazine*. This popular Sci-fi paperback is still being published. For details contact the editor Sheila Williams [swilliams@dellmagazines.net](mailto:swilliams@dellmagazines.net).

Many of Gardner's columns are collected in his books *Science Fiction Puzzle Tales*, 1981, Random House Value Publishing, and *Puzzles From Other Worlds*, 1984, Vintage Press.

In the November, 1983 issue Gardner quotes this doggerel in his article "The Dybbuk and the Hexagram":

I am obliged to plant a grove,  
To please the pretty girl I love,  
This curious grove I must compose  
Of nineteen trees in nine straight rows;  
And in each row, five trees must place,  
Or I may never see her face.  
Now, readers brave, I'm in no jest.  
Pray lend your aid and do your best.

Gardner offers this hexagon as the answer.



Assuming the lines of the diagram are unbroken by spots or numerals, can you discover the number of triangles in the figure? The answer will be given later.

We are privileged to have editor Sheila Williams comments about Gardner:

Dear Jeremiah,

My January 2011 editorial for Asimov's is called "Martin Gardner." Here's most of it:

There were many reasons to be thrilled when I landed a job at Asimov's *Science Fiction Magazine*. The first and most obvious was the chance to work along side Isaac Asimov—a man I'd admired since my childhood. A second, very important reason that I was doing

my little happy dance, was that I would also get the chance to work with another childhood idol—Martin Gardner.

I'd first fallen down the rabbit hole and into Martin Gardner's wonderful work with *The Annotated Alice*. In middle school and high school, I read and reread his notes about Alice, both in Wonderland and through the looking glass, and I've continued to dip into that book in all its various editions ever since. As a teenager, I avidly turned to Gardner's Mathematical Games column in *Scientific American* as soon as the magazine arrived in our mailbox. I'm sure it was an early exposure to his work in SA that led to my own lifelong love of logic and math games. On some level, these essays may even have contributed to my decision to pursue a graduate degree in philosophy at Washington University in St. Louis. In one of life's circuitous routes, it was a fellow grad student who introduced me to Gardner's famous pseudoscience debunking *Fads and Fallacies in the Name of Science*. Once I got to know Martin, I subscribed to the *Skeptical Enquirer*, both because I found it an intriguing journal and because I wanted to keep up with his *Notes of a Fringe Watcher* column.

"The Doctor's Dilemma" appeared in the inaugural issue of Asimov's. It was introduced briefly as "the first in a series of SF puzzles that Mr. Gardner has promised us." The series of puzzles took the form of short science fiction stories and lasted for more than nine years and one hundred and eleven columns. I was lucky enough to work on nearly half of them and I edited a little sixty-four page booklet of his puzzles that was used as a premium by our circulation department. The columns took us "Around the Solar System," escorted us along "The Road to Mandalay," and introduced us to "The Jinn from Hyperspace." They included correspondence with Paul Dirac and explored errors in William Goldman's *Lord of the Flies*. The columns could be challenging to run because they were often accompanied by complex images and because we had to find space at the bottom of several stories for all the solutions. They were a lot of fun, though, and I enjoyed working closely with Martin and shepherding the puzzles through the production process. I was very disappointed when he called one spring day to let me know that he intended to retire from his duties as our columnist once "Thang the Planet Eater" appeared in our November 1986 issue.

It was a very active retirement that saw the publication of at least thirty-five books. One of the last, *The Jinn from Hyperspace: And Other Scribblings—both Serious and Whimsical* (2007), showed that the little puzzle pieces in Asimov's were not lying fallow.

Martin continued to write essays and books right up until his death last May at the age of ninety-five. His passing occurred just a month after the loss of Asimov's first editor, George H. Scithers. Both men deserve thanks for the magazine's firm foundation.

Best wishes,

Sheila Williams, editor  
Asimov's