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I SEE BY THE PAPERS

by Curtis Fuller



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

As Lewis Wolpert has written, the real objection the members of CSICOP have to psychics and psi is that these offend against the Puritan hard work principle by promising knowledge on the cheap — "I didn't get where I am today without studying theoretical physics for 70 years; now along comes John Pseudoscientist stealing the bread out of my mouth!" This probably explains the bad temper.

—Paraphrased from a review of Kendrick Frazier's *Science Confronts the Paranormal* by Peter Rogerson in June 1987 *Magonia*

DO YOU believe that all scientists delight in revolutionary scientific breakthroughs? Guess again. The recent breakthroughs in high-temperature superconductors show how scientists really feel and react when their tidy little worlds are shattered.

For years we have reported on how the scientific community denigrates unconventional claims, refuses to investigate them, develops

hate campaigns against their proponents and criticizes all such research, however carefully done, in anomalistics. For the most part these criticisms have been limited to more or less isolated cases although it was possible to deduce that such attitudes were reasonably universal.

Now Jon Van, a science writer with the *Chicago Tribune*, has dramatized this sad situation with greater documentation than we have seen before in his report of a meeting hosted by Fermilab and published in the July 5 issue of the *Tribune*. Although one might suppose that scientists who have spent much of their lives working on superconductivity would be tremendously excited by the new findings, the fact is that many express resentment.

IAM NOT altogether persuaded that Lewis Wolpert's analysis of the CSICOP mind is entirely correct when he says Establishment scientists reject the unconventional because they fear the revolutionary approach might produce "knowl-

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Pythagoras, St Francis, Kabir,
& Zarathustra have in common?*

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edge on the cheap." But it is certainly true in this current case.

Up to last December's breakthrough the experts in the field of superconductors believed that certain metals could lose all resistance to conducting electrical current *but only if they were cooled almost to absolute zero*. Their research therefore was mostly confined to improving the refrigeration system, not to experimenting with materials that might improve superconductivity. The former theory that explained superconductivity won a Nobel prize for its authors and indicated strongly, according to Jon Van, that the phenomenon could not occur at warm temperatures. "Yet the new materials defy this contention," Van writes, "and most researchers think the new superconductivity operates outside existing theory."

He says, "Clearly there are bruised egos over a new kid on the block virtually wiping away decades of solid accomplishment, at least in the public perception. . . . 'What we're doing now is more like alchemy than science,' one physicist grouched."

The breakthrough has made obsolete the plodding, orderly work of decades. Scores of scientists and engineers have devoted their professional lives to the field and now they feel bereft. Van reports that M. Brian Maple, a physicist at the University of California, couldn't



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believe that the new materials performed as claimed when he first heard of them. But he had only to perform a simple test to convince himself they were right.

All the complainers have had to shift their emphasis to the new ceramic superconducting materials. But, says Van, "They are bothered by the notion that if somebody comes along in a month or two and announces he or she's found yet another material that superconducts at minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit or plus 50 or whatever, then all the work they are doing now with the minus 285 stuff could become useless." Quite clearly science is no longer standing on solid ground.

WORRY, WORRY

IN AFRICA they worry that the desert locusts will cause starvation and in this country we worry more urgently now about the advance of the African killer bees. Both worries are very real.

First, because they're closer although they do not pose so crucial a threat, let's consider the African killer bees. They are now in Mexico and as they approach the United States the agricultural specialists worry increases. It is not only that the bees are deadly; at least 350 persons in Central and South America have died from their stings, according to Jim Tew of Ohio State University's Agricultural Institute. It is that they are certain to affect

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crops throughout those areas where they are able to survive. One question, of course, is whether they will be able to survive northern winters.

The African bees arrived in Venezuela in 1975 and commercial honey production dropped from 535 metric tons the following year to 78 metric tons in 1981. In the United States bees are far more important economically than the value of the honey they produce. Crops affected by bee pollination are valued at \$20 billion annually. Commercial beekeepers here transport enormous quantities of hives annually, beginning in the south and moving north as the growing season extends. The approach of the killer bees may force the United States to outlaw bee transportation and the keeping of hives.

The bees are so dangerous because they defend an area up to 300 yards around their nests while the Europeanized bees of this country chase intruders only a few yards. In addition, the Africanized bees emit a special substance which causes other bees to swarm a victim. In the summer of 1986 a University of Miami biology student was killed by a swarm of African bees in Costa Rica. Fellow students on the trip reported seeing a thick cloud around their classmate when he was attacked. A coroner in Costa Rica counted an average of 46 bee stings per square inch on the victim's body.



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THE MARTINIST ORDER is an Order of Mystic Chivalry. It was originally organized in France. In 1888 Dr. Gerard Encausse (Papus), Grandmaster, established the French magazine L'INITIATION as the Order's official organ and it continues so to this day.

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by no means perfect but there is a consistency about the measurements from various instruments at different places around the globe and it has many scientists extremely worried. Every trend is heading down.

There are two main reasons for concern. One is that experts are not sure of the cause. Donald Heath of the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., says, "Everything appears as if we're dealing with a photochemical loss process. I'm not saying it's the chlorofluorocarbon chemistry; it could be something else. I think there's a fairly consistent picture emerging. Unfortunately we can't explain it."

The other reason for concern is the extreme danger all this poses for much of life on earth. A continuation of the ozone loss could be deadly for many living things. Wearing a large hat won't protect you against the killing ultraviolet rays, environmental scientists say.



NEW SLANT ON DREAMS
WHAT DO YOU dream about most frequently? Leonard Hollie of the Knight-Ridder newspapers interviewed Andrew Pickens, a Wichita, Kans., psychiatrist, last spring and reported Pickens' conclusions about the meanings of most dreams.

One such dream is of being naked or scantily clad, says Pickens. This may have one of two meanings: One

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is a wish to exhibit one's self and to receive a "positive response from others." The other could be a wish to return to the cradle when you were accepted as a naked infant.

Another common dream is the examination scenario. You are scheduled to take an examination but can't find where it is to be held or haven't studied for it. You become extremely anxious about it. Basically, says Pickens, this is an attempt to deal with anxiety by psychological conflict or stress.

You dream of the death of a loved one, living or dead. If the person is alive, you have mixed feelings about him or her and really wish the person dead but do not admit it to yourself because of guilt feelings. If the person in the dream is already dead, Pickens says it may represent the beginning of the mourning process which is quite a different thing from dreaming of the death of a living person.

When you dream about missing a train, bus, plane or other vehicle, you are really trying to calm your anxiety about death, which is viewed symbolically as a trip. It may also be a way of dealing with the anxiety of going to sleep and the fear of not waking up. Children especially often have such dreams.



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NATHAN STEIN had always wanted to be a medical doctor

and at the time of his death he had transferred his hopes to his grandson Kevin Ladin. Nathan's daughter Sandy and son-in-law Sherman Ladin encouraged Kevin to carry out his grandfather's wishes but they knew it was going to be financially tough sledding.

Both Sherman and Sandy are realtors and one day in 1983 Sherman noticed an ad in the neighborhood newspaper placed by an owner who was trying to sell his own house.

"Normally I don't call people who advertise on their own," Sherman told Lee Linder of the Associated Press, "but in this case I had an uncontrollable urge. However, the people weren't very receptive.

Finally they agreed to talk to me if they failed to make a sale over the weekend."

Ladin made an appointment for a Tuesday but Sandy pointed out they had a conflict and he switched the appointment to 3:00 P.M. Monday. Then the homeowners moved the appointment up to 11 A.M. because the afternoon appointment was "too late."

When Ladin drove up to the house he realized it had been his father-in-law Nathan Stein's home before his death 14 years ago. "It was a strange feeling," Ladin recalled. "Inside I was telling the house owners Sidney and Dina Toporov about the coincidence when the doorbell rang.

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"It was the postman with a certified letter for Nathan Stein and I heard Toporov say nobody by that name lived there. I jumped up from my chair and told him the letter was for my father-in-law who was dead. I signed for the letter which was from a bank. It said that if the account wasn't claimed it would be forfeited to the state."

The account held \$15,000.

Sandy Ladin told Linder that neither she nor her mother had ever known about the bank account. She said, "I am sure my father wanted my husband to be in our old house at that exact time and he made sure the postman would come then bringing the registered letter."

"It had to be that way. Can you think of any other reason for that happening?"



LEGALITY OF HYPNOSIS

ONE OF THE paradoxes of our complex world was dramatized by the recent Supreme Court decision that states may not bar criminal testimony based upon recollections induced by hypnosis. A dozen states have excluded all such testimony on the grounds that it is unreliable. But now the U.S. Supreme Court has made a legal ruling on what is essentially a psychological problem. The court is very tentative about it and recognizes the pitfalls but it is a legal ruling nonetheless.

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New Science of Bioelectronics

The effects of electronic fields on the human mood and energy levels have long been known. Ionized air, lunar cycles and solar flares, and increased electrical activity during and preceding a storm are all known to effect the way we feel and act. But the correct techniques for controlling these forces to improve human health have been very elusive — until a recent breakthrough made by a remarkable Israeli inventor during his extensive research in the field of bioelectronics.

Simple Method Of Energizing the Body Discovered by Inventor

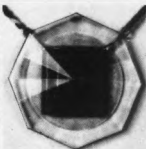
In the early sixties, Leon Halton joined the staff of the famous Dead Sea Hospital. He became part of a team that was developing methods of treating headaches, tension and insomnia with externally applied electrical energy. The dramatic results achieved by the hospital team inspired him to begin research on his own into ways of applying this knowledge to benefit people in all walks of life. His effort led him to the discovery that a continuous flow of low-yield energy into the body would create a POWERFUL ENERGIZING EFFECT on the physical and emotional state of the recipient. And this energy could be easily supplied by the small solar cells used to power spacecraft!

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The "Solar Energizer" is more than just an attractive necklace — it is a functioning space-age power cell that delivers a continuous supply of energy when exposed to light. The positive and negative electrodes are formed by the chain, which delivers a gentle and continuous flow of ENERGIZING POWER THROUGHOUT THE BODY of the person wearing it. The energy produces no tingling sensation on the skin but any simple electronic multi-meter will detect its presence and verify that the energizer is working.

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The Solar Energizer is a patented device that has been subjected to a thorough review by the U.S. Patent Office. Patent Number 4,173,229 was issued on November 6, 1979. The Summary Of The Invention begins with: "It is the object of the present invention to provide an improved and decorative therapeutic adornment or jewelry object operable to generate a beneficial flow of electrical current through the body of a person wearing same".

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The court's decision struck down an Arkansas law that barred all hypnotically-induced testimony. Yet the decision was a close five to four and in his dissent Chief Justice William Rehnquist said there is no consensus on the reliability of such testimony and that it is premature for the court to impose such a rule.

Justice Harry Blackmun who wrote the majority opinion said, "We are not now prepared to endorse without qualifications the use of hypnosis as an investigative tool. Scientific understanding of the phenomenon and of the means to control the effects of hypnosis is still in its infancy."

The court did not, however, open the gates to hypnotic induction completely. Justice Blackmun said the states do have a right to set guidelines for such testimony—such as interrogations by trained persons in a neutral setting with tape or video recordings before, during and after the hypnosis to ascertain whether leading questions were asked.



BATTLE OF THE MAP

IN 1974 AN ancient map of North America, purportedly charted by the Vikings, was branded a fraud. The map was called the Vinland Map and had been presented to Yale University by an anonymous donor. Thomas E. Marston, curator of Medieval and Renaissance Liter-

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ature at Yale, and two colleagues from the British Museum had judged the map to be genuine.

But in 1974 Dr. Walter C. McCrone, a Chicago microscopist and consultant, was retained by the Yale library to examine the Vinland Map. McCrone lifted 29 microscopic particles of velum and ink from the map and analyzed them. He concluded that all of the ink particles consisted mostly of titanium dioxide, a white pigment invented in 1917, and said that the Vinland Map was unquestionably a fake.

But now scientists at the University of California at Davis say the map may be genuine after all. Thomas A. Cahill, director of the Crocker Nuclear Laboratory at Davis, and his colleagues used a cyclotron to fire protons through the map and they conclude that the ink contains only trace amounts of titanium and that these amounts are consistent with genuine medieval documents. They call for a reevaluation of the map.

Their opinion has enraged McCrone who told Malcolm W. Browne of the *New York Times*, "I'm at a loss to explain the thousandfold difference between Cahill's results and ours. I would like to think that the difference results from an honest error on his part."

Cahill is equally certain that McCrone is wrong. "Obviously we don't claim that the Vinland Map is

authentic," he said. "All we can say is that McCrone's challenge to its authenticity, based on the finding of titanium in the ink, is completely mistaken . . . McCrone attempted to extrapolate from too small and too unrepresentative a sample."

At the time Yale was given the map, Italian-American partisans allowed their patriotism to overflow, charging that publication of the Vinland Map by Yale was an attempt to discredit the achievements of Columbus. Malcolm Browne writes, "The Vinland Map is no longer pivotal to the debate over Columbus since archaeological discoveries, mostly in northern Canada, have convinced most scholars that the Vikings arrived in

America hundreds of years earlier than Columbus' flotilla. But reputations and scholarly integrity remain at stake."



SASHA K.

WE NEVER thought reading the Soviet national daily newspaper *Izvestia* would be akin to perusing our own tabloid *Weekly World News* but a recent dispatch from Moscow is written as if the Russians never had heard of a poltergeist before encountering Sasha K.

Sasha K. is the identity given to protect a young boy from Yenakievo in the Ukraine. The poltergeist activity associated with him is

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definitely five-star material. *Izvestia's* comments associated with Sasha's poltergeist activity also demonstrate five-star ignorance.

It all began, says *Izvestia*, when fires broke out in Sasha's presence, objects flitted hither and yon, light bulbs exploded and on one momentous occasion a refrigerator turned upside down. In addition to proving to Americans that the Soviets have refrigerators, the report shows how powerful Sasha's poltergeist is.

William Tuohy, reporting on the events in the *Los Angeles Times*, wrote, "Neighbors panicked. The boy's father had a nervous breakdown and was hospitalized. The police were called." The word "poltergeist" was mentioned and defined as "a ghost that is supposed to be responsible for noisy disturbances."

When the fire broke out in the boy's home he was taken to Moscow. There a complete physical examination revealed nothing, not even a match. A stethoscope which was used to examine the boy did not catch fire although one witness said a shoe flew off his foot and out the window when Sasha walked into the room.

A Dr. Adriankin theorized that Sasha projects some kind of mysterious energy that can hypnotize people so they don't remember exactly what happened in his presence. Adriankin also had another idea. Sasha, he proposed, may be



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able to project a kind of electrical energy that ignites gases in the air, causing fires. He suggested that this might be a result of increasing air pollution and if so, many such cases would come to light. He did not explain why this would cause an observer to lose a shoe.

Finally Dr. Adriankin looked at the evidence cold turkey and concluded, "It is clearly a case of a poltergeist."

He also concluded, "Further investigation is necessary."

From which we conclude, we are back to Square One.



RELIGIOUS APPARITIONS

THERE ARE many explanations for religious apparitions and visitations of the Virgin Mary. One of them is that people create their own reality and the visions are due to their need to experience and believe in them.

Near Wilkes-Barre, Pa., early in June crowds gathered to pray beside an image that looked like an outline of the Virgin on the wall of an empty house. People gathered along Breslau Street in Hanover Township to kneel beside the figure which seemed to skeptics no more than a human shape under an arc light.

Dolores Sincavage said, "I think it's the Mother. I think she wants all the people to see her and pray."

As the crowd grew someone mistook the gathering for a brawl and

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"INCREDIBLE!**" I got out of my depression. My mother is no longer a problem. To celebrate, my husband and I went to Europe for the best second honeymoon ever!**

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called police. One officer tried to
convince the group that the image
was only a reflection and demon-
strated that it was being reflected
off a window by putting his hand in
front of the beam. But many con-
tinued to pray.



IN YUGOSLAVIA

ON A DIFFERENT level, the
Yugoslavian Catholic bishop's
conference has been requested by
the Vatican to study reported
Marian apparitions at Medjugorje,
a village in western Yugoslavia
where apparitions have been re-
ported since 1981. This is the second
commission appointed to study the
events.

The visions appeared to six young
people in a field outside the village
and later moved to a small chapel in
St. James church inside the town.
Supporters say that the young peo-
ple see, hear and touch Mary during
regular visions in the chapel. Some
say that they have been given secret
"messages" foretelling world events.

These claims are extremely con-
troversial among Yugoslav Catho-
lics. Bishop Pavao Zanic, head of
the diocese which includes the vil-
lage, has questioned them publicly.
The first investigatory commission
said it found "disciplinary and theo-
logical difficulties" in the events.
Yet Medjugorje continues to be
popular with pilgrims despite a
statement from Bishop Zanic and

Cardinal Franjo Kuharic that, until the church makes a judgment on the apparitions' authenticity, church organizations should not sponsor official pilgrimages there.

RUBEN G. MENDOZA is exploring the meaning of this kind of event in his thesis for the University of Arizona where he is a candidate for a doctoral degree in anthropology. Mendoza has been studying the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Loma barrio in Bakersfield Calif., which first appeared on Christmas Eve 1984. Mendoza, commenting on the intense beliefs that there is a miracle here, describes the initial negative reaction of police and the ambiv-

alence of the church hierarchy. The same behavioral patterns seem to have occurred at Medjugorje.

The La Loma miracles were described in *FATE* at the time they first took place and Mendoza's thesis points out how the specific apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe, as portrayed in the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City, has become a "cult" among Hispanics. He calls it a "cult" because of the intensity of the Hispanics' reverence for Our Lady of Guadalupe and "the irreverently noncommittal views of the various church leaders in their attempts to downplay the significance attributed to it."

The crowds that gathered to view the figure on the wall outside the

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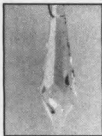
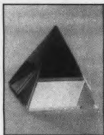
Jefferson Street home of Alvaro and Petra Zamora alarmed Kern County sheriff's deputies who arrived on January 2, 1985, with police dogs and nightsticks to disperse the hushed congregation. The Zamoras were threatened with arrest, reports Mendoza, if they did not turn away the prayerful.

Although the officers later apologized, Mendoza said it was too late. "For barrio residents, the action of the deputies was considered symptomatic of law enforcement's attitudes and approaches to dealing with Chicanos in Kern County."

Jim Mayer, staff writer for the *Bakersfield Californian*, reported

on Mendoza's talk to the Southwest Anthropological Association late in March. He wrote, "What is important is that something happened on Jefferson Street. While as an anthropologist he cannot document the authenticity of the apparition, he can show how the event unified the community and strengthened religious faith."

Mendoza said at the meeting that "despite the passage of over 2½ years since the apparition occurred, the faithful continue to leave offerings, make prayers and celebrate the cult of Guadalupe at the house on Jefferson Street. The impact of the apparition will not likely be forgotten in the very near future."



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The prehistoric *Carcharodon megalodon* was — and may be still — an oversized version of the great white shark. Experts estimate length at about 50 feet.

DO GIANT PREHISTORIC SHARKS SURVIVE?

Scientists study tantalizing clues that suggest
the most dangerous sea creature of them all is still alive. . . .

By Michael Goss

IN 1927 or 1928, off Rangiroa in the South Pacific, Zane Grey, the celebrated author of Western romances, encountered a huge shark "yellow and green in color" with a "square head, immense pectoral fins and a few white spots." It was, he said, "considerably longer than my boat—conservatively between 35 and 40 feet."

Grey, a passionate, world-travel-

ing angler, was accustomed to handling fish of record-breaking sizes. So too were the New Zealand fishermen who were with him at the time and who excitedly confirmed that his 40-foot estimate was about right. But neither Grey nor his companions, for all their experience with the biggest fish the tropical oceans had to offer, could identify the incredible creature they had seen

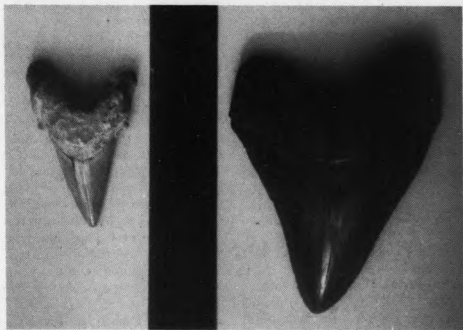
for those few tantalizing seconds.

"The eyes sometimes deceive one," he acknowledged afterwards, "and excitement is no help to accurate observations. But there could be no doubt that we had seen an outstandingly and almost incredibly huge shark."

But of what kind? Initially the sheer bulk of the thing reminded him of the spectacular white shark *Rhincodon typus*, the world's largest fish and object of one of his earlier (and less successful) exploits. But only the size of this new shark was the same; otherwise it was in no way similar. Grey reflected, "I

figured out that the fish . . . was not a harmless whale-shark but one of the the man-eating monsters of the South Pacific. Then I was more frightened than I remember for a long time."

In 1933 Grey and his son Loren were returning from a fishing trip to Tahiti on board the *S.S. Manganui*. When they were about 100 miles northwest of Rangiroa, where the elder Grey had met the huge shark, Loren joined others on deck for a last look at the island as the ship passed between the Tuamotu atolls before settling into the long run for San Francisco. It was about 5:00



Fossil tooth at right is from *Carcharodon megalodon*, the one at left from a prehistoric shark roughly the size of a modern great white shark.

P.M. Loren noticed a small flock of wheeling birds and, close by, a yellow patch of water.

"At first I thought it was a whale," Loren would later remark, "but when the great brown tail rose in the ship's wake as the fish moved ponderously away from the liner, I knew immediately that it was a monstrous shark. The huge round head appeared to be at least 10 to 12 feet across if not more. . . . It was my belief that this huge, yellowish, barnacled creature must have been at least 40 or 50 feet long. He was not a whale shark: the whale shark has a distinctive white purplish green appearance with large brown spots and much narrower head. So what was he—perhaps a true prehistoric monster of the deep?"

"What we had seen was something [that] no ichthyologist had ever dreamed existed. The largest known specimen of this type of shark, generally known as a sand shark or black-tipped shark, had hardly been known to exceed a length of about 15 feet."

In fact, names such as "sand shark" or "black-tipped shark" mean different things in different parts of the world, but nowhere do they apply to species in the 15-foot range; this figure is double what authorities allow for the black-tipped shark *Carcharinus limbatus* and also exceeds the maximum record of 12 feet three inches for the sand shark *C. taurus*. Needless to

say, neither gets anywhere near the dimensions of the Greys' fish.

So what did they see?

SHARKS are often said to be "primitive" fish which have not changed over millions of years. This is only partially true. While they retain what some like to think of as "primitive" characteristics—the cartilaginous skeleton, for example—comparison with the fossil record suggests that most modern sharks have diverged drastically from their archaic ancestors. Still, some do not appear significantly different from prehistoric forms within that fossil record. And several "living fossils" have literally surfaced only in the past 100 years or less.

Toward the end of the last century Japan's Sagami Sea yielded two large and decidedly unusual sharks new to ichthyologists. One was the frilled shark *Chlamydoselache anguineus* whose six-foot-long, eel-like body and reptilian head struck its describer Samuel Garman in 1884 as being "very likely to unsettle disbelief in the sea serpent." (That suggestion has been followed up by cryptozoologist Bernard Heuvelmans and others who conjecture that some though not all reports of the sea serpent may refer to a giant form of *Chlamydoselache*.) The frilled shark is related to a shark known only from a few surviving 350-million-year-old teeth.

Only 14 years afterwards natural-

ists marveled over the still stranger goblin or elfin shark, the bizarre rodlike extension of whose head has been compared with a mason's trowel, a paper knife or an old-fashioned sailing ship's bowsprit. Again the only previous clues to the existence of a shark that can reach lengths of 14 feet were some awl-like fossil teeth, this time found in Lower Cretaceous beds around the world.

In short, two large sharks known only from ambiguous fossils (and presumed extinct for millions of years) had turned up, belatedly and unexpectedly, in the deep ocean: survivals as significant in their own way as the more famous coelacanth, the equally ancient armored fish found alive and well off South Africa in 1938. It did not require an overheated imagination or undue optimism for ichthyologists to expect that other prehistoric sharks—perhaps larger, perhaps even more grotesque—might be loitering in the obscure depths of the sea.

Ichthyologists got a strong reminder of that possibility when, on November 15, 1976, a U.S. Navy research vessel stationed off Kahuku Point, Hawaii, experienced unaccustomed difficulty in raising one of the parachutes that served as its sea anchor. It turned out that the chute had half-disappeared into the enormous jaws of a 14½-foot, 1653-pound and now-deceased shark of unknown species, genus and family.

That was zoology's introduction to *Megachasma pelagios*, the "megamouth" shark. The nickname comes from its scooplike jaws in which it engulfs plankton while cruising through the tropical waters off Hawaii. Even before a second specimen had been taken (again by accident) eight years afterward off Santa Catalina, Calif., Dr. Leighton Taylor of the Waikiki Aquarium had summed up what megamouth's discovery meant: "It reaffirms science's suspicion that there are still all kinds of things—very large things—living in our oceans that we still don't know about. And that's very exciting."

And perhaps a little alarming too. Prehistory boasted a number of sharks so large that the possibility of their survival is hardly a comforting prospect. During its oceanographic expedition of 1873-76 the *Challenger* dredged from the red clay 2385 fathoms beneath the South Pacific a couple of huge teeth belonging to the extinct giant *Carcharodon megalodon*. The thought that this relative of our modern *Carcharodon carcharias*—better known as the great white shark, "white death" or simply "man-eater"—may hang on in some saltwater haven isn't calculated to soothe those of nervous disposition. Yet the possibility has been considered more than once.

Because of the cartilaginous nature of selachians (sharks and rays),

physical evidence of *C. megalodon* is confined to a number of huge teeth in Tertiary deposits from as far afield as the Americas, Britain, Europe, the East and West Indies and New Zealand. This is enough to show that, apart from being one of the largest fish of all time (and maybe even *the* largest), *C. megalodon* was also a widely distributed one.

The sheer size of these relics is unsettling. Even the four-inch-tall specimen with its 4½-inch base recovered by the fishing boat *Explorer* on the Georges Bank, Maine, in September 1964 seems modest beside others from Lake Bonney, South Australia, and Sharktooth Hill near Bakersfield, Calif., measuring five and six inches in height respectively. Except for their larger size, these teeth are similar to the serrated, triangular teeth of our present-day great white shark.

We all know, of course, that the great white is a very big fish which can inflict terrible damage on man, beast and even boat. When one sees how its fearsome dental hardware pales into insignificance beside that of its prehistoric relative, it doesn't take a genius to realize that *C. megalodon* must have been a much, much larger and even more terrifying beast, one to which the great white shark of *Jaws* would have been a stripling and perhaps a between-meals snack.

WE LIKE our monsters vast, menacing and extinct. Yet it is fun to tease ourselves with the notion that perhaps *not all* of them are extinct—and because you cannot prove that something does not exist, the monsters hover at the outer limits of possibility. So *C. megalodon* stands as a sort of marine equivalent of *Tyrannosaurus rex*, chief among prehistoric super-predators and the ultimate shark fantasy. Its bloodcurdling image is part of the spell cast over our minds by those tremendous fossil teeth. And why not? Even the most cautious scientists have not been wholly immune to their ancient magic.

From the moment that paleontologists became aware of the great prehistoric shark last century, the first and foremost question was how big the beast had been. When all other evidence is lacking (as it is here), a shark's size must be gauged from its teeth. It ought to be possible to calculate the unknown length of *C. megalodon* by establishing the ratio between the size of teeth in the modern great white and the *known* measurements of its body length. Theoretically the same ratio ought to apply in the case of its extinct relative. That sounds simple enough. Unfortunately, there are some problems.

The American Museum of Natural History's Frederick A. Lucas spoke of using a "rule of three": if a 30-foot great white shark has 1¼-

inch teeth, the equation shows that *C. megalodon* teeth of three, four or five inches came from fish at least 75 and perhaps as long as 120 feet. In 1931 ichthyologist J. R. Norman postulated that a six-inch tooth meant a shark about 90 feet in length but six years later calculated that a five-inch tooth "must have belonged to a shark nearly 100 feet long."

This blend of statistics, inference and guesswork affected the outcome of the best-known *C. megalodon* reconstruction in the early 1900's. Guided by four-inch teeth and comparative data from modern great white sharks, the American Museum of Natural History prepared a splendid plaster set of the extinct monster's jaws which measured nine feet in width by six in height. Their living owner, the museum's specialists believed, would have been about 80 feet long—a slightly more conservative estimate than some but still enough to clear beaches anywhere in the world.

The influence of this authoritative reconstruction has been immense. It seemed to sanction practically any outlandish statement about *C. megalodon*'s size. If it was 80 feet long, why shouldn't it have been 90, 100, 120, 200? Writers have vied with one another to create the most spectacular portrait of the marine menace, depicting it as being able to swallow a truck and, in a recent novel, a Russian nuclear submarine.

The only sour note is that ichthyologists are no longer content to believe in these 100-foot-plus engines of super-destruction. It turns out that the American Museum experts got their sums wrong and the jaws they reconstructed are at least one-third too big.

One of the factors that have misled people into believing *C. megalodon* was much larger than life is the tendency to see its modern relation, *C. carcharias*, in exactly the same distorted way. The great white shark is undeniably a big fish but not quite so big as we have been led to believe. During the peak of *Jaws*-mania, when newspapers could not get enough of sharky items, the record figure of 36½ feet was cited freely—often with the hint that there might be even bigger great whites which so far have eluded hooks and harpoons. Indeed there may. But so far most experts are skeptical of reports of great white sharks over 21 feet long. Reports of those more than 25 feet long are not even considered.

A review of Gerald Wood's section on great whites in his *Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats* (1982) shows a contrast between properly-taken, verified measurements and the guesstimates arrived at by the eye without benefit of tape measure. Sometimes the observer will deduce the shark's length in the water by visually comparing it with the boat he or she occupies, as was

the case for the supposedly 31-foot shark seen several times by California fishermen in 1977. Then there are the hearsay reports like the one concerning a 43-foot great white allegedly grounded at False Bay, Cape Province, South Africa, sometime before 1958—an account based solely on secondhand testimony—or the 1880 32-foot Santa Monica, Calif., specimen which proved to be a hoaxer's version of the true 14-foot length.

As I have said, it is possible that larger-than-normal great white sharks are out there. But so far we have no firm evidence for that. The sorry fact is that even cases that seem to have been well corroborated frequently fail to withstand critical reassessment. The jaws of the record-holding 36½-foot shark from Port Fairy, Australia, still exist in London's South Kensington Natural History Museum but recent examination makes it seem likely that they came from a fish less than half the reported size. One theory is that the "36½" feet was in reality a printer's error for "16½."

The largest great whites of this century include two from New Brunswick: a 26-foot, seven-inch specimen was said to have been trapped in a herring weir at Harbour de Loutre, Campobello Island, in November 1932 and a second—even bigger at a massive 37 feet—supposedly came to grief the same

way at White Head near Grand Manan in June 1930.

Incredible as it may seem, the latter appears to have some factual basis, even though Dr. Vadim Vldykov accepted purely second-hand information concerning it when he coauthored a paper on "The Marine Fishes of Nova Scotia" in which it is mentioned. In 1980 Dr. W. B. Scott of the Huntsman Marine Laboratory obtained a tooth from this shark courtesy of someone present at the capture. But its companion from Campobello fared less favorably at the hands of Richard Ellis who wrote to the *Newsletter* of the International Society of Cryptozoology to say "it cannot be authenticated (I have tried to track it down) because the only person who is alive to discuss this event has forgotten almost everything about it."

Ellis was just as severe with an alleged 29½-foot great white harpooned in San Miguel harbor in the Azores in May 1978 and photographed (although in a way that gave little idea of its true size) by the big-game fishing-guide and writer Trevor Housby.

Ellis went to the Azores expressly to check on this monster. He found no mention of it in the daily press in the years between 1974 and 1982 and his offers of a reward for a tooth from the fish met no claimants; nor were whalers, fishermen, journalists or other authorities able

to help. Ultimately he concluded that if the shark had existed at all, he was unable to find any evidence of it.

Inaccurate figures based on inflated versions of the great white have inevitably added scores of feet to reconstructions of its prehistoric cousin. Logically, if we need to scale down our *C. carcharias*, we must do the same for estimates that have used it to calculate the size of *C. megalodon*. So far as the American Museum of Natural History's super-jaws is concerned, this has been done already. Research shows that museum personnel mistakenly assumed that the jaws reflected a size commensurate with that of the four-inch teeth they were working from—teeth from the front-center of the jaw. They failed to realize that not *all* the shark's teeth would have measured up to that stupendous size and that (as can be seen in today's great white) they would have decreased in size toward the corners of its mouth.

The result, as Shelton P. Applegate remarked, was similar to what would happen if a paleontologist rebuilt a saber-toothed tiger's skull to accommodate teeth *all* the size of its two mighty canines: a fearsome monster but far huger than the one that existed in real life. Extrapolating from two *C. megalodon* teeth, John E. Randall arrived at a more conservative length of 43 feet for the shark. The American Museum now

estimates its specimen to have been 45 feet long.

* * *

BUT THIS may not be the end of the story. Gerald Wood points out that the Lake Bonney and Bakersfield teeth were larger than those used in Randall's reassessment and must have come from a larger fish. The original possessor of the Bakersfield tooth, he thinks, could have reached something like 55 feet. Even the lower figure makes *C. megalodon* larger than the biggest scientifically-accepted great white and nudges the world's largest fish, the whale shark (41½ feet for the largest measured specimen and 75-plus feet in unconfirmed eyewitness accounts). And if we take the Greys' anecdote at face value, it also comes close to their giant of the South Pacific—which, you may recall, was where the *Challenger* picked up those two *C. megalodon* teeth about half a century before.

Fossil teeth are, however, just that. They aren't necessarily omens of extinction; fossils, as we have seen, occasionally can come to life.

In his *The Unknown Ocean* (1972) Richard Perry rates the likelihood that new large sharks remain to be discovered as very good. And in his opinion there is "no reason" that one of them should not be *C. megalodon*. Michael Tweedle remarks that until 50 years or so ago ichthyologists were more likely to believe this fish survived than that

the coelacanth did. At the same time he poses the ecologically-based argument that *C. megalodon* may exist as the apex predator which contributes to the natural balance by cropping the numbers of the giant squid.

What those numbers might entail can only be guessed at. We do know that these huge cephalopods occur with some regularity as stranded carcasses on our beaches and as dismembered ones inside the bellies of their traditional enemies, sperm whales. Obviously these casualties represent just a small proportion of the total squid population. Perhaps, as Tweedie suggests, they are culled by giant sharks as well.

One way or another, the food factor appears crucial to the debate. The largest known sharks (the whale and basking kinds) are both filter feeders (that is, they filter organic matter from water passing through their systems). From its dentation alone *C. megalodon* would have to be a flesh- and fish-eater and its size indicates it would require a lot of food.

Rodney Steel thinks this alone is reason to doubt its existence. He writes, "Suggestions that the abyssal depths of the Pacific continue to harbor *Carcharodon megalodon* seem too farfetched. A fish of such a size would require a substantial amount of food in the form of prey and the great ocean deeps support only a limited fauna, totally inade-

quate for the nutritional needs of a 15-meter [50-foot] killer shark."

But proponents can argue that perhaps *C. megalodon* is not an inhabitant of the deepest waters but of the mid-to-lower depths. Here it would be in the company of those other shark "primitives" just mentioned and, more to the point, of the giant squid: an item of prey that might meet its vast requirements.

Yet there is still the need for proof, if only of the eyewitness kind. An authenticated sighting of a giant great white would go some way toward providing it, but there is little aside from the Grand Manan monster to suggest that any over 21 feet have been recorded. There is another avenue of evidence that deserves to be considered, however.

Bite marks can also be a clue to a shark's size. Randall, whom we have already seen as a cautious observer, writes of a set inflicted on a whale carcass off southern Australia (May 26, 1972) which implied a 25- to 26-foot *Carcharodon*, while those on the stern of a chartered fishing boat at Long Island, New York, on July 5, 1975, may have been the work of a shark four or five feet longer.

The most incredible eyewitness account is one David G. Stead heard from some Port Stephens, Australia, crayfishermen in 1918. They told him that their 3½-foot, heavily-weighted pots had been borne off by a "shark of almost

unbelievable proportions . . . the like of which they had never dreamed." One witness estimated the creature to be 115 feet long. Another thought it was 300 feet.

Stead felt himself obliged to half-apologize for the story. He conceded that the lengths were "on the whole absurd and I mention them . . . as an indication of the state of mind which this unusual giant had thrown them into." Nonetheless he stuck to his private belief in the witnesses' sincerity. These were, he said, "prosaic and stolid men not given to 'fish stories.'" Stead thought this was "one of those very rare occasions when humans have been vouchsafed a glimpse of one of those enormous sharks of the White Death type which we know to exist or to have existed in the recent past, in the depths of the sea." He had seen five-inch teeth of this or a similar shark dredged up from the

Pacific. They were not fossil teeth. "A shark possessing such teeth would be from 80 to 90 feet long," he declared in his book *Sharks and Rays of Australia Seas*.

Even if we assume that their shock caused them to double the size of the fish they saw, Stead's informants described a monster well outside the accepted or even rumored limits for *C. carcharias*. As far as anyone knows, the prehistoric shark would have looked like a greatly magnified version of a modern white shark—which is in effect what they described to Stead, who believed them. Most ichthyologists didn't and don't.

But the lesson of megamouth does hold out the promise that new, remarkable and large sharks may await scientific recognition. Where *C. megalodon* is concerned, skepticism is permissible but outright rejection unwise.



BIRDS GETTING BOMBED

THE COMMUNITY College of Beaver County, Pennsylvania, has a plum tree with a barroom ambience. College president William Bauer told Associated Press in March 1987 that 20 robins and several gray waxwings feasted on the fruit which apparently had fermented during the winter. Some of the birds seemed to stagger and others missed in their attempts to land on branches.

Last year, Bauer said, finches eating late winter fruit from the same tree got so drunk they were flying into campus buildings.

"They can get good and drunk," said Scott Woods, assistant curator of birds at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh. "The fruit starts to rot and ferment and it makes plum wine. They eat fruit like that and get bombed out of their minds."

Parapsychology Today

HOW COMMON ARE PSYCHIC EXPERIENCES?

By Andrew MacKenzie

UNDER THE TITLE "Mysticism Goes Mainstream" *American Health* magazine of January-February 1987 carried an account of a survey taken of 1473 adults and conducted in 1984. The survey, carried out by the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Council, showed that most Americans (67 percent) have experienced ESP and that nearly half (42 percent) believe they have been in contact with someone who had died, usually a spouse or sibling.

Commenting on these findings, Father Andrew Greeley, Ph.D., a University of Arizona sociologist who conducted the poll with colleagues at the University of Chicago, stated, "Even though I've never had a psychic or mystical experience myself, most Americans have. We saw this in our first study in 1973 and in data from a repeat survey we have just analyzed. . . . More people than ever say they've had such experiences. Other surveys confirm the

trend. And it's true whether you look at the most common forms of psychic and mystical experience, or the rarest." Since this study replicated an earlier poll, let's take a look at that previous study.

The National Opinion Research Council (NORC) showed in 1973 that 35 percent of Americans had experienced the feeling of being, in Greeley's words, "very close to a powerful spiritual force that seemed to lift" them out of themselves. And one-seventh of those who had had such experiences — five percent of the whole population — had literally been "bathed in light" similar to the account the Apostle Paul reports in the New Testament.

Greeley wrote in the earlier report that "these experiences go way beyond intellect, and even beyond emotion. For a fifth of those who have them, they involve 'a sense of tremendous personal expansion, either psychological or physical' — a form of 'body mysticism.'" He added that "such paranormal experiences . . . are generally viewed as

PEOPLE REPORT psychic experiences all the time. Parapsychologists call such reports "spontaneous cases." There are two ways these incidents can be evaluated. The first is the case-study method in which the researcher tracks down promising cases and tries to authenticate them. A second important approach is the case-collection method, where the parapsychologist gathers several cases of a particular type (such as precognitive dreams or apparitions of the dead) and maps out their characteristics.

A more sociological approach to spontaneous case material has recently been incorporated into parapsychology. Some researchers have become interested in such questions as: How common are psychic experiences? Who reports them? What types of experiences are most regularly claimed? The model for this type of study was outlined in the 1970's by Dr. John Palmer who mailed a special questionnaire to a student population and to the general public in Charlottesville, Va. Similar independent studies have surveyed the public's religious experiences and possible contacts with the dead.

Andrew MacKenzie, who serves on the council of the Society for Psychical Research in London, is interested primarily in spontaneous-case studies. After a recent survey of these studies he concludes they make an important contribution to the growing evidence that psychic experiences are natural to mankind.

hallucinations or symptoms of mental disorder. But if these experiences were signs of mental illness, our numbers would show the country going nuts. What was paranormal is now normal. It's even happening to elite scientists and physicians who insist that such things cannot possibly happen."

Greeley suggested, on the basis of that study, that the nation is living with a split between scientific belief and personal reality. For example, 30 percent of the Americans who did not believe in life after death still said that they had been in personal contact with the dead.

Studies by NORC have shown that persons who have had experiences of the paranormal, whether

they have accepted them intellectually or not, are anything but religious nuts or psychiatric cases. They are ordinary Americans, somewhat above average in education and intelligence and somewhat less than average when it comes to formal religious involvement. This finding is not based solely on personal opinion. The research unit has tested persons who had had some of the deeper mystical experiences, such as being bathed in light, with standard psychological tests.

"We began with the Affect Balance Scale of psychological well-being, a standard measure of the healthy personality," Greeley says, "and the mystics scored at the top. Norman Bradburn, the University

of Chicago psychologist who developed the scale, said no other factor had ever correlated so highly."

The results of the 1984 NORC poll follow, with those of the 1973 poll in parentheses:

Had contact with the dead (adult population): (27 percent) 42 percent.

Had contact with the dead (widows): (51 percent) 67 percent.

Had visions: (eight percent) 29 percent.

Experienced ESP: (58 percent) 67 percent.

Experienced deja vu: (59 percent) 67 percent.

Experienced clairvoyance: (24 percent) 31 percent.

Believe in life after death: ()* 73 percent.

Believe the afterlife is Paradise: ()* 68 percent.

Believe that after death they'll be reunited with loved ones: ()* 74 percent.

(*) *No figures available.*

It is interesting that various national surveys conducted by the Gallup organization bolster Greeley's polls, demonstrating that paranormal experiences in the United States are on the rise. On the following chart the year of the specific poll is printed in parentheses:

Had an unusual spiritual experience: 43 percent (1985).

Had a near-death experience: 15 percent (1981).

Believe in life after death: 71 percent (1981).

Believe in reincarnation: 23 percent (1981).

Believe in God or a Universal Spirit: 95 percent (1981).

Believe Jesus is God: 70 percent (1983).

Believe in angels: 67 percent of teenagers (1986).

Believe in heaven: 71 percent (1980).

Believe in hell: 53 percent (1980).

Expect the afterlife to be boring: five percent (1981).

As Greeley observed in his *American Health* article, there has been a scientific iron curtain raised against serious research into these experiences. But a crack in it opened a few years ago when researchers in Japan and Wales found that spontaneous contact with the dead, especially among widowed persons in nursing homes, is reported fairly often. Likewise a University of North Carolina team led by P. Richard Olsen, an associate professor of family medicine, found that nearly two-thirds of widows at two Asheville, N.C., nursing homes had sensed at least once or twice that they were in touch with someone who had died. "It's not well known that such experiences are common," Dr. Olsen said, "but they are." In *Geriatrics Today* he wrote that even psychoactive drugs do not end the "visits."

Greeley remarks that none of this is "surprising by itself. What is surprising is the vividness of the

experiences. Of those who reported such contact, 78 percent said they saw the dead one, 50 percent heard, 21 percent touched, 32 percent felt the presence, 18 percent talked with the departed and 46 percent had some combination of the above. Most found the encounter helpful, not scary, but none had ever mentioned the incident to their doctors."

But even these findings only replicate a celebrated Welsh study conducted by Dr. W. Dewi Rees. In the *British Medical Journal* for October 2, 1971, Rees wrote that he interviewed 227 widows and 66 widowers to determine the extent to which they had had hallucinatory experiences of their dead spouses. The individuals interviewed comprised 80.7 percent of all widowed persons resident within a defined area, in mid-Wales, and 94.2 percent of those were suitable (because they had no serious illness) for interview. Almost half of them, men and women alike, reported hallucinations of their dead spouses. The hallucinations sometimes lasted many years but were most common during the first 10 years of widowhood. Social isolation did not affect the incidence of hallucination, nor was it related to the incidence of known repressive illness.

Rees said that young people were less likely to experience these contacts than those widowed after the age of 40. These ostensible post-mortem experiences increased with

the length of marriage and were particularly associated with a happy marriage and parenthood. Members of the "professional and managerial" group were particularly likely to report such hallucinations.

The most common type of hallucination was that of feeling the presence of the dead spouse (39.2 percent). Those who saw the deceased amounted to 14 percent, heard the deceased 13.3 percent and spoke with the deceased 11.6 percent. Nearly three percent were touched by the deceased.

The survey also showed that the percipients were more likely to decline an opportunity to remarry than those not reporting such experiences. Some gave as their reason the feeling that their dead spouse opposed it.

These types of studies have been replicated several times. In Japan researchers examined the process of mourning in a culture where the actual presence of the deceased is implied through ancestor worship. They interviewed 20 widows living in Tokyo and 18 (90 percent) reported feeling the presence of the dead spouse.

In a related study published in the *Journal of Psychiatry* in 1970, Dr. Colin Murray Parkes, a social psychiatrist at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London, surveyed the reactions of 22 London widows to their husbands' deaths. He found that 10 of them thought

they heard or saw their husbands at some point during the first month after their deaths. In several cases these experiences consisted of temporary visual hallucinations. One widow repeatedly "saw" her husband coming home through the door in their yard's fence, while another was upset by the appearance of her husband sitting in a chair on Christmas Day. Sixteen widows sensed the presence of their husbands during the first month.

BUT ARE these experiences paranormal or are they psychological in nature? Discussing such experiences, Dr. John Hinton, a professor of psychiatry at the Middlesex Central Medical School in London, states in his classic book *Dying*:

"The unconscious hope or the extreme desire for the loved person still to be alive may be conducive to hallucinations of his presence. It is a dramatic but quite common event for the bereaved to have the experience of apparently seeing or hearing the dead person. Quite normal people, grieving over their loss, have glimpses of the person who has died. They may hear the familiar voice, perhaps saying their name, or recognize the footsteps or customary noises about the house. Usually it is soon realized that this is a trick of the senses, but the experience is often extraordinarily vivid and apparently real."

Hinton notes that persons undergoing such hallucinations may wonder if they are going mad, "but it usually comforts them to know that many other sane people have similar experiences following bereavement."

There is reason to question Hinton's assertion that such experiences may be caused by the "unconscious hope or the extreme desire for the loved person still to be alive." Although these experiences tend to become less frequent with time, as Rees discovered, some do last a remarkably long time. Rees found that three persons who had been widowed for over 20 years were still "seeing" their deceased spouses and two conversed with the figures. Tricks of the senses do not usually last so long and it could be argued that these experiences point to our continued survival after death. But let us return to the other more wide-ranging studies of spontaneous psychic experiences.

Other surveys taken in recent years support Greeley's belief, based on his own survey, that experiences of the paranormal happen to a great number of people and that acceptance of them could even change the nature of our society.

Research in Italy, 1978-1981.

A survey of spontaneous cases taken in South Tyrol, Italy, by G. M. Rinaldi (a teacher) and his wife Graziella Piccinini produced 961

accounts of psychic experiences. The researchers spoke with over 1000 persons. Their main interest lay in what parapsychologists call "death coincidences" so the first question Piccinini asked was whether the person interviewed could report any strange experience when a family member, relative or friend died. The bulk of the collection was made up of 500 death-coincidence cases — an extraordinarily high proportion of the total survey.

Besides death-coincidence cases Mr. and Mrs. Rinaldi collected about 100 instances of crisis coincidences, for which the event prompting the experience was a physical injury or accident involving someone known to the percipients. Among the 961 cases were 43 reports of apparitions, not a high proportion. The visual apparitions were almost always of a human figure. Sometimes the figure was reported as "so real, as if it were alive." Other individuals reported telepathic experiences corresponding to the crisis; seven percent experienced intuitions and 18 percent felt strong and otherwise inexplicable emotions at the time.

Research in Hong Kong, 1980-81.

A survey of the beliefs of the Chinese was carried out by American sociologist Charles F. Emmons and his wife who conducted 3600 interviews and reported the results in Emmons' *Chinese Ghosts and*

ESP (1982). Fifty percent of the Hong Kong Chinese believed in ghosts compared with 12 percent in the United States (the latter figure being based on a 1978 national-sample Gallup Poll). Although half of those interviewed in the random telephone survey said they believed in ghosts, only 4.1 percent had experienced any.

When he began his inquiries into Chinese paranormal beliefs, Dr. Emmons did not know what to expect, "Perhaps the most significant surprises along the way turned out to be certain stunning similarities to the West," he wrote. He found that the same social-cultural factors help predict belief in paranormal phenomena both in Hong Kong and in the United States. Most believers in paranormal phenomena are young and highly educated. This finding contradicts the stereotype in both cultures that the old and the uneducated are more "superstitious."

Research in the United States, 1974.

The July 1979 issue of the *Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research* contains the results of a community mail survey of paranormal beliefs conducted by Dr. John Palmer, then a research associate at the University of Virginia's Division of Parapsychology. In March 1974 a 46-item questionnaire was mailed to a randomly-selected sample of 300 students from

the university and 700 adult residents of Charlottesville, Va. Usable questionnaires were obtained from 89 percent of the student sample and 51 percent of the town sample.

The form's specific question about apparitions was adopted essentially verbatim from the famous "Census of Hallucinations" conducted by the Society for Psychical Research between 1889 and 1892. This old survey was carried out throughout Britain where people were asked, "Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice, which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any physical cause?"

Affirmative answers were given by 17 percent of the respondents in each sample. But while the majority of the "hallucinatory" experiences reported in the "Census" were visual, the Charlottesville sample predominantly reported auditory or tactile incidents. Despite this disparity the apparitions reported in the Charlottesville study were fairly typical.

Forty-two percent of the apparitions reported by the townspeople represented family members, while only 17 percent of the students' apparitions fell into this category. Collective experiences — i.e., apparitions or related experiences simultaneously seen or witnessed by more

than one person — comprised 22 percent of the townspeople's cases and 29 percent of the students'. Only about one in five cases concerned a tragic event such as an accident or death, although about 40 percent of those reporting waking ESP experiences said they had had at least one experience of this type. Seven percent of the townspeople and eight percent of the students said they had lived in a haunted house.

Palmer and his colleagues were impressed by the large number of respondents who claimed multiple psi or psi-related experiences. "It does not appear from our data that such experiences are normally distributed in the population," they report. "On the contrary, it seems that our population consisted of two rather distinct subgroups: those who claimed no or very few psychic experiences, and those who claimed a large number."

Research in England, 1968 and 1974.

In 1968 and 1974 the Institute of Psychophysical Research in Oxford appealed in the news media for firsthand accounts of "perceiving apparitions." The term was intended to cover paranormal experiences involving any of the senses and not just visual ones. Approximately 300 persons responded to the first appeal and 1500 to the second. In each case more than half of those who

replied claimed to have had more than one experience with the uncanny. About a third of the respondents to the second appeal were from overseas countries, English-speaking or otherwise.

Questionnaires were sent to all those who responded to these two appeals (except for those who wrote in any language other than English) and a total of 850 completed questionnaires were received. According to the institute's collection, only 14 percent of the visual apparitions spoke but in a few cases the subjects reported communicating with the apparitions as if by telepathy.

Research in Iceland, 1976.

Dr. Erlundur Haraldsson of the University of Iceland conducted a representative survey of persons who had experienced apparitions of the dead. A mail survey was conducted of a random national sample consisting of 1132 persons between 30 and 70 years in age. Each questionnaire contained some 50 items. In due course Haraldsson obtained 902 usable questionnaires.

Thirty-one percent responded affirmatively to the question: "Have you ever experienced the presence of a deceased person?" From this data base Haraldsson drew 100 cases for analysis, finding that 84 of these consisted of visual apparitions; 16 respondents reported only a vivid feeling of a discarnate presence.

In half the cases the respondents

could discern no specific purpose for the apparitional appearances. "In 20 cases, however, our respondents did discern a definite purpose in the appearance of the dead," Haraldsson told a 1980 gathering of the Parapsychological Association. "Usually it was that of consolation, of support, or even a direct and very earthly help and advice. The purpose had been experienced in various ways; only in three cases was it clearly said. . . . In 31 cases respondents were not sure if the apparition had been trying to bring a certain message or show any purpose or not."

The investigators also collected five cases in which the respondent did not know about the death of the person at the time he experienced the apparition.

In over 50 percent of the cases the respondents were alone when the incident occurred. But in 43 instances someone else was present and in those cases nearly one third (13) saw what the respondent saw. "This high percentage of collective apparitions is difficult to explain if the cases are regarded as purely subjective experiences," Haraldsson remarked.

Research on spiritual or mystical experiences.

Several related surveys have been carried out by the Alister Hardy Research Center of Oxford University. The unit was founded by the

late Sir Alister Hardy, a celebrated zoologist and a former president of the Society for Psychical Research. His studies offer further confirmation of the role mystical and spiritual experiences play in our lives.

Since its foundation the center has built up a unique body of research data consisting of more than 5000 case histories of individuals who have had some form of deep religious experience. While these cases have come mainly from Great Britain and (to a lesser degree) from other English-speaking countries, many other cultural and religious traditions are represented in the foundation's files.

Through repeated national polls the center has shown that between a third and half of the adult populations of Britain and the United States claim the experience of being "aware of or influenced by a presence or power . . . which is different from their everyday selves." Parallel studies in the United States and Australia have produced similarly high figures.

Sir Alister founded the center because he had doubts about the way in which such religious experiences are dismissed in our culture. I once asked him if a collection of such accounts could be considered a field study. "Yes, one can certainly call this a field study," he said. "I like to regard our [the Religious Experience Unit] work as similar to that of the great observing naturalists in the last century: Darwin, Wallace, Bates and many more. The doctrine of evolution was built up by their field observations brought together to culmination by Darwin in his *Origin of Species* — it came *not* from the biological laboratories."

For far too long experiences of a psychical, religious or mystical nature have been rejected as "anecdotal" reports not based on "scientific" evidence. But when we look at these surveys as *field studies*, these numerous polls indicate that people do have such experiences and the combined evidence is overwhelming.



AN AVALANCHE OF INK

WHEN AN EARTHQUAKE struck San Diego on July 15, 1986, one of its victims, 86-year-old Anthony Cima, was nearly crushed to death — by 10,000 books.

The volumes came raining down on Cima when the earthquake

shook the walls of his hotel room. He was pinned under books, barely able to breathe, for 12 hours before neighbors noticed he was missing.

When he regained consciousness at University of California-San Diego Medical Center, Cima asked for orange juice — and a book.

TRUE

MYSTIC EXPERIENCES

FATE will pay \$10.00 for each true experience published. Stories should be less than 300 words and typed double-spaced on one side of the paper. They may be sent to the TME Editor, FATE Magazine, 500 Hyacinth Pl., Highland Park, Ill. 60035. They must be signed by the author and address must be shown. Manuscripts will not be returned unless accompanied by stamped self-addressed envelope.

LIFESAVING DREAM

By William H. Langston III

INOW believe in prophetic dreams. The fact that I can write this story is due, I feel, to a prophetic dream that saved my life.

In 1968 I worked in Garden Grove, Calif., for the Swedlow Plastics Company about 10 miles from my home in Long Beach. Each day I drove the freeway to work in the morning and home again in the evening. I always chose a lane in the center of the road in order to avoid hitting cars entering and leaving the freeway.

One night I dreamed that I was on my way to work when an old beat-up red Buick entered the freeway, cut across three lanes of traffic and whipped in front of me clipping my right front fender. This caused me to lose control of my car which went into a skid, then started to roll

and finally came to rest against a concrete embankment. I was thrown from the car and ended up lying in a heap in the roadway.

It was all so real that I woke in pain, unable to move for a minute or two.

The next morning I tried to push the dream from my mind. And I didn't think of it again until I was on



William Langston III

my way to work and saw an old beat-up red Buick enter the freeway. Realizing that this was the car I had dreamed of, I slammed on my brakes as the Buick cut across three lanes of traffic and pulled in front of me. It just missed my right front fender.

If I had not had that dream the night before, I believe I would have died that morning on the southern California freeway. — *Big Indian, N. Y.*

SEEING FIRE

By Monica Moore

ON DECEMBER 24, 1985, a month after my third child was born, I was visiting my friend Lois in her trailer in Rhodelia, Ky. We had been exchanging news of our families and among others had mentioned her son Jon and grandson Jamie.

After a while Lois excused herself and left the room. While I sat in the room alone, I suddenly saw her son's house catch fire and burn to the ground. It was just like watching it on television.

When Lois returned, I told her about what I had just seen. She looked at me strangely and then laughed. I could imagine what she was thinking.

But a couple of hours later her son telephoned and told her his wife had almost burned up their trailer where it stood in Brandenburg, Ky. Jon and his wife had just gotten a

wood-burning stove and his wife had stuck rags into a hole in the trailer's wall. These rags had caught fire because the hot stovepipe ran too close to them and from the rags the fire had jumped to the nearby curtains.

If Jon had not been home at the time the trailer would have burned to the ground and both his wife and infant son might have been seriously hurt — or worse. — *Owensboro, Ky.*

PIANO IN THE WOODS

By Janice Jakeman

I HAD grown up with a piano in our home and after I was married I missed having one very much. Several years went by but we never seemed to have enough money to buy the piano I wanted so desperately.

The summer of 1969, when my nephew Larry Mart was 19, he came to spend several weeks with us on our small farm in Breathitt County in eastern Kentucky. One evening while Larry was with us we decided to visit my parents Russell and Florence Mart in the neighboring county of Wolfe the next day.

That night I had a strange dream. We were driving over a mountain road which was an alternate route from our house to theirs. We didn't often use it because it was steep, winding and unpaved. I was relaxing in the passenger seat of Larry's pickup and enjoying the scenery

when suddenly I saw an old upright piano in the woods. It was just standing there, waiting for me to find it.

Over breakfast the next morning I told Larry about my dream and we had a good laugh.

In the afternoon, after a nice visit with my parents (Larry's grandparents), we started home. I suggested we take the mountain road. Perhaps in the back of my mind I remembered my dream and the piano.

As we neared the top of the mountain, I screamed and my heart nearly stood still. There was the piano in the woods just as I had dreamed it!

Larry stopped the truck and I got out, running over to the piano. As I gazed at it in disbelief, I saw that it was a beautiful old upright but painted a hideous green. That didn't bother me. I ran my fingers over the keys. It was horribly out of tune but pianos can always be tuned. Miraculously every note worked — there were no broken strings.

We hurried home to get my husband to help us load my treasure on Larry's truck.

The piano tuner had to come to our house twice before the instrument was fully in tune because of the dampness it had picked up sitting there in the woods.

Over the years I've wondered about that piano. Who put it there, miles from the nearest house? Why?

If someone had meant to dump an old piano, why was it standing only a short distance from the road? Uprights weigh hundreds of pounds. If someone were throwing it away, wouldn't it have been easier to simply push it off the bed of a truck and let it fall? Granted, it would have been smashed, but if it were being dumped, who would care?

I'll never know the answers but I do know it appeared to have been lovingly placed there just for me to find. — *Sandy, Utah.*

"SCENTSORY" PERCEPTION

By Laura Tracy

A FEW years back, in 1976, while we were living in the mountains, I was quite concerned because my husband Jim hadn't come home from work. In fact, he was several hours late. Since we didn't have a telephone, he couldn't call me.

My little girl Krista and I were restless so we took a walk outside.



Laura Tracy

We were totally alone and the air was pure and clear. Suddenly I smelled the strong, overpowering odor of whiskey. There didn't seem to be a logical explanation for this until my husband finally got home. Then I smelled his breath and knew what the odor had meant.

The next afternoon shortly before Jim was due home, the scent of roses filled the house. Again, there was no logical explanation for this because I didn't have any fresh flowers in the house and snow covered the ground. Anyway, our altitude at Westcliffe, Colo., didn't permit the growth of roses in the area.

When Jim walked through the door carrying a dozen roses as an apology gift, I understood my "scentsory" perception.

Now whenever I smell unexplainable odors, I know something is about to happen. I just hope I never smell smoke!—*Philomath, Oreg.*

CALL FOR HELP

By Christina Wightman

SANDY and I had been close friends for many years. We grew up together in Wellsville, N.Y.

After graduating from college I married and settled in our hometown. Shortly thereafter Sandy married and moved to the Miami area. My husband and I participated in Sandy's wedding and felt good about her future.

Although we were separated by

hundreds of miles, my dear friend and I maintained close contact by telephone and letter. In 1975, however, I didn't hear from Sandy for at least six months. I knew she was busy with infant twins, so I wasn't worried.

Then one night I woke up from a disturbing dream in which Sandy had called me and pleaded with me to fly to Miami and take her home with me. "They've put me in the hospital," she sobbed, "and they won't let me out!"

The dream was so vivid and upsetting that I told my husband about it.

The very next evening Sandy called while I was out. She left a number for me to call and emphasized it was extremely important that I return her call. I called the unfamiliar number and it connected me to a candy store.

"That's odd," I thought and dialed Sandy's home phone. There was no answer.

Thinking of my dream, I grew alarmed and called Sandy's mother.

"You won't believe what's happened," she said sadly. "Sandy has had a complete emotional breakdown. We had to commit her to the state hospital. Last night she somehow left the premises and called you to see if you would come and get her out."

Since then, I'm happy to say, Sandy's life has straightened out. She got divorced and has remarried. But she still lives in Florida. —*Wellsville, N.Y.*

MY PROOF OF SURVIVAL

FATE will pay \$10.00 for each story published in this department. Stories must deal with an actual experience proving spirit survival. They should be less than 300 words and typed double-spaced on one side of the paper. They may be mailed to FATE Survival Editor, 500 Hyacinth Pl., Highland Park, Ill. 60035. Manuscripts must show author's name and address and include a stamped self-addressed return envelope.

LIGHTNING STRIKES

By William R. D'Andrea

IN THE SPRING of 1977 I had a dream that had a peculiarly stirring effect on me. I heard the dream voice of my girl friend's mother say, "Don't you know? Lightning strikes!" In the misty dream I looked up and saw the charred roof of the house.

When I awoke I found that the house had not been struck. The dream had been so vivid that I was actually relieved. Then, turning my attention to the morning paper, I learned that a horse named Lightning Strikes was racing that evening at The Meadowlands.

That night at the races I put \$2.00 on Lightning Strikes. He won and I made \$7.00.

Why had I received this tip in my dream? It certainly wasn't for the seven dollars my two-dollar bet re-

turned. Ten years later I think I found the answer.

It was the day that Halley's comet reached perihelion, February 9, 1986, that I received a call informing me that my uncle Mike DeMaro, Sr., had died while vacationing in Puerto Rico. My uncle and I had drifted apart over the years and I was saddened because now we never



William D'Andrea

would be able to bridge that emotional gap. I was wrong.

A month later I had a vivid dream of being with Uncle Mike in a strange environment. He was amiable, totally unlike his demeanor when he was alive. As we gazed on an ocean scene, a wave of tidal proportions took my breath away as it crashed over a structure. My uncle's voice sounded gleefully from behind me, "That's a real storm wave!"

The next morning I nearly dropped the paper when I read that a horse named Storm Wave was racing. That night at the track the shock was compounded when, looking at the racing program, I discovered that Storm Wave's sire was none other than Lightning Strikes!

Storm Wave ended up losing by a nose but still returned a hefty \$70.00 for the place-and-show bets I put on him. It wasn't that I didn't trust Uncle Mike, but as I said, we weren't on the best of terms at the time of his death. But I admit I was a bit disappointed. Why would my uncle go to all this trouble to give me a second-place horse?

About a week later I saw my uncle again in a dream. He was wearing a dark pin-striped suit and his expression was solemn. No words were spoken. The dream seemed meaningless and I gave it no further thought.

The following spring I was in

need of a suit and purchased a dark pin-strip. As I prepared for my dinner date, I looked in the mirror and the memory of that dream came crashing through to me. This was the suit my uncle had worn in the dream!

Without hesitating I opened the paper and found that Storm Wave was racing at extremely long odds. I found out the next day that it had been a remarkable race and old Storm Wave won by 5½ lengths and returned \$27.00.

Unfortunately, because of my dinner date I didn't go to the track in time for the race. But more important than the money was the knowledge that after a span of 10 years my uncle was getting through to me from the other side of life. He opened up a flood of thoughts about time, space and the hereafter.

I am grateful to Uncle Mike and to my two racing friends, Storm Wave and his sire Lightning Strikes.—*Bloomfield, N. J.*

DR. MCCALL ON CALL

By Bernice Bishop

IN THE LATE 1960's I was working in the accounting department of the McCall Hospital here in Rome, Ga. One day I became quite ill and had to be put to bed in the hospital.

That night, after my husband Furman had left, I began to hemorrhage from my stomach. The nurses called my doctor and he told them

what to do. After they cleaned up me and my bed, I was knocked out by medication my doctor had prescribed for me. I had two IV's in my arms.

During the night I awakened to see my husband's mother, father and sister standing beside my bed. I was not afraid, only comforted by their still looking after me although they had been dead for some time.

The next morning I was moved upstairs into what we in the hospital referred to as the "dying room." Most terminal patients were put in that room because it was the quietest in the hospital.

For two weeks I lay semiconscious but I kept asking my husband, "Who is that doctor, sitting at the front of my bed?" None of the other people around me saw that doctor and they assumed I was out of my head and paid no attention to me. But he was there. Night and day he just sat there. I could not see his face but I could see the old-fashioned double-breasted doctor's coat he was wearing.

Later, after I had recovered and gone back to work, I came out of the accounting offices into the lobby. On my way to my car in the parking lot I looked up and froze in my tracks. Behind the receptionist's desk, on the wall, hung a large picture of the founder of McCall Hospital. He was wearing a double-breasted doctor's coat, just like the one I had seen sitting at the foot of my bed when I



Bernice Bishop

was lying sick in the dying room.

When I got home, I told my husband that although Dr. John McCall was dead he was still looking after the patients in his hospital—*Rome, Ga.*

FAMILY CONNECTIONS

By Marilyn Allen

I GREW UP enjoying an especially close and loving relationship with my maternal grandparents Alpha and Chester Napier. They spoiled me outrageously and since my dad's family were more restrained and formal, it was only natural that I felt much closer to Mom's parents.

As time passed both of them died. We moved from Little York, Ind., to another state and eventually I married and had children. In the summer of 1974 my husband had just gotten a new job and we had to move about 60 miles away from my parents Arnold and Omega Cra-

vens. Our phone was not connected and I missed not being able to talk with Mom, even for a few days.

One night I fell into bed exhausted from all the cleaning and unpacking and dreamed I was standing between my two deceased grandparents. They were staring at a casket across the room. I couldn't see who lay inside, nor could I see the faces of the people who moved slowly by as they paid their last respects. Actually, I was more interested in my grandparents and beginning to feel hurt that they did not seem to notice me at all.

"Who is that?" I asked with a nod toward the casket.

"It's your grandfather," replied Grandpa who was standing on my right.

"But if you're here, you can't be there," I protested, pointing toward the casket. Grandpa turned his head

toward me and smiled warmly. I woke up feeling depressed and sad. The dream haunted me for days.

As soon as our phone was installed, I called Mom and described my dream to her. She was silent for a few seconds and then told me that while we were out of touch, my paternal grandfather Leslie Cravens had died suddenly and my parents had rushed to be with my grandmother. Mom felt terrible that they had not been able to let me know but they realized I had not been that close to him anyway.

I assured her that I understood. And I reminded her that I had been notified after all. I had simply been too dense to listen to what I had been plainly told by two persons who love me very much. They had bridged a gulf called death to tell me and to remind me of their love.—*Tallahassee, Fla.*



THE RIGHT RITE

ASSOCIATED Press reports from Brisbane, Australia, that Anglican priest Michael Connolly performed an exorcism ceremony in a small tropical town on March 1, 1987, after people complained that evil spirits had caused suicides in the local jail.

"I have no doubt the demons have been driven out of the lockup because it is all in the Bible," Connolly said after the ceremony in Yarrabah in Queensland.

He was called after many of the town's 2000 aborigines said evil spirits had caused two suicides and one attempted suicide among inmates in the preceding three months.

With police approval, Connolly and Australia's only Anglican bishop, Arthur Malcolm, called on demons to leave each of the jail's four cells, a police van and a nearby police station which had been the target of a firebombing.

MARK OF THE BEAST



The image on the wall was a picture of perfect evil, an omen of strange things to come.

By Richard D. Seifried

IN THE SPRING of 1984 I was teaching in a suburban high school in the Dayton, Ohio, metropolitan area. I taught American history, anthropology and philosophy.

One day in April I looked up from my papers to see Dwayne Gimble,* one of the night custodians, standing there. He was looking at me in a hesitant manner.

Dwayne didn't fit the stereotype of a janitor. He was well-educated, intelligent and articulate. The teaching staff respected him not only because he did a good job but because he was too smart to let the students play tricks on him. He always got the better of them.

He shuffled his feet, cleared his throat and asked, "Mr. Seifried, can I talk to you about something?"

"Sure," I said.

"Well, I don't know how to tell you this but I think we have a ghost." And he told me this story:

Each night at 9:30 the custodians would lock all of the school doors and turn out most of the hall lights. By 10:30 all student activities were concluded and the buildings vacated. Then a custodian, usually Dwayne, would walk the halls to make sure that all of the doors were closed and locked. He would check all of the restrooms to be certain that no student was hiding inside. Sometimes he found a boy or two.

Around 10:30 one night Dwayne reached the top hallway (there were three floors: a basement and two levels above it). The switchbox was a short distance down the hall on the west wall, just beyond a door that opened to a platform above the backstage of the school auditorium.

He checked the lock on the box and as he proceeded along the hallway he saw a dark figure standing by the second set of windows. Calmly Dwayne secured the first group of windows and moved toward the silhouette.

"Don't you think you'd better go home?" he said.

The figure didn't move.

*All names are pseudonyms. The real names are on file at FATE's editorial office.

Dwayne moved closer and realized that the figure had the shape of a grown man. "What are you doing here?" Dwayne asked. "I think you'd better leave."

He took several steps forward. By then he was about 15 feet from the figure — which suddenly vanished.

You have to know Dwayne, who is unflappable under any circumstances, to appreciate how matter-of-factly he took this strange development. He completed his rounds and reported what he had seen to his fellow workers. They weren't hard to convince. The old school was of Tudor architecture and if there were such things as ghosts, that school would have been the perfect place for them.

I suspected, however, that an overactive imagination had caused the experience. The building was spooky and I, not so brave as Dwayne, sometimes found myself hurrying down darkened halls early in the morning or late in the evening. The place just didn't feel right.

Dwayne told me he had seen the figure several times since then. The shape would materialize just a short distance from the old stage door. At first it would be vaporous but within a short time the "man" — if that's what he was — would appear to be solid.

The other night custodians had seen him too. They had also heard sounds of sweeping brooms and other noises when no one else was

there. When they called out, the ominous shape would hesitate, turn toward the challenger and simply disappear.

ONE NIGHT several weeks after Dwayne told me his strange story, a volunteer coach ran up to the custodians and said, "You have a ghost, don't you?"

"Did you see it?" they asked.

"No," the young man gasped. "I had just walked out of the boys' locker room when a cold wind swept past me and slammed the doors shut. I hurriedly checked the outside doors and windows and nothing's open! I'm not going to stay down there alone again!"

Everyone, including the coach, laughed nervously.

After a few weeks of ghostly activity several of the teachers knew about it. My primary concern was that the students would find out and start sneaking in at night causing problems.

But inevitably, of course, the news got out. By the end of the third week rumor had it that the ghost was the spirit of a former student. The few teachers who believed, some of the students and all of the night custodians decided that the ghost was the disembodied spirit of Brian Morris.

Brian had been a student at the high school several years before the ghost appeared. He loved working the lighting and sound equipment

for the plays and musicals. He became the best technician in the school and was in charge of effects for two years.

Unfortunately Brian was not entirely reliable. His ambition in life was to become a policeman. When he heard sirens wailing, he would abandon his duties to seek the action outside, even if a performance was in progress.

This was an indication of serious instability. When he reached the age of 21, Brian applied for positions in police departments throughout the area. All of them rejected his applications. Finally, feeling that he was a failure, Brian killed himself.

Now people were saying he had returned to the place where he had been most successful in life. Brian had come back to his beloved auditorium.

That struck me as pure speculation and I wasn't even convinced that anything unusual, whatever its cause, was going on in the upper hall. There was no denying, however, that the custodians and the coach were convinced there was. By this time three or four men would stand nightly at the north end of the hall and wait for the ghost to materialize. Sometimes, they said, it did.

All of the upper hallway's ceiling was covered with cream-colored acoustical tile, the kind with little holes in it. The upper third of the west wall was also covered with the material.

Early one May morning before classes I hurried down the brightly-illuminated hall on my way to the duplicating machine. Suddenly a grayish blur caught my eye. I stopped.

On the west wall, at about eye level, there was a smudged image. I recognized it instantly and felt irritated. Someone, I thought, had put a match or more likely a cigarette lighter to the tile. Carbon from the flame had caused the shape.

Then to my horror I realized that it would have been impossible to create the perfect image I was observing. There before me was the mark of the beast, perfect in all details down to the tufts of fur on its pointed ears!

I WAS teaching a semester course Idealing with religion and philosophy. On a Wednesday evening a Pentecostal minister and his grown son were guest speakers in my classes.

When the noon bell rang I asked them to wait a moment until the students cleared out of the hall. "I have something to show you," I said as I led them to the image.

"There." I pointed to the smudge. "What is it?"

The minister's mouth dropped in astonishment. "Why," he whispered huskily, "it's the sign of the beast!"

By this time I was convinced that something evil was in the upper hall. My religious affiliation was the

Catholic Church. My solution was to take a pencil and draw a cross over the ugly, cruel face. With some satisfaction I walked away.

The next morning I entered the school, as I always did, through the junior high school. There was another one! Another smudge of soot — but this time the head with the pointed muzzle and slitted eyes was turned as if it were gazing toward the high school wing.

Making sure no one saw me, I scratched another cross over the revolting image. The tile crumbled and tiny pieces of milk-white substance floated to the floor.

The second phantom visage angered me. The experience caused me to think more seriously about the happenings. My mind considered a whole line of "what ifs":

What if Brian's spirit was the ghost?

What if Brian was trapped because of his suicide?

What if his soul somehow could not leave the physical environment?

What if a demon was preventing his departure?

What if Brian was doomed to a lonely existence of roaming the darkened halls until the school was torn down?

What then?

What if I helped?

That was it! Somehow, I didn't know why, I had to make sure the young man's spirit was released from its earthly prison.

Since I was going to act I had to do something fast. In a few weeks school would be out and I would leave for my summer job.

Dwayne and I devised a plan. Within a few days the opportunity came for me to put it into play.

Armed only with a rosary, I left my home and drove across the city to the school.

The custodians met me with nervous smiles. Dwayne and I climbed the spacious marble stairs to the upper hall. The time was just 9:00 P.M. but Dwayne turned the lights off on that level and also darkened the main hall below.

Red EXIT lights and a dim glow from below were my only sources of light. I didn't have a flashlight. Dwayne's retreating footsteps grew fainter and finally ceased.

There, beside the stage door, I stood alone but sure of my intent.

"Brian. Brian," I spoke softly. "Come out, Brian. I am your friend. Don't be afraid. Nothing will harm you. I want to talk to you."

Perhaps it was my imagination but I thought I sensed apprehension and yet a feeling of hope coming from ... *what?*

After quietly saying a few prayers I retreated to the far end of the hall where my room was situated. I felt embarrassed, not at all sure I wasn't making a fool of myself.

The lights in the classroom were bright. Green and yellow hues from the carpet and painted halls cheered

me considerably. My courage thus reinforced, I left the door open and seated myself near the back of the room, beside the movie projector and stand. Soft, cool breezes wafted through the open windows bringing with them scents of flowering trees and the muffled rumble of traffic from the nearby street.

For over an hour I sat there grading papers. Occasionally I glanced into the hallway. Light from my room cut a rectangular pattern through the thick blackness of the hallway and rested on the wall opposite the door.

My purpose was to let the apparition, if there was one, know that it was welcome. I was not an enemy.

Strange how reality — nice stable, comprehensible reality — can be there one moment and the next instant the human condition is devastated by the indescribable. That is what occurred.

An envelope of cold air encircled me. Hair on the nape of my neck rose and my skin tingled from the icy chill. Something was in the room.

The odor of sulfur filled my nostrils and teared my eyes. Evil was with me.

Quickly I grabbed the rosary from the projector stand and placed it about my neck. The crucifix with Christ's metal body felt reassuring and I began rapidly to speak in a strong voice, "Our Father, who art in heaven —"

Then I recited several "Hail Marys" over and over, regaining my composure, willing the evil away.

I stood up and spoke firmly, "I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior, to leave these premises and never return!"

It must have worked. The smell and the bone-chilling cold dissipated and my room was comfortable again.

I raced down the stairs seeking the custodian. Dwayne was sweeping the floor of a basement classroom. I rushed in and nearly shouted, "Do you smoke?"

"Why, yes," he said, looking sheepish. "When no one's around."

"Did you just light a match?" I asked, thinking it was at least vaguely possible that this was the source of the sulfur smell.

"No. I use a lighter. I don't have any matches. What's happened? Did you see it?"

IT WAS 11:00 P.M., time for everyone to leave. I had narrated my activities and experiences to the three service employees. We agreed that we would all go upstairs and look for the shape.

We looked and looked.

"There!" Dwayne whispered. "Just outside the door." The distance was over 100 feet to the auditorium loft door. "Watch. When it materializes it blots out the exit light in the stairway."

"Yeah, I see it," Bill, another

one of the custodians, said.

I didn't see a thing. Nothing appeared to have changed. After a time I spoke up, "Well, it's time to go home. Do me a favor. You'll think I'm crazy but stay here. I'm going down there and try to talk to Brian."

Slowly I walked toward the door that was somewhere in the blackness. I was frightened but my determination overcame my discomfort.

"Brian." I paused. "This is Mr. Seifried, Brian. I am your friend. I can help you. Come out so I can talk to you."

Over and over I pleaded with whatever it was to appear, to reach out for my help.

The door was there, a mere eight feet away in the near-total darkness. My voice sounded strong but gentle. I sensed (some would say imagined) a dark figure inside, just on the other side of the door.

"Brian," I called quietly, "it's all right. You were ill. You couldn't

help yourself. Your death wasn't your fault. Don't let it keep you here. You are free to go. Let yourself move on to your next life."

I began praying aloud, asking God to help Brian and to accept him into the Kingdom of Heaven.

I don't know what the men thought. They could hear me because my voice had risen as my determination increased.

After a while, exhausted from the strain of what I considered to be my responsibility, I concluded with the Lord's Prayer, blessed Brian and asked him to leave with God. My mission was concluded.

What, if anything, transpired that night I do not know. The sulfur was real. The icy blanket was as vivid an experience as a brilliant sunrise. I do know that no one ever saw or felt the phantom again. Neither did any more images of the beast appear on the walls.

I hope that Brian is at peace — if indeed it was he to whom I communicated that night.



LIGHTNING ANSWERS CALL

PROMINENT Louisiana attorney N. Graves Thomas stood up in his new ski boat on Lake Bistineau, raised his hands heavenward and proclaimed, "Here I am." Moments later a lightning bolt struck him dead. According to United Press International, Graves and his friends were preparing to water-ski despite heavy storms which had rumbled through much of the state on Memorial Day 1987. But Associated Press reported there was no thunder, lightning or sign of lightning before the killer bolt struck.

Back to Life

When I died I went to heaven, a place of breathtaking beauty, but I wasn't yet ready to spend eternity there

By Dominic P. Soudy

“YOU LEFT US for about a minute and we really worked to get you back,” Dr. Hennessey said.

It was March 1954, about a month after he and two other doctors had performed emergency surgery on me following discovery of a gangrenous gall bladder. I was severely dehydrated with an extremely high temperature and was not given much chance to survive.

Since I was scheduled for emergency exploratory surgery at 7:00 A.M., the priest from my church in Roseville, Mich., a few miles from my hospital room in Mount Clemens, was called in to give me the last rites of the Church. He was young and I sensed he was uncomfortable about what he had been asked to do. I apologized for getting him out of bed at two in the morning. He seemed even more concerned about my well-being than I was — and as a 34-year-old art teacher with two small children and a wife, I was not

exactly eager to leave my family to shift for themselves.

The staff busily prepared to begin working on me. As the anaesthetic entered my system, I was aware of people moving around, the sounds of equipment running and low-pitched serious-sounding voices. The strong overhead lights were aimed at me and through my pain I was aware of my body's desperate struggle to live.

I suddenly had the weird feeling that my eyes were leaving my head. They seemed to rise toward the ceiling. I looked down at my feet and saw them covered by a green sheet. I chose not to look at the rest of me, fearing I had been opened up. It appeared that I was on a cart in an empty room. I was no longer aware of the doctors and staff or all of the equipment that I had seen a short time before.

Now my eyes went *through* the ceiling. I expected to bump into the heat ducts, plumbing and wiring between floors. Instead I came to a peaceful landscape, with green grass

rolling on to blue cloudless sky. All sense of time stopped. The pain ceased, along with my desperate fight to stay alive.

So this is what it's like to die, I thought. Why do people fight it so much?

As I gazed in wonder at the lovely hills and the beautiful sky, a voice spoke from above my head, to the left and slightly behind me. I had no idea who the speaker was but I was afraid to turn around and find out. His voice reminded me of Paul Newman's but of course I knew that was ridiculous.

"Not so fast," the speaker said. "You can stay if you want to, but it will be forever. You have a job that is not finished that you can go back and complete if you want to or you can stay. Your two children will not do well because of the influence of your wife and her family. They will be much better off if you go back."

I was still looking at the landscape when it occurred to me that there were no birds, trees or people. It did not take long for me to make my decision. In a moment I was aware of the struggle to continue to live as my eyes returned to my head.

ABOUT A month later I tried to tell Dr. McKinley, our family physician, of my experience. He was terrified and refused to listen. Other persons to whom I described the experience told me I hallucinated or dreamed the event. Some

even suggested that it was the effects of the drugs I had been given during the operation.

That was over 30 years ago. Since then the subject of near-death experiences has become well known and many books, magazine articles and television shows have dealt with it. Now people are much more willing to listen with an open mind.

Dr. Hennessey told me that in desperation the doctors picked my heart up and hand-massaged it after pumping adrenalin through the largest syringe they could find in the operating room. It was all they could do to bring me back. I never told him about my experience but he did say I was "dead" for about one minute.

What did this experience teach me? It made it clear to me that I had a purpose and I carried it out to the best of my ability. I not only continued to guide my children but taught until my retirement five years ago, believing I could help my students to live better lives.

I have also become aware that all religions relate to one God. People of different faiths from mine have beliefs as valid as my own. Heaven, I am certain, is interdenominational. There is no one special church that insures heaven for everyone. One must do the best one can to help other people and this is all that is expected.

One evening in 1985, as I sat in my chair watching the 11 o'clock

television news after an exhausting day, I dozed off — only to struggle to wake up as quickly as possible. Again I felt my eyes leaving my

head and going up and to the left. Instinctively I pulled them back as fast as I could.

I am not ready to leave just yet.



A GIANT MYSTERY

By Michael T. Shoemaker

IN NOVEMBER 1856 some laborers uncovered a giant human skeleton while plowing Sheriff Wickham's vineyard in East Wheeling, Va. (now W. Va.). Wickham and another lawman measured the "much decayed" skeleton and the impression it had left in the earth, and they were "prepared to swear that it was 10 feet nine inches in length." The bones were taken to Wickham's office and put on display. The *Wheeling Times*' report of the discovery was reprinted in the *Alexandria Gazette* and the *Richmond Enquirer* on November 17 and 18 respectively.

On the 20th the *Gazette* reported that "three bullets have been found in the skull." Oddly, this caused the paper to scoff at the supposed antiquity of the bones, even though the writer suggested that Wickham may have planted the bullets "to assist the great rush made to see the bones." This suggestion is at least more logical than the idea that such a giant could have existed in historical times without being known to the settlers.

The details in the case clearly rule out a newspaper hoax, but we must wonder whether Wickham was a hoaxer. To carry out such a fraud, he would have had to substitute some large animal bones for

the lower limbs. But where would he get the huge skull with jaws and teeth "as large as those of a horse"? Surely farmers know the difference between a horse's skull and a human skull.

No, Wickham does not appear to have been a hoaxer. It is even doubtful that he planted the "bullets," since he could hardly expect to deceive anyone, unless his purpose was to discredit the discovery. These projectiles were not described, so they may not have been modern bullets at all. Perhaps they were lead or copper pellets.

A great many "giants" have been found in the earthen mounds attributed to the Adena Indian culture. One 7 1/2-foot specimen was even found in South Charleston not far from Wheeling. (See Jim Miles' "Pygmies and Giants," March 1985 FATE.) But the size of the Wheeling giant far exceeds the usual seven to eight foot range. Indeed, it appears to be the largest ever reported from North America. This size suggests that it may not have been a man after all. Was it perhaps the skeleton of a Bigfoot killed by a slingshot? We will probably never know. As happens to many strange discoveries, no more reports appeared and the final resting place of the bones is unknown.

INDIA'S GREAT ABANDONED CITY



Once the capital of a mighty medieval empire, the city of Vijayanagara, "City of Victory," exercises undeniable magic as one of the outstanding archaeological sites of Hindu Asia.

By John M. Fritz, George Michell and M.S. Nagaraja Rao

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Photographs by John Gollings

MANY MILES away from the beaten tourist track, deep in the heart of south India's rocky Deccan plateau, lie the remains of the medieval city of Vijayanagara. Once the capital of a mighty empire whose reputation spread throughout Asia to Europe, Vijayanagara was almost completely forgotten outside India for almost four centuries. Today Vijayanagara is once more gaining international recognition — this time as one of the outstanding archaeological sites of Hindu Asia.

The effects of more than 400 years of pillage, neglect and erosion are evident at Vijayanagara. Even so, clearly visible are fortifications, gateways, temples, shrines, pavilions, stables and palaces as well as countless unidentified collapsed

Medieval site of Vijayanagara boasts some of the best-preserved architecture in India. This Islamic-style octagonal watchtower guards the approaches to one of the royal center enclosures.

buildings and masses of stone rubble. Such remarkable remains testify to the vast extent of the city, the most completely preserved of any medieval Hindu capital in India. While earlier cities are well known from historical references and isolated monuments, almost nothing can now be observed of their urban layouts, defense systems or palace complexes. Vijayanagara presents unique opportunities for investigating medieval urbanism as well as the ways in which a Hindu dynastic center functioned socially, economically and ritually.

Despite its devastation, the capital has become synonymous with one of the most glorious eras of Indian history. Today Vijayanagara symbolizes the preservation of traditional Hindu society, culture and religion. While clearing and conservation of Vijayanagara's monuments began at the turn of the century, it was only in the late 1970's that systematic archaeological exploration was taken up. At this time, under the direction of M. S. Nagaraja Rao, the Archaeological Survey of India and the Department of Archaeology and Museums of the government of Karnataka (the state in which the site is located) took up excavating and initiated

plans to make the site more accessible to tourists and pilgrims.

VIJAYANAGARA — which means “City of Victory” in Sanskrit — was established in the middle of the 14th Century at a time when the Hindu kingdoms of peninsular India had been completely disrupted by the incursions of Muslim invaders. Vijayanagara quickly became the most powerful political force in the Deccan, fighting innumerable wars with both the Muslim kingdoms established to the north and the Hindu kingdoms to the east

and south. In fact, by the end of the 14th Century the rulers of the city had gained dominion over all of south India. Subordinate rulers contributed men, arms and animals to the vast armies fielded by the Vijayanagara kings. Muslim military techniques and Muslim mercenaries, especially cavalry, contributed to the effectiveness of these campaigns. By the early 16th Century Portuguese gunners from Goa were also employed.

For more than 200 years the Vijayanagara rulers preserved their city in the face of periodic sieges and



On the slopes of Hemakuta hill above the village of Hampi, stone shrines dating to the 12th and 13th Centuries commemorate the spot where the indigenous goddess Pampa was betrothed to the god Shiva.



The most impressive of all Islamic-influenced buildings in the royal center, these stables housed the king's elephants used in ceremonies as well as on campaigns. Each chamber is roofed with an elaborate dome.

internal conflicts. But in 1565 the battle was finally lost, and their capital was completely sacked by the allied forces of five sultans. The city was then abandoned and left to the vicissitudes of weather and looters seeking remnants of its fabled wealth. The empire survived this catastrophe and, despite their shrinking territories, the Vijayanagara kings continued to influence events in south India well into the 18th Century.

The city was founded by two brothers native to the region, Hakka and Bukka, sons of a petty chieftain named Sangama. They chose a wildly beautiful and spectacular

location near the village of Hampi on the south bank of the Tungabhadra River. This rocky valley had long been celebrated as a sacred site. Here were worshipped an indigenous goddess named Pampa — from which the village Hampi takes its name — and her divine consort, Virupaksha. Shrines and images dating back to the Eighth and Ninth Centuries at Hampi are dedicated to these local cults. It was only natural for Hakka and Bukka to wish to ally themselves with a local source of sacred power. On Hemakuta hill overlooking Hampi, these Vijayanagara kings established their first royal center. They had the



Standing within the courtyard of the Vitthala temple is the stone chariot, a replica of the actual chariots used in religious festivals.

hill fortified and from here they embarked on military expeditions throughout south India.

Considerable numbers of people were attracted to Vijayanagara, not only from all over south India but even from the Muslim kingdoms to the north. (Muslims were always part of the city's population as were other non-Hindu groups like the Jains.) The imperial guards employed large numbers of cavalry, elephant riders, footmen and attendants. The palace was filled with ministers, advisers, record-keepers, astrologers, entertainers, eunuchs, women and attendants. Philosophers, poets, musicians and artists flocked to the court where they were

richly patronized. Architects and craftsmen were summoned to execute ambitious building projects. Priests too collected in the city to manage elaborate temple complexes in which different deities were venerated and where considerable wealth was accumulated. Beyond the city walls, a large population provided essential goods and services for the royal palace and militia. Extensive hydraulic works in the Vijayanagara region permitted intensive agriculture to support the ever-increasing number of inhabitants, which probably surpassed 100,000 by the end of the 15th Century.

At the height of its power —

under the reigns of Krishnadeva Raya and Achyutadeva Raya in the early decades of the 16th Century—Vijayanagara was the largest and wealthiest city in India. The power and royal display of its emperors were the envy of Muslim sultans and lesser Hindu kings. To European travelers in the 15th and 16th Centuries, the city seemed enormous and magnificent.

According to these visitors, the capital was well planned, with stone-lined streets and roads regularly laid out so that a brisk trade was possible in the markets located there. Domingo Paes, one of the

Portuguese traders, wrote of Vijayanagara: "This is one of the best provided cities in the world, and it is stocked with provisions. . . . The streets and markets are full of laden oxen without count." Where did the wealth come from? The fabled riches in Vijayanagara's treasury derived from the spoils of war and the agricultural prosperity of south India. Items of trade were subject to levies and land taxation was related to irrigation.

Much of the revenue went to support the sumptuous life-style of the ruler and his court, public works and the palace guards. Finance was



Monolithic sculpture of Narasimha, the man-lion incarnation of the god Vishnu, stands in the temple complex or sacred center.

also required for state rituals that took place at the capital at the end of the monsoon (September to October). During the Mahanavami festival — the most important annual event at Vijayanagara — all of the lesser rulers, governors and military chiefs assembled in the capital together with their various retainers. Foreign delegates were also encouraged to attend this festival of which they have left vivid accounts.

The visitors witnessed rites in which the king exchanged honors with a deity (probably the goddess Durga who is noted for her ferocious and warlike character) who consecrated the royal weapons and insignias. Taxes were paid to the king who provided the visitors with spectacular entertainments. For nine days and nights, the palace was crowded with processions of elephants, horses, military formations, women laden with jewels, and countless attendants. There were fireworks, mock battles and athletic contests, not to mention continuous banquets. Only after the conclusion of the Mahanavami could the king, together with his royal household and army, depart from the capital. He would spend several months touring his territories, often visiting important temples and presenting gifts. This was also the season for war; most military campaigns were conducted during these cool dry months.

NO VISITOR to Vijayanagara today can be unaffected by the remarkable landscape in which the city was situated. Surrounded by rugged granite outcrops weathered into gigantic boulders, the landscape presents striking contrasts of inhospitable grandeur with rich irrigation. These rocky hills and the river afforded a set of natural barriers which protected the large basin in which the city and its suburbs were located. Through the wildest part of the site, to the north of the city, flows the Tungabhadra River. Here on limited areas of flatland are the great temple complexes and numerous smaller shrines that constitute the sacred center of the city. Originally concentrated in and around the village of Hampi — the ancient holy spot — the sacred zone of the site was gradually extended along the south bank of the river, even onto the rocky summits of nearby ridges.

The great temple complexes, particularly those dating from the 16th Century, are truly urban in scale. Consisting of vast rectangular compounds defined by high granite walls, the temples are entered through towered gateways. These soaring pyramidal brick and plaster constructions were the "skyscrapers" of their day, sometimes reaching a height of more than 150 feet. Such towered entrances formed the focal points of long wide streets, paved with slabs and flanked by colon-

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nades, rest houses and markets. Along these streets, festivals took place in which images of deities were removed from the temples and placed in chariots which had huge

wooden wheels and brightly colored bamboo and cloth superstructures. Pulled by pilgrims and other devotees, the chariots were maneuvered up and down the streets to the

excitement of the assembled crowds. Such festivals still take place in the Virupaksha temple at Hampi, the only sacred complex at the site where deities are still worshipped.

Within the walls of the great temple complex, a principal sanctuary housed a male deity such as Virupaksha, Krishna, Vitthala or Rama, all aspects of the Hindu gods Shiva or Vishnu. Several open and enclosed halls were axially aligned with the sanctuary. Granite walls and columns were provided with niches and moldings were covered with finely carved images of divinities and mythical beasts. Carved processions of elephants and horses, the latter sometimes led by foreigners, were also found on temple basements. Rising over the sanctuary were brick and plaster towers capped with hemispherical roofs.

A secondary shrine, essentially a small version of the major shrine, housed the female consort of the god. Colonnades and freestanding columned halls were provided for various ritual activities, especially singing, dancing and recitation of sacred texts. Kitchens, storerooms, wells and tanks were also included. But perhaps the most remarkable subsidiary structure is the stone chariot standing within the courtyard of the Vitthala temple. This granite replica of an actual chariot was used to enshrine an image of Garuda, the eagle deity on which the god Vishnu rides.

Like the monastic establishments of medieval Europe, the great temple complexes at Vijayanagara were economically powerful. Managing large tracts of irrigated land, temple committees also maintained the tanks, channels and aqueducts necessary for agriculture. Temples were storehouses of grain as well as treasuries where costly items such as bullion, gold and silver were collected. Temples even acted as potential sources of finance for kings during their frequent wars.

Today most of the sacred complexes at Vijayanagara are abandoned. Evidence of their destruction in 1565 is evident everywhere — columns are smashed, towers fallen and floor slabs ripped up in the search for buried treasure. Nothing remains of the votive images studded with jewels and clothed in precious silks, and the treasuries are empty. Yet some temples have benefited from the reestablishment of worship. Sanctuaries and halls have been renovated and images of divinities have been installed once again within the sanctuaries. Similarly, former temple lands have been recultivated. With the aid of the hydroelectric dam at Hospet to the southwest and the subsequent control of the river, ancient canals and aqueducts have been renovated. As a result, ruined temples today stand on the edges of lush fields of sugarcane and groves of coconut and banana trees.

In the sacred center itself and indeed throughout the capital, numerous sacred images are carved onto boulders. Most common are representations of the monkey hero, Hanuman, and the terrifying Virabhadra form of Shiva, complete with weapons and human skulls. Some of these sculptures are large-scale compositions carved out of a single granite outcrop. The most impressive is a freestanding image (more than 20 feet high) depicting Narasimha, the ferocious man-lion incarnation of Vishnu. Together with shrines housing other religious icons, these rock-cut images help define the mythical "dimensions" of Vijayanagara's sacred center.

Immediately south of the sacred center lies an irrigated valley which separates the sacred center from another zone of the city which we call the urban core. Occupying land that is partly bounded by rocky ridges, the urban core incorporates several broad valleys opening up to the south and west. This zone is easily distinguished since it is completely surrounded by a ring of massive stone fortifications. The natural terrain is also integrated into the city's defensive system. A measure of the effectiveness of this protection is illustrated by the fact that Vijayanagara was never taken by siege despite numerous attempts by the Muslim armies.

The fortifications define an approximately elliptical area —

about 2.5 miles along its southwest-northeast axis — entered through numerous gateways. These are heavily defended with flanking bastions, guardrooms and protective walls. Most of the gateways employ traditional Indian constructions, with corbelled lintels covering the gates. Others display the impact of Islamic techniques in the use of pointed arches and domes. Such gateways played an important role in both the defense of the city and in the control of movement of people and goods. Taxes were levied here, and it is possible that a network of spies informed the king of all who came and went. While the ancient roads of the urban core have now almost completely vanished, gateways can still indicate the points of entry. Within the urban core, such routes are indicated by the alignments of ruined structures. Most of the roads lead in a radial fashion to a major complex of enclosures at the southwestern end of the urban core. We identify this complex as the royal center of the capital, the seat of the king and court. The royal center is characterized by a number of irregularly shaped, interlocking enclosures defined by high tapering granite walls. These walls display a remarkable masonry technique in which granite blocks of different shapes are jointed without mortar.

IN OUR preliminary interpretation of the functions of the dif-

ferent enclosures, we distinguish two zones separated by a north-south wall. This leads to the Ramachandra temple complex in the middle of the royal center. To the east of this north-south axis is the zone of royal performance, the site of public and ritual activities of the king. To the west is the zone of royal residence where more private activities of the king's household took place and where women and their attendants were accommodated. Several large-scale ceremonial structures are found within the zone of royal performance. Particularly impressive is a 100-columned hall, probably for holding audience. Today only the stone basement and column footings remain; the gold-covered wooden columns, as described by the foreign visitors, have long ago disappeared. Nearby is a multitiered stone platform, the tapering sides of which are completely covered with shallow carvings depicting the pursuits and symbols of royal power.

All around, excavators of the Archaeological Survey of India have revealed numerous square and rectangular columned halls, ruined except for their raised subfloor platforms and portions of their floors, column bases and rubble walls. For such features, we are not yet able to provide any precise purpose, although analysis of associated artifacts will provide clues. We speculate that these structures accom-

modated those in the king's immediate service — his private guard, scribes, advisers, attendants and spies. Wells, tanks for bathing, channels and aqueducts are evidence of a complex hydraulic system.

Also located in this zone are the stables, the most impressive of all Islamic-influenced buildings in the royal center. The stables consist of a long row of chambers, each roofed with an elaborate dome. Here were housed some of the royal elephants used by the king for ceremonies at the capital as well as on campaigns. Drummers may have been seated in the open pavilion above the central chamber. The adjacent structure, also displaying Islamic-influenced arches and vaults, has a raised arcade from which processions of animals and soldiers could have been viewed. Within an interior court, athletic contests and mock battles may have taken place.

The enclosure immediately west of these military features had been mistakenly identified as the abode of women. We propose that here the king or military commander had his headquarters. Dominating the area is the basement of a large palace structure; rising above the surrounding walls, watchtowers guard the approaches. In the middle of the enclosure is a two-storied pavilion known, somewhat fancifully, as the "Lotus Mahal." This well-preserved courtly structure blends Islamic influenced elements (multilobed

arches, vaults, plaster decoration) with templelike features (molded basement, overhanging eaves, pyramidal towers). Such a pavilion functioned, we believe, as a private audience hall. In contrast, the nearby structure with a masonry gabled roof probably served as a treasury.

Quite different features were discovered within the zone of royal residence. Here excavators from the government of Karnataka's Department of Archaeology and Museums are revealing the stone basements and lower portions of residential structures. These are characterized by symmetrical plans, multiple courts arranged on ascending levels and one or more chambers at the rear. Walls are made of rubble and earth with elaborate plasterwork. Traces of wood, metal, plaster and tiles suggest materials used in the columns and roofs. Almost all of the artifacts recovered here are earthenware fragments of vessels used for cooking and storing. Stone mortars, like those used today to process rice and other grains, are other common finds.

The important Ramachandra temple in the middle of the royal center, dating back to the early 15th Century, probably served as a chapel for a king. The temple is contained within a rectangular enclosure with high walls, the outer surfaces carved with reliefs portraying the activities of the Mahanavami. While the courtly character of

these scenes is unmistakable, within the temple compound the iconography is more religious in character and illustrates episodes from the Ramayana epic. This mythical account of the god Rama (also known as Ramachandra) connects the temple with the surrounding landscape. The gateways and doorways of the complex are aligned with two hills — Matanga to the north and Malyavanta to the east. These holy sites are associated with Rama's adventures in the region as he journeyed southward in search of his abducted wife Sita. In this way, the mythological world, the landscape through which Rama moved, is linked to the world of the king, the royal center in which the temple is located. As the divine hero-king, Rama served as a paradigm for Hindu rulers. At Vijayanagara, this relation was given concrete expression through the placement of the principal buildings within the different zones of the city.

* * *

AFTER ITS sack, Vijayanagara lay abandoned and forgotten for more than two centuries. In 1800 Col. Colin Mackenzie, an energetic antiquarian, visited the site and sketched some of its ruins. By the middle of the 19th Century, the site attracted enthusiasts of Indian history and architecture including several early photographers. Recently more than 50 waxed-paper negatives dating from

1856 were discovered in an attic in Cornwall.

Although a few guidebooks to Vijayanagara have been available since early in this century, the ruined city received surprisingly little systematic attention from scholars. The relatively recent date and the overwhelming scale of Vijayanagara seem to have been discouraging factors. Perhaps also the rich contemporary literature describing the city and its inhabitants suggested that studies of the ruins were unnecessary. In 1976 Vijayanagara was declared a site of national importance by the Indian government and an excavation project was initiated. This has brought to light many features that add substantially to our knowledge of the city and has raised many questions that have yet to be answered. For example, was the large and finely finished tank with stone stepped sides, discovered virtually intact in 1985, possibly used in ceremonies of royal coronation? Most recently, under the direction of M. S. Nagaraja Rao and A. Sundara, two teams of excavators have focused their clearing work within the enclosures of the royal center.

Such excavation programs are accompanied by extensive conservation work that aims at rebuilding collapsing walls and basements, replacing cracked beams, repairing damaged sculptures and consolidating excavated remains. This work

goes hand-in-hand with analyses of construction history. Overgrown buildings on the periphery of the site are being cleared of vegetation, while other partly buried structures and even roads are being revealed. It is worth pointing out that such conservation has been carried out at Vijayanagara, although with interruptions, since the turn of the century.

From 1980 onward, an international team of scholars and students under the direction of authors John Fritz and George Michell has contributed to research at Vijayanagara. This team has developed a program of "surface archaeology" in which architects, surveyors and photographers document all remains visible at the surface of the site. Beginning in the royal center, this project has expanded to encompass much of the urban core. Inventories of archaeological and architectural data are currently being compiled and an elaborate mapping system has been devised to designate features. The project has also been concerned with "socio-ceramics." Analyses by Carla Sinopoli of the University of Michigan of the forms and spatial distributions of pottery vessels are helping us to understand the economic and social life of the capital.

This site work is accompanied by research on the written record of the city. More than 200 inscriptions are incised onto monuments and natural

boulders at Vijayanagara. These epigraphs mostly record donations of money or land to temple deities but also provide information on dynastic history, military expeditions and legal and property matters. Indian archaeologists periodically discover new inscriptions which are gradually being translated into English and published. Also of great importance is the rich literary heritage of the period, much of it in south Indian languages such as Kannada and Telugu.

For those of us involved with fieldwork at Vijayanagara, an increased understanding of the form and function of this city depends on both archaeological and historical data. The use of these sources — each incomplete without the other — characterizes medieval archaeological projects, whether in Europe, the Islamic Middle East or Hindu India. Correlating archaeological

and historical material vastly expands our understanding of the development of Vijayanagara and its relation to the evolving state. In fact, no other non-Muslim capital in India provides such rich opportunities for research. Here we may investigate important social and economic problems, cultural and artistic matters and broader questions about Hindu India's ritual and symbolism.

While our investigation is still in its early stages, we believe it has already established the outstanding importance of Vijayanagara as an archaeological site. One measure of estimating the success of our various projects is the increasing number of scholars and students, from both India and abroad, who are attracted to Vijayanagara. Meanwhile the site itself exercises its undeniable magic on all visitors, whether they be travelers or devout pilgrims.



THE RAM WHO CAME FOR COFFEE

CUSTOMERS in an English restaurant who were showered with glass after a deafening crash found themselves staring at a runaway ram. They were shocked but the ram was calm, lapping coffee from a cup still held in one customer's shaking hand.

The animal had escaped from Huntley Gate Farm near Preston, Lancashire, and was chased by

farmhands for a quarter of a mile into the grounds of the restaurant — which was named, by the way, the Broken Ram. There the cornered ram caught a glimpse of its reflection in the window and charged.

The broken window trapped the animal and freeing him took about a half hour of pushing from the inside with farmhands pulling from the outside.

Channeling . . . What Comes Through

When does a channeled message make sense and when doesn't it? Here's how you can tell the difference.

By Mark Wallek

CHANNELING is seductive. Speaking with a dead person can be a real thrill, especially if the dead person claims to be an enlightened master. There are seemingly credible accounts in the literature of psychical research in which a being without a body assumes temporary control over someone to deliver information not otherwise available. In many cases in which channeling is claimed, however, I believe we are seeing either a case of multiple personality or a mild form of psychosis which is seldom harmful.

When so many people claim to be channels for these megabeings, it becomes important to understand what constitutes legitimate channeling and how you can determine the authenticity of what you are witnessing. This article discusses the different types of channels, evaluates the channeled information and suggests questions the reader will find useful in coming to his own conclusions.

I have no doubt that amazing phenomena are sometimes demon-

strated during channeling. Empirical sciences have not been able to validate these phenomena but this is not a problem for me. I seriously doubt we will ever explain channeling exclusively in scientific terms. It takes what Immanuel Kant called a "leap of faith" anchored in an open, discriminating mind to better understand what channeling is and why it occurs.

If we can suspend prejudiced beliefs (i.e., "all channels are fakes") without throwing out our ability to discriminate and to make choices, we can use the channels and the information they provide for realistic, life-enhancing help or we can chuck the whole thing.

I always pay particular attention to the quality of the information a channel discloses. I ask, "Does the content of the communication have clear, direct value for me?" The show the channel provides is an unimportant distraction. I *often* feel I am witnessing a part of the channel's awareness expressing itself rather than interacting with a being who is not the channel. If the content is incisive, intelligent and use-

ful, I don't care if there's a separate entity or not. Ownership of his fuller self is the individual channel's problem. It becomes an issue for me only if this split has a significantly negative effect on the clarity and neutrality of the channel in his "altered" state.

The term "channeling" refers to one of three separate processes.

First, there is conscious channeling in which the individual channel is fully conscious of what he is saying. Conscious channels fall into two basic groups: accountable and unaccountable.

Accountable channels know the source of the information is coming from a part of themselves not normally given a voice. Unaccountable channels attribute the insights, beliefs and creations to something other than themselves. They do not take responsibility for originating the information.

The other two types of channeling are often indistinguishable from each other. The differences between trance channeling and trance mediumship are profound but also difficult to grasp by those unfamiliar with channeling. While a trance channel's ego is passive but remains within the physical body and brain, the medium's ego is totally displaced. In residence instead is the identity of a life other than the channel. In instances of genuine mediumship no possibility exists of interference by the channel's con-



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scious or unconscious mind. Instances of multiple personality also fall into this category. To my mind the finest modern example of mediumship was the relationship between Jane Roberts and Seth.

The difference between the types of channeling is important. A true medium will be able to maintain a continuity of character and content without interference from his own personality. A *good* trance channel

can do the same thing when he is channeling an entity. If he is not a good channel or if he is fraudulent, there will be observable inconsistencies in the character supposedly in residence. The content of the allegedly channeled information will be biased and strained. An honest channel is open to his own limitations; a questionable one covers his tracks with more "wisdom."

Unfortunately, more often than not this kind of dishonesty occurs and you end up paying cash for the learning experience. My own experience is that good channels and useful information are exceptions to the rule. Disappointment runs high among individuals who give themselves over to the instruction of a "transcendent being." Many people cut their metaphysical teeth on experiences with channels.

I once saw a great demonstration of billet reading at a little Spiritualist church in Marin County, California. (In billet reading the practitioner is blindfolded.) Everyone attending the "service" wrote something on a piece of paper and sealed it in an envelope. I drew a circle with a dot, a symbol with personal meaning, and passed it forward. My envelope was selected.

"Mark," the tightly blindfolded minister said although my name was not on the envelope, "you are in row three, seat four, left side." Correct. "Why don't you have a motor-

cycle yet? Well, don't worry. You'll get one."

True enough, I'd always wanted one — but not *that* much. I still don't have one and I'm not worried about it. The show cost \$20 — cheap by today's standards.

A happier experience occurred when a channel filled in some blanks in my own spiritual awareness. He called my attention to an option I had not seen before. It was not one provided by therapy, meditation or advice from people in my life. This information, while abstract, was useful in that it allowed me to broaden my perspective, which I feel is the single most useful thing a channel can facilitate.

WHEN I SEE a channeled entity acting like an infinitely wise advice columnist, I am irritated. I don't think we need to speak with a disembodied Ann Landers. If they are entities at all (and usually they are not), they are not highly developed ones or they would engage us in our process of opening up and not just offer sage explanations. Genuine love, which many of these "transcendent beings" claim they emanate, carries no sentimentality and offers no Band-Aid solutions.

What passes for unconditional love on the entity's part is little different in its effect on the seeker than an indiscriminate dose of valium. It is much safer to feel uncon-

ditionally loved by someone who will never really be present to share it with us. Some of us need this kind of safety in the process of beginning to open up to fuller life experience, but most of us are just indulging ourselves and playing it safe. It's too dangerous to truly love another human being and to be loved in return. Too much obligation. Too much vulnerability.

A channel who does not look to the motives behind the seeker's questions is not serving his client (who may be best served by not being a client at all).

Many entities claim to be beyond ego. I have never met one who was, although I've heard the statement often. I don't mind ego in my entities. What I do mind is being told they are without ego. If they were, they would not speak through the channel in the first place. Of the channels and entities I have looked at, only Seth has been truly candid and honest about his own level of spiritual development and the condition of his own ego.

I don't like being told by an entity I am a limitless being. I don't buy it. It reminds me of someone who is trying to act as if he doesn't smell something that stinks. We *do* have limits. Period. The good news is that we can grow beyond them if we first know how to live with them. Limits are not the enemy. Rather it is the simplistic belief in our ability to live totally without those limits

now that trips most people up. It is in our relationships with fellow human beings that we learn about self-acceptance and grow beyond our current limitations. After years of taking the advice of channeled beings, people begin to realize, I have noticed, that change is wrought through interactions with other corporeal souls, not incorporeal ones. No being without a body can do for us what another human can but in the glamour of phenomenal display it is something we often forget.

Working through resistance is something we all must do. Experiencing resistance is as much a part of life in the body as needing to eat or breathe. An entity knows nothing about resistance because he has no physical anchor point of his own. When a change in our lives is necessary, a good partner, friend, therapist or counselor is better than any entity, however wise it appears.

For the entity change *is* as simple as changing a thought. This is not true for us but we like to believe it is. We humans must work with physical bodies which have emotional feelings. We must experience the stresses of change. We must take concrete actions to create change and *this takes time*. For humans, changing the thought is only the first step in the process of changing our lives.

Prediction on demand never proves to be statistically significant.

Fantastic claims are often made for accuracy. I've found that accurate predictions are usually spontaneous and come into conscious awareness like uncontrolled intrusions. When one makes predictions with conscious intent, the level of accuracy is significantly reduced.

Some years back Benjamin Creme proclaimed the return of Christ over the VHF airwaves. I'm still waiting for his show and for the annually promised landings of spacefolk who will save our rear ends if we can't do it ourselves. This kind of prediction panders to our primal fear of being alone. (Freud's opinion was that the greatest cause of psychological dysfunction was the fear of finding out who we truly are.) Even for the well-intentioned channel, as I believe Creme was, there is no excuse for feeding on the hopes of people who suspend discrimination to support a movement that promises to make their dreams come true. It makes more sense to think of Christ's reappearing in the quality of unconditional love we share as human beings. Humanity may need a teacher but we do not need (nor will we get) a nursemaid.

* * *

THE MOST troubling thing I confront is the issue of predicting world events, particularly disasters. J. Z. Knight, acting as Ramtha, says the west coast is threatened with earth changes and that the Mount Rainier area is safe.

Her version of the coming cataclysm is the same as all other predictions except that it manages to save her personal real estate. It's sad that so many people not only believe but make life-changing decisions based on these kinds of predictions.

Aside from being a way of making money from people's fear of the unknown, the prediction of future events is a pointless exercise, in my opinion. I think that when a channel starts pumping out predictions (especially of disaster) I am witnessing a play for power, an attempt to capture and hold the audience (if only through fear). Inevitably the faithful rebel and are often left feeling more profoundly the vacuum they tried to have the channel fill. I personally would demand more from the person who puts himself in a position of authority.

I always ask these questions of myself:

Does the experience feel contrived? How much does the "show" act as a cover for lack of substance? What claims are being made? Do they make sense? Am I being talked with, at or down to? How specific is the information? Can I really use what is being offered? Does the experience broaden my perspective without pandering to my personal hopes and fears?

When I've been to a channel, I ask in retrospect:

Am I satisfied with the experience? Was it worth the money I

paid? How am I going to use this information now?

How we determine value and validity is subjective. What I believe to be fraudulent you may feel certain is legitimate. It is still impossible for us to arrive at a collective definition of what is truth.

Whatever your position on this issue, it is *your* responsibility to exercise discrimination. Do not let yourself be intimidated or surrender your personal identity to any practitioner of the metaphysical arts. Channels are people too, with human qualities and imperfections. Some will gladly take away your initiative when you offer. Be wary of the person who advertises superhuman abilities. Even after 13 years

as a professional psychic observing different channels I am sure I have only scratched the surface of what's out there. My own experience tells me there are a few individuals who are not only legitimate but highly useful as well.

Be certain about what you want from the experience. Be willing to ask more of the facilitator if what you want is not forthcoming. You may find what you thought you wanted is not what you *needed*. Interact with the facilitator and think about what you hear. The information must ultimately make sense to your rational mind. It must feel right and it must support clear insight and inspire necessary action. Blind trust is just that: blind.



MRS. CLEMENS' PSYCHIC HEALER

By Harold Satterfield

IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY Mark Twain tells of his wife's experience with a psychic healer. When she was a girl of 16, the future Mrs. Clemens, Olivia Langdon, suffered an injury when she slipped on some ice. She was left unable to sit up or walk without severe discomfort.

In desperation the family consulted a Dr. Newton who was widely regarded as a quack. Dr. Newton took the injured girl in his arms and suddenly she was able to sit up and walk a few steps without the discomfort she had experienced

earlier. The doctor predicted she would never be entirely well but she would be able to walk a few hundred yards without fatigue. This proved true.

Later Twain questioned Dr. Newton about how his power worked and the doctor confessed he was not sure. He theorized that he was able to heal through an electrical energy that issued from his body.

The future Mrs. Samuel Clemens owed her regained mobility to a "quack" doctor who could not explain how he accomplished his cure.



A PLEASANT HOME FOR GHOSTS

Springhill in Moneymore, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, has been taken into protective custody by the National Trust, guardian of home and gardens for the British people. It served as a family home until 1957.

One cannot call Springhill a haunted house because that term misinterprets the welcoming atmosphere of its sunlit rooms.

By. Sheila St. Clair

Photographs by kind permission of The National Trust
(United Kingdom and Ireland)

NEAR THE small village of Moneymore, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, stands a friendly, welcoming house. At the risk of sounding sentimental, I must confess to having fallen hopelessly in love with this 17th-Century family home over 20 years ago, when I first laid eyes on it. It stands amid quiet green acres and one breathes air that is heavy with the scent of

honeysuckle and old roses and feels a sense of home and history lovingly intertwined.

The National Trust, the guardian of homes and gardens for the British people, has taken Springhill, Moneymore, into protective custody. The house and grounds have been sympathetically restored to their former glory — and it is still a home, housing the custodian ap-

pointed by the Trust. Over the past 20 years hundreds of visitors have climbed the broad flight of stone steps up to the great front door and, having entered, stepped back in time to a more gracious and leisurely age.

Originally the home of the Conynghams who came from Scotland in the reign King James I, the house has experienced all the turmoil and strife of troubled Ireland and has emerged a little scarred here and there, to act as a perpetual reminder of the men and women who built the province of Ulster. The family later to be the Lenox-

Conynghams lived in the house until 1957, when it passed into the care of the Trust.

It is an attractive white-walled house, with spreading wings over which large copper beeches stand sentinel. Close to the house are the signs of the self-sufficiency of other days, laundry, slaughterhouse and great barn. In the walled garden beyond are the famous McCartney roses named after Lord McCartney, envoy to the Imperial Court in Peking in the 18th Century, and from the herb garden drift the scents of lavender and rosemary.

The interior of the house bears



Most of the gentle ghostly manifestations center on the Blue Bedroom where, in 1816, George Lenox-Conyngham shot himself, although not until 16 years later were there any records of hauntings within the house.



The interior of Springhill bears the stamp of family occupation over the centuries: well-thumbed books in this library, a nursery full of toys and family photographs and other rooms full of period furniture.

the stamp of family occupation over the centuries: well-thumbed books in the library, a nursery full of toys, Victorian sofas and family photographs. It is precisely because it is a family house that the tapestry of the life woven within it has its light and dark patternings. One cannot call Springhill a "haunted house" because that would be to misinterpret the atmosphere of those sunlit rooms and quiet gardens, but there are those who still inhabit this house and whose unseen presence will touch you lightly on the shoulder as you linger on the staircase or turn away from a bedroom window.

Although Springhill has been a family home for over 300 years, it

was not until 1832 that there were any records of hauntings within the house. The event on which most of the manifestations seem to pivot was the death in 1816 of George Lenox-Conyngham who shot himself in the Blue Bedroom. His wife Olivia's austere comment, written in the family Bible, may give some indication of the deep shock and bewilderment that this tragedy evoked:

George Lenox-Conyngham being in a melancholy state of mind for many months prior, put an end to his existence with a pistol shot. He lingered from the 20 November 1816 to the 22nd, and died, thanks to the Almighty God, a truly penitent Christian. He was in the

64th year of his age. . . .

Olivia followed her husband to the grave 16 years later in 1832 and the first known paranormal events date from that time. The Hon. Andrew Stuart, the unhappy George's son-in-law, slept in the Blue Bedroom after the suicide and often found that during the night his clothes and belongings had transported themselves from one chair to another — an occurrence that did nothing for that gentleman's peace of mind!

Later, in the 1880's, a visitor to the house, a Miss Wilson, also had an unnerving experience. She had been chatting with Millie, the elder daughter of the house, in the Cedar Room, a room halfway up the main staircase and below the gallery that led to the Blue Bedroom. When it got late, the two girls separated to go to their own rooms. Millie went to her room on the upper floor, while Miss Wilson prepared to retire in the Cedar Room. As she was about to get into bed, she realized Millie had left her diary on a chair and she decided to return it to her.

The stairs by now were lit by a brilliant moon and in the light of that moon streaming in through the landing window, Miss Wilson saw the apparition of a woman on the upper landing. The woman appeared distressed, throwing her hands up into the air and hurrying to the door of the Blue Bedroom,

where to Miss Wilson's consternation she simply vanished.

This apparition has been seen on several occasions in the gallery, once it is said after the house was taken over by the National Trust. Some generations later she was seen by two small boys of the house as they lay in bed in the Blue Bedroom. They didn't seem especially concerned as they told their nurse of "the lady who stands by the fireplace" and with whom they seemed to be on conversational terms.

An even more curious manifestation took place in the Blue Bedroom in the last decade of the 19th Century. A Miss Hamilton who was visiting Springhill was given the Blue Room for her guest chamber. One morning she arrived for breakfast looking decidedly pale and wan. When her hostess Charlotte Lenox-Conyngham asked what was wrong, she gave the following explanation:

I had gone to bed in the Great Four Poster and the fire had died down and I had begun to be drowsy, when it suddenly seemed that the room was full of excited people — servants I thought — who were pushing and wrangling in whispers. I felt overcome by fear, but just then I heard a clicking sound behind me, as though a door had been opened, and then a light shone at my back, and someone seemed to come through this light and stilled the commotion, so that all fear left me, and after a while I fell asleep. . . .

Miss Hamilton had referred to a door where there was none, at the back of the bed, but her hostess looked thoughtful. "But there *is* a door," she said. "It is hidden by the tester of the bed and it has been papered over for quite a long time."

This door in fact was opened during the occupation of the house's last owner who found inside a small powder closet, with a bricked-up fireplace, a pair of gloves and a small bag of bullets. Could the "great commotion" have been the inevitable outcry that may have followed the shot that eventually killed George Lenox-Conyngham?

Another occasional occupant of the Blue Bedroom is a "man in a black cloak." It is interesting to note that while the female apparition arouses no dread, the children who had seen the man in black did not care for him in the slightest.

Most people believe that the female apparition is that of Olivia Lenox-Conyngham. According to reports, she haunts the nursery and her apparition has been seen too at the foot of the main stairs on one occasion. One wonders why it is the wife and not the suicide victim himself who haunts the Blue Bedroom. Recently I was given a possible explanation.

A medical friend of the present custodian, a man interested in the paranormal, suggested that when such a tragic event as suicide takes place, many people close to the vic-

tim may harbor guilty feelings about their own "sins of omission." So perhaps because of these regrets about "what might have been," those people are far more likely to haunt the scene of the tragedy than the victim himself.

But the lady who haunts the nursery is more caring than guilt-ridden. In the early 1900's, during the residence of Col. William Arbuthnot Lenox-Conyngham and his family, the children's nurse told this story. She said that she had seen — so she thought — the mistress of the house, Mrs. Conyngham, come into the nursery in the early dawn and stand at each of the children's beds. When the nurse turned up the lamp to speak to Mrs. Conyngham, however, the figure hurried away. The same event was repeated some weeks later. In fact, as Mrs. Conyngham knew well, it was not she who bent so watchfully over the sleeping children. It is known that the same Olivia who had witnessed her husband's suicide had also nursed all her children through the dreaded smallpox. Perhaps it was her spirit that came to watch over those great-great-grandchildren.

I have my own story of Springhill. One afternoon as I was standing in the Cedar Room, a room that now houses the children's toys from long ago, I heard a woman's footsteps on the stairs outside. They stopped at the door of the room.

Then the door swung softly back and as I watched, the heavy oak cradle at the window began to rock.

Sometime previous to this, a workman repairing the roof heard footsteps on the stairs of what he understood was an empty house. Others too have their own stories to tell of Springhill.

As for me, I prefer to think of this

lovely and gracious house as a home that likes to be visited. As one wanders through the sunlit rooms, one can be forgiven for imagining that one hears the distant laughter of children at play or the sound of women going about their household tasks — and that memory, for a moment, holds the door to the past ajar.



HELLO, I AM YOUR MEDICAL COMPUTER

By George W. Earley

TALKING TO (or swearing at) machinery has been a human behavior trait for generations. But machines (particularly robots and computers) that actually react to the spoken word have primarily been science-fiction devices. Remember the scene in *Star Trek IV* when Scotty futilely tried to talk to a simple 20th-Century computer? A few years from now that scene may not be science fiction.

Design News recently reported, "IBM researchers at the Watson Research Center, Yorktown Heights, N.Y., have come up with a PC [personal computer]-based speech recognition system with a vocabulary of 20,000 words — about 97 percent of the words a speaker is likely to use in normal business."

The system is still experimental, says IBM's Dr. Gerald Present, and requires the computer user to speak slowly and distinctly and to "train" the computer by reading a special document to it. "Listening"

to the speaker read the document enables the computer to learn and memorize the speaker's speech patterns. Your personal computer would be a very personal computer indeed if it responded only to your voice.

Initially, while such voice-recognizing computers would be ideal secretaries, I believe that once the personal-speech-recognition-pattern stumbling block is overcome, the possibilities are nearly limitless.

Once programmed, all knowledge in any field would be accessible to virtually anyone. Imagine, for example, a computer that could listen to your medical symptoms and compare them against a memory bank more extensive and more easily accessible than human memory. Diagnosis would then be based on the near-totality of medical knowledge as opposed to what one or two overworked doctors know. Tomorrow may be closer than we thought.

POSSESSED BY A MURDER VICTIM

The authorities ruled his death a suicide but the dead man who spoke through a young girl demanded justice.

By Paola Giovetti

GIUSEPPE VERARDI was only 19 years old when he was killed. On February 13, 1936, his body was found under a bridge which stretched across a deep gully separating the small towns of Siano

and Catanzano in Italy.

The body was clad only in undergarments. The rest of Giuseppe's clothes were scattered close by. The youth lay face downwards and several abrasions, including a broken



Maria Talarico did not know murder victim; yet during her "possession" she mentioned intimate details of his life and death and her handwriting even matched his.

clavicle, were evident. The experts who examined the body ultimately concluded that Giuseppe had died of a skull fracture.

These same authorities later discovered that on the night of the incident Giuseppe had been out drinking with four friends. He left the Siano tavern after imbibing a great deal of wine. The investigators deduced that his death was probably a suicide — a conclusion the youth's family and friends rejected. They doubted that a fall from a 30-foot bridge would have resulted in so few injuries. The injuries and the manner in which the body was positioned suggested to them that Giuseppe was murdered — perhaps somewhere else, then brought under the bridge to encourage the belief that this was a case of suicide.

Three years later, on January 5, 1939, the puzzling death of Giuseppe Verardi would again come to public attention, this time with a remarkable twist.

Maria Talarico was a 17-year-old resident of Siano. Known as a sane, gentle and intelligent girl, she had known neither Giuseppe nor his family and took little interest in the case when the youth was killed. (She had been 14 at the time and the incident probably made no particular impression on her.) In 1939 she was engaged to be married.

On that fateful January day she was crossing the bridge with her grandmother when she suffered a

strange fit. Upon reaching a certain point she suddenly stopped and felt a crippling pain in her knees, then collapsed to the ground. With the help of a passerby, Maria was taken back home by her grandmother. The girl continued to suffer from the effects of the episode and kept calling for her mother who was working in Catanzano. As soon as she was informed of the situation, the older woman rushed home — to hear an unexpected greeting.

"You are not my mother!" the girl shouted. "You are the owner of this house. My mother's name is Caterina and I am Giuseppe. Go and tell her to come and see her unhappy son."

The voice, not at all like Maria's, spoke with a strong masculine intonation. The news raced through the village that the spirit of Giuseppe Verardi was possessing Maria and soon the residents were flocking to see the girl. "Giuseppe," now speaking regularly through Maria, related to the crowd the events that led to his death. He claimed he was a victim of murder, not suicide.

Maria's mother did not know the Verardi family but she decided to seek out Giuseppe's mother. She was initially unsuccessful but "Giuseppe" expressed the hope that he would be reunited with her. He even wrote his mother a short note using Maria's hand and wanted Mrs. Talarico to deliver it for him. The local police compared it to Giuseppe



Body of Giuseppe Verdi was found under bridge separating two Italian villages. The young man's alleged spirit return led investigators to reconsider their original conclusions and to ascribe death to murder. Absence of witnesses made prosecution impossible.

Verardi's earthly handwriting. In their opinion the two penmanship styles were identical.

DURING THIS strange sequence of events the apparent spirit of Giuseppe continued to control Maria. That evening, while still residing in the Talarico household, "Giuseppe" seemed to reenact the night of his death.

The townsfolk were still invading the house and "Giuseppe" selected at random four men and invited them to play cards and drink with him. "Giuseppe" refused to call them by their real names. He called them by the names of the four friends with whom he was drinking the night of his death: Toto, Abele, Rosario and Damiano. Although Maria seldom drank more than a

single glass of wine with her meals, "Giuseppe" drank glass after glass. Finally the spirit possessing the girl sternly told the four card players, "That night you let me get drunk adding salt, sugar and poppy to my wine. Do it now as well."

After making this abrupt speech "Giuseppe" placed salt and sugar in the wine and drank until he threw up. Then the spirit seemed to be reenacting a fight.

"Abele, Toto, please stop!" he cried. "Let me go, do not beat me! Help! They are killing me under the bridge!"

Only later that night did "Giuseppe" settle down, falling asleep while holding and kissing a photograph of his sister.

Mrs. Verardi visited the house at seven o'clock the next morning, but her arrival came as little surprise to "Giuseppe." The spirit already knew she was making the trip and even announced it to everybody present. When he finally saw Mrs. Verardi, he ran to her and embraced her. He called her "Mama" and kissed her repeatedly.

"Giuseppe" once again insisted that he had not committed suicide but was murdered. He correctly described the injuries authorities had found on his earthly body. Nobody heard his cries for help, the entity complained. "Giuseppe" accurately reported the present whereabouts of the perpetrators, informing the crowd that one had died in

the hospital (which was true of Abele) and that another was currently in Africa (true for Toto). Next he said that Damiani was coming to the house. This was true, but when the accused man arrived, "Giuseppe" merely looked at him coldly and ordered him to leave.

By this time "Giuseppe" had been possessing Maria for more than a day and during this time he spontaneously recognized several persons in the crowd, including his brothers. He also recognized some former friends and recounted incidents from their mutual past.

Maria's own mother, concerned for her daughter, asked Caterina Talarico to return home and pray to Giuseppe to release her daughter. Mrs. Verardi agreed to the request and "Giuseppe" eventually capitulated.

"I must go under the bridge," he said, "and I want with me only four men."

"Giuseppe" chose four persons from the crowd, left Mrs. Talarico's house and walked, masculine fashion, in the direction of the bridge. When she finally reached the bridge, she took off some of her clothes and placed herself in the exact position in which Giuseppe's body was found in 1936. She remained in that position for a few minutes, then awakened as if from a deep sleep. As she got to her feet she asked the amazed onlookers why she was there.

Maria was obviously back in

charge of her body but she recalled nothing of the previous events. She was again the shy, quiet and gentle girl she had been.

THE CASE caused a stir in the Italian press in 1939. A report on the case (including documentation) originally appeared in *Luce e Ombra*, one of Italy's leading psychic journals, that same year. Subsequently the late Ernesto Bozzano, a prominent parapsychologist, studied the case and in 1940 wrote a monograph on it.

Fortunately some of the individuals who witnessed the events firsthand still live in Italy. I recently met one of them, Dr. Pericle Assennato, now a retired magistrate. He was working near Catanzano when the apparent possession took place. He even worked with the commission of physicians who first examined Maria Talarico. He confirmed the accuracy of the story as I have described it in this article, adding some additional details. For instance, he told me the following story concerning a young brigadier named Guglielmo Sita:

It seems that Sita went to the Talarico home to see the possessed Maria, and "Giuseppe" spontaneously recognized the youth, correctly saying that they spoke the night of his own death. There was an even eerier side to the conversation. Giuseppe's jaw and teeth were broken when he died and Sita

claimed he heard Maria's own jaw creaking, as if broken, when they spoke. Sita told Dr. Assennato that he entered the house skeptical and left it terrified.

Assennato also told me that a second inquest was held into Giuseppe's death after the episode. This time the city authorities reversed their earlier opinion and ascribed his death to murder. Although "Giuseppe" had named his murderers, the inquest concluded that the crime was committed by persons unknown — a reasonable conclusion since there were no living witnesses to the crime. Nobody profited from Giuseppe's death and even the motivation for the killing was left unexplained by the restless spirit. Assennato suspects that the murder came about when a drunken argument raged out of control.

When I asked Assennato to elaborate on his personal conclusions, he responded cautiously.

"There are two possible interpretations," he said. "The spiritistic one — i.e., the possession of Maria order by the spirit of Giuseppe — was in to show the truth. All the village believed it. But a second one is that maybe the girl, walking on the bridge, recalled Giuseppe and his death and had a hysterical attack. After that she received telepathic impressions from the persons who came to see her and transmitted to her their knowledge, information and ideas about the case. Maybe the

description of the murder was transmitted to her by the killers themselves!

"I personally prefer this explanation, even if I cannot exclude the other one. In that time everybody

believed in possession. Very little was known about ESP, and possession seemed the only possible interpretation. Anyway, this case is one of the most interesting in the whole history of parapsychology."



SAM HOUSTON'S BIRD OF GOOD OMEN

By Harold Satterfield

SAM HOUSTON, a prominent figure in the histories of both Tennessee and Texas, was also something of a mystic who had lived among the Indians and absorbed much of their lore, including that involving the magical significance of birds. At two crucial times in his life the eagle took on great symbolic significance for him and in one instance may have saved his life.

As a young man Houston was a political phenomenon in Tennessee. The bright young attorney became a popular governor and was seen as Andrew Jackson's logical heir. In his mid-30's Houston married Eliza Allen. Three months later the marriage ended in divorce. Ruined politically, the disgraced Houston left Nashville in disguise.

Only recently has the cause of the divorce become known. Years earlier, during the Indian wars, Houston was wounded in the side. The wound never healed and his young bride found it unbearable, and so the union was ended.

A despairing Houston stood at the rail of the steamboat bearing

him away from Nashville. In his dark mood he contemplated jumping overboard and ending his life. Suddenly an eagle flew past, almost brushing his head with its wing before ascending into the setting sun. Houston interpreted this as an omen meaning he should not kill himself because a great destiny awaited him in the West.

Later, General Houston found himself in command of a ragtag army of Texans facing the vastly superior forces of the Mexican general Santa Anna. The Alamo had fallen and morale was at a low ebb.

On the morning before the crucial battle of San Jacinto, Houston looked upward to see an eagle sailing high overhead. To the mystic in him this could mean only one thing: victory.

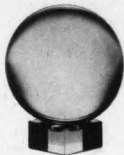
And victory it was: 1586 Mexican casualties compared to only 26 for the Texas side. On top of that, General Santa Anna himself was captured.

The Republic of Texas was born, heralded by Houston's bird of good omen, the eagle.

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BOOKS

NEWS & REVIEWS

by D. Scott Rogo



PRESENCES

SINCE THE late 1960's Andrew MacKenzie has been Great Britain's most consistently reliable writer on the paranormal. His first books were based primarily on cases drawn from the files of the Society for Psychical Research on whose governing council he serves. MacKenzie left the field in 1982 to write a series of books about Rumania but recently he has returned to his favorite subject. *The Seen and the Unseen* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, England, 1987, 285 pages, £10.95) is a collection of stories about unseen presences, hauntings, ghosts and retrocognition (psychic perception of the past).

MacKenzie is especially interested in the Belmez haunting in which mysterious faces appeared on the concrete floor of a small house in Spain. He offers the most complete summary of the case currently available in English, based in part on his visit to the site.

Other stories will be familiar to FATE readers. There is a demonic poltergeist case studied by W. G. Roll of the Psychical Research Foundation (see his article in our November 1985 issue) as well as a curious case of retrocognition involving the "seeing" of a non-existent landscape (Mary Rose Barrington's "A Slip in Time and Space,"

October 1985 FATE).

But if you think the book is no more than a rehash of previously published cases, you're wrong. People from the British Isles often send their own ghost stories to him and MacKenzie investigates the more promising reports. *The Seen and the Unseen* includes some of these unpublished cases and also reports on some promising but till-now-unpublished cases collected by other researchers in Europe. MacKenzie, who does little editorializing, usually presents the reports in a simple, straightforward manner, restricting his more personal observations to lengthy opening and concluding chapters.

The last chapter focuses on the frequency of ghostly experiences in the general population. Many people were surprised when Andrew Greeley, the famous priest, novelist and sociologist, published the results of his most recent psychic survey in *American Health* magazine. The poll reveals that religious experiences of all sorts, including direct contact with the dead, are commonly reported by Americans. Drawing on similar surveys conducted by parapsychologists in Iceland and Italy, MacKenzie shows that this trend is not

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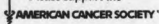
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The Seen and the Unseen is everything a good book on ghosts should be. It is solid, well-researched and readable. It stands miles above most books on the subject. My only complaint is MacKenzie's habit of continually referring to his previous books. He either cites or quotes directly from them 28 times in 278 pages of text. Enough is enough!

SPIRIT CONTROL

SPIRITS and ghosts of a different kind play the prominent role in Edith Fiore's *The Unquiet Dead* (Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1987, 177 pages, \$16.95). Dr. Fiore's previous book was *You Have Been Here Before* (1978) which argued that many psychological problems have their roots in past-life experiences.

Evidently Fiore, a California psychologist, has changed her mind. Her new book asserts that 70 percent of her patients seem to be possessed by spirits of the dead. Whether this position is an outgrowth of her previous one or a direct reversal is left unclear, although it is obvious from the text that Fiore still believes in multiple lives. *The Unquiet Dead* presents case histories, information on the symptoms of possession, and the use of hypnosis to uncover and test the disorder and concludes with detailed instructions on how to protect yourself from spirit control.

Fiore is not the first psychologist to suggest that some psychological problems result from possession and spirit obsession. Some of the early American psychical researchers spent years collecting evidence to this effect. Prominent among them was Dr. Carl Wickland who "depossessed" his psychiatric

patients by contacting their persecuting spirits through his wife's trance mediumship. This Spiritualist procedure was also employed by other researchers, including Prof. James H. Hyslop, a Columbia University philosopher who founded the American Society for Psychical Research. Other researchers, among them such forgotten pioneers as Dr. Titus Bull and Dr. Elwood Worcester (remembered today not for his psychic studies but for his role in promoting public health education in Boston in the 1920's), followed Hyslop's lead. The use of hypnosis to treat spirit possession was also practiced during those years by Dr. W. Franklin Prince, a clergyman-turned-psychologist-turned-psychical researcher.

It is unfortunate that, apart from the Wickland work, Fiore seems unfamiliar with this large body of fascinating case studies and research. What results is a highly personal book on spirit possession but hardly a complete or detailed study of the phenomenon.

But what of Fiore's own cases and opinions? She presents five complete case studies in which depossession supposedly cured patients suffering from different behavioral disorders. None of these cases, however, strikes me as particularly strong evidence of spirit possession but FATE readers should evaluate these cases for themselves.

The main problem is that conventional psychological explanations could be suggested for the "cures." It is well known that every form of psychotherapy contains implicit placebo effects and that the personality of the psychotherapist is critically important to the success of the treatment. Psychologists today know very little about why

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therapy works in the first place. This simple fact certainly makes it impossible to promote such "cures" as evidence for the reality of possession.

But my real quibble with Fiore is not with the evidence she offers. What I object to are the sweeping and less than circumspect statements she sometimes makes. I doubt that many therapists, even those who believe in spirit possession, would agree that *most* behavioral problems stem from such a paranormal source. Fiore also believes that multiple personality is caused by possession, that *any* recreational use of alcohol or drugs can lead to spirit control and that walks through cemeteries or mortuaries can also put one at risk. These statements contradict the views and experiences of many parapsychologically-oriented psychotherapists who believe that spirit possession occurs only rarely. Fiore's thinking is not unlike that of Christian fundamentalists who see "demons" lurking behind every source of pleasure.

Still, *The Unquiet Dead* does offer some interesting information. Fiore has found that many people became possessed by playing with Ouija boards, participating in Spiritualist seances or dabbling in the occult in other ways. It is amazing that so many clinicians continue to make similar discoveries. The fact has been remarked on earlier by (among others) Dr. Worcester in *Mind, Body and Spirit* (1932) and by Dr. M. Scott Peck in *People of the Lie* (1983). Fiore's discussion of the techniques of "psychic self-defense" as a way of protecting oneself is quite good.

The Unquiet Dead, although a simplistic and unconvincing book, is nonetheless worth reading as a primer on a fascinating subject.

OTHER REVIEWS

LIGHT YEARS by Gary Kinder, Atlantic Monthly Press, New York, N.Y., 1987, 266 pages, \$18.95.

Unless you've been off on a flying saucer yourself, you probably know of the decade-long controversy surrounding the UFO-contact claims of Eduard "Billy" Meier. *Light Years* is an attempt by lawyer-turned-writer Gary Kinder to make sense out of Meier's claims.

Meier is a Swiss farmer whose formal education stopped in the sixth grade but who subsequently knocked about the world picking up street smarts. He also acquired, if his critics are to be believed, the knowledge to pull off what ufologist Kal Korff calls "the most infamous hoax" in UFO history.

Meier claims he has been communicating with space visitors since he was five and photographing their "beamships"—a term he uses for what we'd call UFOs—since 1975. A few of those photos are in the book; the same ones and others have appeared in various publications by an Arizona outfit called Genesis III Productions whose first book, *UFO...Contact from the Pleiades*, I reviewed unfavorably in FATE's June 1980 issue. I see little in *Light Years* to change my initial opinion that Meier's claims are at best unproven.

This is not to say that there aren't aspects of the affair undeserving of further study. There are. Unfortunately they tend to be obscured when Meier gets caught cheating. For example, photos of the destruction of California by earthquake, allegedly taken while he was aboard a Pleiadian beamship with time-travel capability, turned out to be

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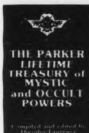
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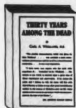
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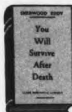
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pictures of someone else's artwork.

But when Kinder identifies scientists, engineers and other experts who have examined some of Meier's evidence, the reader can't help wondering if there really could be some grain of truth among all the confusion. The "evidence" includes a tiny metal fragment an IBM scientist believes to be an alloy "we could not achieve on this planet," tape recordings of sounds a professional sound engineer believes Meier could not create himself... and those photographs.

It would take, said one Hollywood expert who worked on the movie *2001* and the Jack Webb *Project UFO* television series, "a fleet of clever assistants, at least 15 people" and about \$100,000 worth of equipment. As far as anyone can determine, skeptics included, Meier has worked alone and lacks the financial resources for fakery on the scale Kinder's expert envisioned.

Unfortunately these judgments are open to question. The metal is lost, there aren't negatives of the photos for proper analysis and Meier may well be the slick con man his critics claim he is.

Hampered as he was in writing this book—Kinder doesn't speak German and had to rely on an interpreter in dealing with Meier—the author still manages to convey the incredible meld of confusion, controversy and contradictions that swirl like an obscuring fog around the Meier case. Kinder also weaves through the book a fairly comprehensive history of ufology from Kenneth Arnold to the present.

Missing, though, are some photographs I am sure we'd all like to have seen: close-up shots of an orbiting Soviet spacecraft, of Semjase, the "blond, Nordic" Pleiadian cosmonaut

who has been Meier's teacher, and of a landed beamship with crew nearby. According to Kinder, the publisher dictated the photos to be in the book. They are neither a good nor a convincing choice.

In all, *Light Years* is flawed in many ways; yet it is the only attempt at an in-depth investigation of the Meier case we have or are likely to have until someone with both time and money, a fluent knowledge of German and a more hard-nosed investigatory approach than Kinder's comes on the scene.

While few will argue with Kinder's conclusion that "the truth of the Meier contacts will never be known," I'd qualify that by saying a beamship landing in Zurich at high noon might do it. But I don't intend to hold my breath waiting for it.—George W. Earley.

THE MEANING OF LIFE by J. H. M. Whiteman, Colin Smythe, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, England, 1986, 267 pages, \$13.95.

Although thousands of books on mysticism have been written, few have broken new ground. Thus it is a great pleasure to read J. H. M. Whiteman's magnum opus *The Meaning of Life* which not only covers unexplored territory but also sets forth one of the first scientifically appropriate studies of the mystical dimension.

Unlike most works of its kind (which simply cross-reference each other), Whiteman deals with mysticism in a precise and rational manner, defining his terms cogently and setting up a rigorous methodology for interested seekers to test the reality of transmun-

dane experiences. I am not indulging in hyperbole when I say that *The Meaning of Life*, subtitled "Volume 1: An Introduction to Scientific Mysticism," is one of the best books ever published on the subject in English.

Divided into four main sections, the book begins with an explanation of five chief types of stabilized nonphysical (SNP) states of consciousness (focusing particularly on separative experiences where mind and body seem apart from one another) and the requisite skills, like active and continuous recollection, necessary for releasing and controlling these forms of awareness. Whiteman then proceeds, in Chapter Three, "A Scientific Evaluation of 'Other-World' States," to develop an ingenious rating system for measuring the relative degree of reality in any nonphysical experience: an assessment schema (diagram) he calls "The General Index of Reality (GIR)."

In Part Two he tests his rating system on a wide variety of otherworldly experiences, including the out-of-body experiences of Muldoon and Monroe, the fantasy excursion of Jung and the questionable accounts of reincarnation memories. The result is an impressive *objective* criterion for gauging the reality of mystical encounters.

Whiteman, like other pioneers in the field such as Harvard University's Aaron Talsky, has noted that there is a hierarchical spectrum of nonphysical experiences, each with an ascending degree of vividness and certainty. Thus it is vitally important not to dismiss all nonphysical experiences as fantasy, since there are fundamental differences between lucid dreams, OBEs, NDEs and conscious meditation transports. As Whiteman reports of his own mystical excursion,

"Suddenly I was carried into *full* interior wakefulness—into a real state with clear consciousness of *separation*. By this term I mean the waking of the reflective consciousness in an interior space and time, existing in its own right, *independent* of physical space and time, but not out of touch with it."

Whiteman completes his study with a rich, suggestive overview of mystical transformation and a provocative reinterpretation of 20th-Century physics.

A watershed text in the history of paranormal research, *The Meaning of Life* deserves a wide reading.

The book is being distributed in this country by Samuel Weiser, Inc., Box 612, York Beach, Maine 03910.—David Christopher Lane.

ALSO NOTABLE

THE SIRIUS MYSTERY by Robert K. G. Temple, Destiny Books, Rochester, VT., 1987, 290 pages, \$12.95, paperback.

The "ancient astronauts" fad of the 1970's produced a mountain of bad books by authors whose imaginations outraced their knowledge and reasoning ability. Temple's book, however, is something else: a learned and methodical, if at times tedious, examination of what *may* be real evidence of early extraterrestrial visitation. The book focuses on West Africa's Dogon tribe, whose apparently ancient and, according to 20th-Century astronomy, accurate beliefs about the composition of the Sirius star system — knowledge the tribe claims to have learned from beings who live on a planet in that system — seem so far to defy conventional explanation. (Temple's response to his critics, who claimed that Dogon's beliefs are relatively recent, having been given them by European missionaries, was published in the October 1980 issue of FATE.) The appearance of a new paperback edition of this book, originally published in 1976, is welcome, but one wishes the author had provided an update on developments since then.

REPORT FROM THE READERS

These columns of FATE are set aside each month for your comments. Send your opinion of articles and stories of unusual occurrences to FATE Magazine, 500 Hyacinth Pl., Highland Park, Ill. 60035.

FAIR AND OPEN-MINDED

In the article "Taking Hawaii Skeptics to Court" (August 1987 FATE) Loyd Auerbach states that the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal is motivated by the desire "to rid the world of what debunkers call 'pseudoscience.'" Surely this is a herculean task unlikely to be accomplished. The paranormal is deeply imbedded throughout the world and uncritically presented as factual by radio, television, motion pictures and such entertaining journals as FATE.

We are realists and "debunking" is not our chief aim. A quick look at the back of *Skeptical Inquirer* will reveal what truly motivates CSICOP. It "attempts to encourage the critical investigation of paranormal and fringe science claims from a responsible, scientific point of view and to disseminate factual information about the results of such inquiries to the scientific community and the public." CSICOP "does not reject claims on a priori grounds, antecedent to inquiry, but rather examines them objectively and carefully." CSICOP is committed to the fair, open-minded examination of evidence for

paranormal claims. We will not accept uncorroborated secondhand accounts or personal anecdotes as proof of these claims.

In his letter to Allison Jacobs-Pendragon, CSICOP Executive Director Mark Plummer included a statement on academic freedom endorsed by CSICOP's Executive Council. This statement included the passage: "CSICOP is committed to free inquiry and academic freedom and is opposed to any effort to deny the right to teach. We believe that competent academic bodies by means of responsible due process should determine the content of the curricula in their respective institutions."

Finally we would like to express our deep appreciation to FATE for constantly keeping CSICOP, CSICOP personalities and *Skeptical Inquirer* in the minds of your readers. I am sure that through your extensive promotion many FATE readers have now become faithful subscribers to *Skeptical Inquirer*. — Barry Karr, Director, Public Relations, CSICOP, Buffalo, N.Y.

Readers who want to know more about what Mr. Karr calls CSICOP's

"fair, open-minded examination of evidence for paranormal claims" are urged to read "sTARBABY" by Dennis Rawlins (October 1981 FATE).

In our view CSICOP deserves the gratitude of everyone interested in anomalies and the paranormal. Through its policy of relentless self-promotion CSICOP kept interest in the paranormal alive even after popular attention shifted elsewhere following the psychic boom of the early 1970's. The current revival of interest in these matters is, we suspect, due largely to CSICOP's efforts to make sure the controversies surrounding paranormal phenomena were not forgotten. — The Editors.

THE FIRST PSYCHIC PLUMBER?

This eerie incident happened in 1977 in my home in Wyoming shortly before I retired to Florida. I had been getting my home spiffed up for selling, hammering brads around the window above the kitchen sink from which to hang lightweight decorations. When I later discovered the garbage disposal thoroughly and completely jammed, with the aid of a flashlight I could see a brad caught under one of the blades. It seemed such a minor thing, not requiring a plumber. Surely I could pry out the brad.

I taped a flashlight to the water faucet aiming at the dark disposal and used one hand to hold back a rubber flange at the opening and the other to wield a sharp-pointed screwdriver to get under the brad. Although I occasionally got good leverage, the nail wouldn't budge. After several futile tries, like a bratty ill-tempered child, I threw the screwdriver on the floor, clenched my hands,

raised my arms to the ceiling and yelled, "I want that nail out!"

When I recovered from my snit and returned to the job at hand, the brad was gone. I couldn't believe it. I searched the drain, the sink, the window casing. Had I unknowingly flipped out the brad or was I flipping out? How could the brad get past the rubber flange? Finally, almost afraid to try, I ran water in the sink and turned on the garbage disposal. It ran like a charm.

Now switch to about 1981 in Florida. I lived in several small apartments before buying a modest home where I now live. One apartment had a garbage disposal. My two small granddaughters came for lunch, then stood on chairs and "did dishes for Grandma." The next day when I turned on the disposal there was a terrible racket so I immediately turned it off, got out the old flashlight and peeked in. A broken juice glass originally the size of the opening to the disposal had evidently slipped in when the children washed the dishes.

I drove to a hardware store, explained the problem to a clerk and bought a sinewy, inexpensive grasping tool. At home again I poised the tool and aimed the flashlight — to see *nothing* in the disposal, not a shred of glass. Recalling vividly my previous experience with the brad, I wondered if I had contacted the garbage disposal genie. Was I now qualified to be the world's first psychic plumber? — *Jane Yeaman, St. Petersburg, Fla.*

FOR UNBELIEVERS

I never dreamed anyone would believe an experience I had as a young girl until a friend gave me copies of FATE to read. I was surprised to find how easily

people reveal similar experiences.

When I was about 12 I had a friend who often referred to "Sarah," a ghost that roamed her house at midnight. One night my friend asked me to spend the night and actually see her ghost. At first I thought she was only playing with my imagination but sure enough, at midnight a very pale young woman passed through her living room. She was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. She was dressed all in white and looked as if she had walked out of a Civil War story. She seemed to float; yet I knew she was walking. I wanted to speak but my friend had told me to be very quiet or "Sarah" would vanish immediately.

I knew no one would ever believe me if I told about this encounter so for the last 25 years I have kept it to myself.
—Joyce Bauguess, Baltimore, Md.

A CULT IS A CULT IS A CULT

How dare J. Gordon Melton write a treatise on "Living in the New Age" (August-September 1987 FATE) and imply that all individuals and/or groups who have broken away from John Wesley's Methodist church have strayed from the flock? I daresay that all of those who have not kept up their membership in the church are not cultists and we might ask just how *united* the Methodist church is.

Grouping together Christian Science, Theosophy, the Krishna devotees, et al, is a pretty broad sweep and shows Melton's inexpertise and overall spite for anyone who has broken away from John Wesley.

Mary Baker Eddy was not a cultist. She established the doctrine of mind-healing and the *Christian Science Monitor* and her science has saved countless



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thousands. Madame Blavatsky was not a cultist and was too damned independent to join the Methodist church.

What's wrong with embracing the New Age? Melton's article is filled with dark implications for those who don't line up with the Methodist church. When hell freezes over, I'll do it. The word "cultism" is a derogatory term and should not be applied to those who have broken away from the mainstream.

Although Melton must have done wide research, his article is filled with errors as to both time and sequence. Helene Blavatsky, Mary Baker Eddy, Annie Besant, John Wesley and the Krishna devotees sprang up at widely divergent times and each person has made his own individual effort.

I am not a Christian Scientist but I respect Mary Baker Eddy. I am not a Theosophist but I pay tribute to Blavatsky and Besant. I am not a Seventh-Day Adventist or a member of a Pentecostal faith. Perhaps Melton didn't have time to deride the latter.

Melton's article was erudite — full of sound and fury and signifying nothing. What is wrong with the New Age when the old age is collapsing? — *Rosemary J. Cornelius, Milwaukee, Wis.*

As a professional medium I am personally offended by J. Gordon Melton's comments in "Living in the New Age."

Channeling did not start with Spiritualism. It has existed since ancient times and channelers were known as oracles. Each medium or channeler is at his own level of enlightenment and so are the people they give readings for. Entities or guides come from many different spheres and what may be shallow and unappealing to Melton

may be quite helpful to others.

I was amazed that Melton would condemn *all* mediums and channelers on the basis of the few he has studied. There are many sincere, reliable mediums today who do not think of themselves as involved in the channeling craze. They are instead a part of the Spiritualist, Spiritist, Metaphysical or other minority religions. They are not answerable to fundamentalist Christians.

FATE readers who are interested in channeling and mediums should ask themselves *why* they are interested. If it's for curiosity, thrills or a desire to prove something one way or the other, they are wasting their time and money.

Mediumship and channeling are sacred and should only be done when sincere people need help. — *Harriett Hill, Metaphysical Fellowship, P.O. Box 13, Lebanon, Ore. 97355.*

NO MISSING LINK

I have just picked up the January 1987 issue of FATE and read Arthur T. Jeffery's letter titled "Up From the Ape." To me anyone who questions evolution is like a person trying to make a stew without a pot to put it in. There is no answer to anything in our time-space universe unless evolution is taken into consideration.

Like Darwin, many people see the evidence of evolution all around them but some are hung up on the theory that we came from apes. *The Urantia Book* published by the Urantia Foundation, 533 Diversey Parkway, Chicago, Ill. 60614, explains all facets of evolution. We don't need bones from millions of years ago to prove there is no missing link. — *Oleta Pierce, Yarnell, Ariz.*

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REPORT FROM THE READERS

(Continued from page 116)

STAR Foundation; she accepts no personal fees.

This was the third time the Summer Sessions Office brought Woodrew, author of *On a Slide of Light* (Macmillan) and the forthcoming *Thunder on a Clear Day* (Doubleday), to speak, a positive endorsement of her effectiveness as a lecturer. From the numbers who attended the program and the fees the university charged, the programs surely made a positive contribution to the department's cash flow each year.

Woodrew held a "Think and Relate Workshop on the World of Psychic Phenomena." She is not and has never claimed to be a parapsychologist. She is a futurist. The most vocal skeptical critic of Woodrew's programs is Victor Stenger, a professor of physics at the University of Hawaii. Isn't it a paradox that the very academic freedom that allows Stenger to practice his vocation is the one he attacks? — *Richard Smolowe, STAR Foundation, Waynesville, N.C.*

SEE THE DISTINCTION

I do not wish to carry on a long argument with Arthur Myers who objected to my review of his book *The Ghostly Register* in the March 1987 issue of FATE. In fact, I enjoyed the book for what it is, an entertaining collection of ghost lore not to be confused with a serious book on the possibly paranormal.

Anyone who has dealt with psychic events — for example, poltergeist cases — knows that often the individuals involved are deeply troubled and the situation explosive. The wrong person

doing the wrong thing can do a lot of harm. Is Myers willing to vouch for the sensitivity, intelligence, honesty, even sanity of the "psychics and parapsychologists" on his recommended list? Would he be willing to take responsibility for any emotional damage they might do?

In his letter (June 1987 FATE) he is irate because I seem to be accusing the people he recommends of wandering around "muttering about energy." Myers should read his own book more closely. In two of the cases he cites he has Alex Tanous, one of his recommended psychics, saying: "The energy of her spirit is still here" and "The vibes are excellent."

What troubled me about Myers' book is that in recommending psychics and parapsychologists, he didn't seem to be making a distinction between ghostly lore, with which every writer can do as he wishes, and real research into the paranormal which imposes far stricter rules. It troubles me that in his letter, he doesn't seem to know there is a distinction. — *Daniel Cohen, Port Jervis, N. Y.*

ON WHAT AUTHORITY?

In the June 1987 issue of FATE, a letter from Robert S. Smith of Vancouver, B.C., Canada, states that Christ did *not* claim to be the son of God but rather a son of God. I wish Smith would tell us the exact authority for this statement. If it is true, how does it jibe with the saying, "He gave His only begotten son. . . .?"

I wish to be enlightened about this by anyone who cares to express an opinion based on the record rather than emotion. — *C. Edward Whitford, Liverpool, N. Y.*

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∞ Ouija boards can be hazardous to your health, says veteran parapsychologist Martin Ebon. If you aren't careful, they can introduce you to dangerous mental and paranormal forces.

∞ Dr. Marge Rieder theorizes that "past lives" people discuss under hypnosis are in fact memories they have inherited. To test her theory, she regresses identical twins—with startling results.

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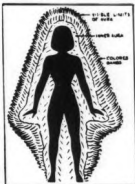


Diagram of normal aura based on sketch by Walter J. Kilner, M.D.

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