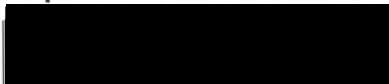


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I SEE BY THE PAPERS

by Curtis Fuller



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

There are no unnatural or supernatural phenomena, only very large gaps in our knowledge of what is natural . . . We should strive to fill those gaps of ignorance.

—Edgar D. Mitchell
Apollo 14 Astronaut

ONLY 443 years ago Andreas Vesalius published the first accurate anatomical descriptions of the human body. Unfortunately his findings contradicted much of the work of the famous Greek physician Claudius Galen whose work was gospel at the time. As a result, when Vesalius published *The Fabric of Man* the Inquisition threatened him with execution. He made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land (1564) in fulfillment of the condition for commutation of his death sentence. Galen's influence was so strong that his erroneous theories of health and disease had prevented the evolution of any new ideas and practices for nearly 1500 years!

If the church had prevailed and

science still followed Galen few of the marvelous new studies of health and medicine would have taken place, the sensational increases in average life span of humans would be nonexistent and even the theory of germs as a cause for disease would never have been born.

Is there an essential difference between the attitudes of the religious Establishment in Vesalius' case and between the present-day attitudes of the Fundamentalist churches seeking to turn back the clock of science and pressure everyone—legislatures, schools, courts, news media, churches—to believe what was disproved a century ago?



WHAT DIFFERENCE?

THE CREATIONISTS believe that certain Bible stories are true and evolution is false or at least unproven. Creation "science" holds that animals and plants were created by God in immutable "kinds" and that fossils were created during the flood of Noah—a claim proved

wrong more than 100 years ago. Creation "science" even holds that physics is wrong when it uses radioactive clocks to date the earth or gauge the distance to the stars because the starlight has taken longer to reach earth than the Creationists believe the universe has existed.

Stephen Jay Gould, a paleontologist at Harvard University, charges Creationism with calling for a "miraculous suspension of natural laws" and a failure to abandon theories that have been tested and proved wrong.

The organized political pressures of the Creationists through their Fundamentalist churches are serious enough that 72 Nobel laureates and 24 scientific organizations attacked them last August in a public manifesto.

Their influence is damaging to this country in two ways.

First, by trying to impose false teachings on the public schools. The incidence of their attempting to censor both books and curriculums has increased 35 percent in the past year. Anthony T. Podesta, president of People for the American Way, says almost 60 percent of the efforts by the Fundamentalists to infiltrate the public schools were attempts to censor ideas, information and teaching methods in the classroom. "Censors today don't just ban books, they want to ban ideas that differ from their own," he reports. In the past school year 39

percent of the attacks on library books and curriculums actually led to removal or restriction of the materials.



THE END OF TIME?

A SIXTH of the biology texts used in schools do not mention evolution at all; half cover it inadequately. In Florence, S. C., the school board voted to remove the Merriam-Webster College Dictionary from school libraries because parents objected to some of its word definitions. The Fundamentalist Citizens for Excellence in Education is pledged to "take complete control of all local school boards."

Another of the doctrines of the Fundamentalists, as evoked by such well-known evangelists as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Hal Lindsey, is "millennialism"—the doctrine that holds the end of time is near. Recently the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. issued a paper denouncing this idea as theologically false. Millennialism teaches that the Bible, especially in the books of Daniel and Revelation, provides a calendar of crises that signal the approaching end of the world. The Lutherans say this interpretation of the Bible is arbitrary. They challenge the idea that "all history is a 'countdown' stage toward the end" and that the end is near. "Our Lord did not say when

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He would return," their document states.



IT HURTS AMERICA

THE SECOND reason for opposing this nonsense is the unscientific attitude it breeds. I recently read a detailed study of the scientific and technical backwardness of the Soviet Union. The Soviets are estimated to be at least 10 years behind us and falling farther and farther behind.

The reason for this, the study says, lies in their near-religious orthodoxy and resistance to any ideas which seem to contradict the gospel as spoken by the Central Committee. The official state com-

mitment to Lysenko, which set Soviet agriculture back by a decade and resulted in the persecution of the experts who disagreed with his theories, is only an exaggerated example of the way the Soviet state works.

The Kremlin's obsession with orthodoxy prevents the free exchange of ideas. It limits the subjects of research. It discourages the workers from being creative; they know they can be persecuted if their work turns out to be less successful than they hoped. Meanwhile the system is plagued with duplication of effort, inefficiency and continual cover-ups of failures.

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RELIGIOUS AMERICA

A RECENT Gallup Poll shows a remarkably consistent religious beliefs and practices in this country over the past 50 years. Despite all we have heard about changing folkways and social mores, a belief in God, the divinity of Jesus, prayer, Bible reading, church attendance and membership and "confidence in religious institutions" have changed little over that entire time span.

The Gallup organization has published its findings in a 57-page golden anniversary summary of data covering the period since the 1930's. At the same time the report comments on the consistency of belief over the 50 years. It states that another consistent factor has been the "glaring lack" of knowledge and "superficiality" about religion. A typical respondent says he worships because "it makes me feel good" rather than because it brings out his need to repent or to do God's will. Ninety-five percent of Americans say they believe in God but only about two-thirds believe in a personal God who watches over, helps and judges people — the God of the Bible. Only 40 percent of those questioned say they attend church each week.

How important is religion in their lives? About 56 percent say it is important — compared with 75 percent who found it important in 1956. The report, however, is hopeful; it says recent trends suggest renewed interest in religion, greater participation in Bible-study groups and a greater interest in religion on college campuses. Students, they say, want to see religion play a bigger part in public life.



REVISING THE BIBLE?

BEFORE WE abandon the subject of religion, we wish to comment on a special study now under way on one of the oldest manuscripts of the Gospels ever found. The text is called Syriac Sinaiticus 30 and was written between A.D. 350 and 420 but the ink was scraped off and the parchment was reused. Two experts, from the University of Southern California and Princeton University, plan to read the original script by computer enhancement.

It was discovered in 1892 by a British woman, Agnes Smith Lewis, who did a translation of all its 364 pages. A few experts regard the manuscript as being of surpassing importance. Its importance has not been generally acknowledged, however, because scholars have not been able to check the accuracy of Lewis' translations. Three separate efforts were made to photograph the manu-

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script but the translations resulting from the attempt were unsatisfactory.

Last July, James H. Charlesworth, a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, Bruce Zuckerman, a linguist-photographer of USC, and his brother Ken crossed the desert from Cairo to the St. Catherine Monastery of Mount Sinai where the manuscript is closely guarded. The Zuckermans tried various combinations of film, light and filters before they discovered that ultraviolet light and a yellow filter brought out the underlying letters. Now computer enhancement is expected to eliminate the darker script, which is a treatise on the lives of female saints written in the late Eighth Century.

The document is expected to clear up at least two extremely important questions. First, like two better-known Greek manuscripts, it shows the Gospel of Mark ending at Chapter 16, Verse 8, without the disciples' seeing the risen Jesus. That scene is found in other texts of Mark. Apparently also, this script is the only manuscript of the Gospels reporting that the three wise men saw Jesus' star "from the east" rather than "in the east," Charlesworth told the Associated Press.



THE LATEST ADAM
PALEOANTHROPOLOGISTS
have "known" that the human

family tree was a sort of two-pronged fork with *Australopithecus afarensis* representing the main ancestral branch which then forked off with one branch leading to modern humans and the other continuing the *Australopithecus* line through *africanus*, *robustus* and *boisei*. Unfortunately, they've been wrong.

A new hominid fossil found on the west side of Lake Turkana in northern Kenya has upset all these neat chartings of the human family. The new cranium was discovered by Alan Walker of Johns Hopkins University. It is a million years older than the *Homo erectus* boy's skeleton discovered in 1984 — specifically the newly-discovered fossil is 2.5 million years old — but it shows confusing characteristics which have the world's scholars in an uproar.

First, it has facial characteristics that the scholars thought evolved perhaps as much as a million years later. Second, along with the "advanced" face it has a primitive cranium. In addition, the new skull has a high bony crest, resembling the bone of a bird's breast and having the same purpose: to anchor heavy chin and jaw muscles.

The new skull probably is not in the direct human line but it may be some time before paleontologists place it properly in our rapidly growing knowledge of our hominid ancestry.



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WHAT NEXT?

MELVIN Calvin is a Nobel Prize-winning research chemist at the University of California at Berkeley. He has come up with a number of innovative ideas that he believes would help solve the world's fuel crisis. Calvin says that modern plants could provide at least half of the fuel energy needs of the United States within the next 40 years. Calvin looks at the fact that Brazil produces nearly half of its fuel from sugarcane but he thinks that's not good enough.

"We would much prefer plants which would do the whole thing in one step — reduce all the way down to hydrocarbons," he told an international symposium at the Smithsonian last summer. Oddly enough, Calvin has found such a plant. He reported in 1979 that the Amazonian copa-iba tree produces fuel that can go directly from the tree into a diesel-powered car's tank. Since then Brazilian researchers have begun to grow a plantation of such trees and soon will have them ready for harvest.

Calvin says the gopher plant, grown on arid soils in this country, can produce the equivalent of 12 barrels of oil per acre at prices that would be competitive if oil climbs again to \$30 a barrel. Two other plants — *P. undulatum* and *P. resiniferum* — also have great possibilities. *P. undulatum*, which grows throughout the West Coast, has

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THE ANTHROPOLOGY WARS

NOWHERE, apparently, are hostilities between rivals more bitter than within certain scientific disciplines — especially paleontology and anthropology. It would be difficult to find more ill will than exists between the pioneering Leakey family of Kenya and the Donald C. Johanson-Timothy D. White team of the United States. Compared with the paleontology wars, the quarrels between the debunkers and the parapsychologists look like mumblety-peg.

The Leakeys were among the pioneer fossil hunters in Africa and have been extremely adept in raising funds and getting publicity in addition to doing outstanding work. Johanson, a comparative latecomer to the field, found the famous fossil skeleton that he named "Lucy" in the Hadar area of Ethiopia. Johanson described Lucy as a new species and the oldest human ancestor — a claim the Leakeys vigorously dispute.

But now the quarrel has intensified. The government of Tanzania and its national museum have given Johanson an exclusive 10-year privilege to survey the country and resume excavation in the Olduvai

Gorge where Mary Leakey did pioneering work before her retirement in 1982.

It seems to be part of the human condition that people who do pioneering work in a given area come to think they own it. This attitude is hardly limited to paleontologists.

"There's a good deal of irony in this and a lot of hurt feelings," says Bruce Latimer, director of physical anthropology at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History, which was originally Johanson's base. Latimer added, with considerable understatement, "It's upset Mary Leakey quite a bit. Richard [her son] too. But there's nothing they can do about it."



SUPER ANCESTOR

THE MODERN human race may be descended from one woman after all but apparently Adam had little to do with it beyond the conventional genetic input. If so, the search for the "missing link" and other ancestors of man may be superfluous. They were all evolutionary dead ends.

This wonder woman — who represented a new genetic breakthrough in humans — lived in Africa 140,000 to 280,000 years ago, according to Allan Wilson, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. He suggests that earlier species of humans may have died out or been swept aside by the

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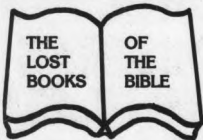
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The Lost Books of the Bible were generally kept secret by the Church Fathers and never translated from the Greek or Latin until 1926, when the texts were first published. These books are all supplements to the New Testament and should not be confused with the "Apocrypha" of the Old Testament, which was omitted from the King James Version of the Bible after 1827.

Here are the Gospels of Peter and Nicodemus and the two accounts of Christ's infancy (I and II Infancy). The Gospel of Nicodemus includes a vivid account of Christ's descent into Hell between the Crucifixion and the Resurrection and describes his expulsion of Satan from Hell. Here too are accounts of Mary and her personal life.

The Gospel of Peter was once highly regarded, but was rejected because it differed too much from the chosen synopses. The Gospel of St. Thomas was rejected because it espoused the Gnostic view that salvation came through wisdom and knowledge rather than through faith and good works.

The formulation of early Church doctrines was marked by dissension, personal jealousy, intolerance, persecution and bigotry. Many of the books contained here were rejected because they contradicted the authority of Paul, although recommended by such authorities as Origen, Jerome and Tertullian.

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descendants of this one super female.

Wilson and his colleagues undertook this research after finding that a peculiarity of cell structure permits only women to pass one class of genes to their offspring. "These genes occupy tiny suborgans called mitochondria," says the Associated Press. The mitochondria are located within cells but outside the nucleus.

The particular mitochondrial DNA at issue is inherited only through the mother and undergoes mutations at the extremely low rate of two to four percent every million years. Wilson's team calculated backward and tried to establish the time when all mitochondrial DNA in humans was the same. They estimated that to be 140,000 to 280,000 years ago. Similar research has been done by Dr. Douglas Wallace of Emory University and he agrees in general with the method but estimates the time span as closer to 100,000 years and the place Asia rather than Africa.



ABOMINABLE HOAX?

EXPEDITIONS still travel to the Himalayas in search of the ever-elusive yeti whose existence, although attested to in numerous reported sightings and tracks, is still doubted by most zoologists.

The yeti first came to the attention of the West in 1951 when Eric Shipton and Mike Ward, climbing

a glacier near Mount Everest, said they had come upon giant human-like footprints at 13,500 feet. The two photographs Shipton took of them were widely reproduced and initiated the continuing controversy about the possible presence of unknown manlike apes ("abominable snowmen") in the Himalayas.

The first picture showed a line of tracks heading across the snow. The second was a close-up of a single giant print, with two large toes on the right, then a gap, then three smaller toes. Measured against Ward's ice ax, the print was 13 inches by eight, making it the size of a gorilla's or a large bear's. But no animal known to science makes a track like that.

Now a mountaineering historian, Audrey Salkeld, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, is charging that this second print was "cooked," its "toes" added by Shipton's knuckles. Salkeld notes that Shipton had a "puckish sense of humor" and was fond of practical jokes.

Writing in the *London Daily Telegraph*, Peter Gilman cites a number of contradictions in Shipton's account, most notably conflicting accounts about whether one or two sets of tracks were involved. Originally Shipton implied that the second photograph was taken of one print among the many that made the trail shown in the first. But he changed his story when primatolo-

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gist John Napier noted discrepancies between the prints in the two pictures. Shipton told Napier that there were *two* sets of tracks and his second picture was taken of a print from a series found near the first.

Napier had been suspicious from the first. Although he is open-minded about the possibility of yeti-like creatures, the print seemed to him zoologically impossible. Napier's scientific specialty is primate walking and no primate he could imagine would have a concave, rather than convex, ball of the foot.

Napier told the *Daily Telegraph*, "I never believed that footprint. It's so phony."

Shipton died in 1977 but Mike Ward, a doctor who serves as con-

sultant to a London hospital, denies the prints were a joke that got out of hand. He says he has always maintained there were two sets of prints; yet, as Gilman notes, Ward's 1972 autobiography mentions only one.

The most prominent doubter was the late Sir Edmund Hilary, who two years after Shipton's reconnaissance expedition to Everest became the first man to reach the top of the mountain. Hilary thought the print had been "enhanced."



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body" includes anthropologists. But now some anthropologists are challenging this conventional wisdom.

William Arens of the State University of New York asserts flatly that ritualistic cannibalism (as opposed to survival cannibalism, when, for example, the victim of an airplane crash eats human flesh rather than starve to death) has *never* occurred in human history. "If I'm right," he told *Science*, "anthropologists are engaged not in a lie, not in a hoax, but in a myth. They are retelling what is always assumed to be true."

To that D. Carleton Gajdusek responds that the evidence of cannibalism in New Guinea is so overwhelming that "it's beneath my dignity to answer the argument." Gajdusek, a member of the National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Diseases and Stroke, won a Nobel prize for his studies of the viral disease kuru among the Fore tribe of New Guinea. He believes that the Fore got the disease because they eat human brains.

But anthropologist Lyle Steadman, who spent two years doing fieldwork in New Guinea, says "there is no evidence of cannibalism" there. He investigated a number of reports and found they were all baseless. "It is really interesting that cannibalism has been talked about in print since the time of the Greeks," he says, "but no solid reporter has ever witnessed it."

Arens' research led to an interesting discovery: People never called *themselves* cannibals. It was always *other people* who were cannibals — and therefore uncivilized. The Chinese accused the Koreans of being cannibals. The Koreans charged the Chinese were cannibals. Africans thought Europeans were cannibals and Europeans thought the same of Africans. Arens says, "I soon learned that the cannibal epithet has been applied at one time or another to someone in every human group."



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Archaeologists are particularly
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of 70 Neanderthals have been recovered.
This is unusual, since typically
no more than four sets of bones are
found at a site. Even more peculiar
was the condition of the bones.
Mary Russell of Case Western Reserve
University says they "were all
scratched and badly broken. The
idea was that they are the remains
of a Neanderthal feast."

Paleontologist Draguton Gorjanovic-Kramberger, who excavated the site around the turn of the century, discovered human and animal bones mixed together. He concluded that the Neanderthals were treating all meat-bearing species alike.

Russell wondered, however, if there was an explanation other than cannibalism. In all parts of the world there is a ritual called the secondary burial, in which bodies are exhumed and the flesh scraped off. "How would you be able to tell the difference between a secondary burial and cannibalism?" Russell asked. She decided to collect the bones of butchered animals to see how the cuts on them compared to those on the Neanderthal bones. She suspected that secondary-burial bones would have many more cut marks because, unlike meat bones, they would be scraped until clean.

After considerable investigation she has concluded that "the Krap-

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This proof has been provided by an Englishman who not long ago discovered a mysterious painting in his garage. The canvas shows the Angel of the Lord announcing the birth of Jesus. Just as the man was about to discard the painting (for he was not particularly religious), a Christ-like figure appeared in front of him, blocking his way. The masterful being reached out his hand and touched the glass-framed picture. The glass on the picture shattered into bits and the mysterious figure then vanished in a blaze of orange light. The Englishman instinctively thrust his left arm upward to shield his eyes, but suffered a burned left forearm and the angel picture was blackened and blistered.

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ina Neanderthals were not cannibals."



US AND THEM

BUT NEW indications of prehistoric cannibalism have emerged from work being done in Fontbre-goua Cave in southeastern France, where archaeologists have discovered disposal pits. In some there are animal bones, in others human bones. But all the bones have cut marks in the same places.

Pat Shipman of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine has confirmed that these are indeed marks caused by cutting, as opposed to something else such as weathering. Shipman and Mary Russell tried to determine whether cannibalism or secondary burial was the cause. They figured that if it was the former, the bones and marks would be exactly the same age; if the latter, the bones would be older than the cuts.

They concluded, in Shipman's words, "The bones were not weathered when the marks were made." In other words, with some qualifications (Shipman acknowledges "some slop" in the data), the bones are evidence of cannibalism.

"It looks like there wasn't any distinction between people and animals," she says. Possibly, if the cave people did practice ritualistic cannibalism (as opposed to survival cannibalism, as some observers

have speculated), they ate only members of other tribes. Shipman remarks, "Many tribal people have as words for themselves 'humans' and for all others 'nonhumans.' It's the ultimate sort of us and them."



IN THE NEWS

THERE IS A certain cosmic humor in many of the stories that come across my desk — ironies, paradoxes, incredibilities and just plain silly events that I would often like to cover in more detail but simply cannot for want of space. So here is a sample:

• There's a roaming bear that has the folks in west Tennessee concerned. It seems a cub from Minne-

sota was taken to Arkansas about three years ago and released in the Ozarks as part of an effort to restore the bear population there. This particular bear has wanderlust, however. For some reason Arkansas wardens removed the bear to a Mississippi River island. He next showed up in Louisiana, whence he was returned to his island. Later he swam away and excited the good citizens of Greenville, Miss., before he was taken back to his island. He then apparently decided to return to Minnesota. By June he was in Tennessee and has been moving steadily northward. If you see him, he has three green tags in one ear and weighs about 300 pounds. And growing.

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PSYCHIC SCOUTS OF THE OLD WEST

A willingness to heed dreams, visions and supernatural portents could keep a man alive in dangerous frontier environment.



John Young Nelson, shown with his family, lived among Sioux on the Midwestern frontier between 1840 and 1890, occasionally serving as scout for white parties. Once he was warned by a voice that he would be shot but he misunderstood warning (South Dakota State Historical Society).

By Robert Hadley

IN SEPTEMBER 1787, on the northwest Virginia frontier, settlers trailed an Indian war party which had stolen horses in the area. The Indians were racing for the safety of their lands west of the Ohio River. The settlers were led by Alexander West, a tall, lithe and active man, more rawboned than handsome. West had an air about him that commanded attention and respect.

When night came, the two parties unknowingly camped close to-

gether. West volunteered to do sentry duty during the night. The hours passed without incident and when West was relieved in the morning, he sat with his back to a tree and fell immediately asleep.

He awoke a short time later and jumped to his feet with a warning. "Boys, look out!" he declared. "Some of us will be killed today. I saw the red doe in my dream. That is the sign of death. I never knew it to fail!"

Psychic phenomena — dreams, visions, presentiments and prophecies — played an important role in

Maj. Gen. Patrick Conner rejected scout Jim Bridger's warning, conveyed by supernatural wolf, that troopers were doomed. Disaster followed, leading to Conner's losing his command (Montana Historical Society).





James Butler Hickok, better known as "Wild Bill," was convinced spirits protected him. Shortly before his murder in Black Hills, he had a premonition that he would be killed (South Dakota State Historical Society).

the lives of men and women, red and white, who lived on the American frontier. But none exhibited psychic powers so dramatically and practically as did the frontier scouts. They had to learn new ways if they were to survive the demanding, ever-changing environment of the borderlands. By necessity that knowledge had to be practical. Many of them learned the "peculiar" ways of the Indians. Many learned to listen to the voice within.

Alexander West, raised in a supernatural climate of dreams, charms, demons and witches, was one such person.

"The wilderness was a region of superstition," wrote Joseph Doddridge, a son of one of the Scotch-Irish immigrants who settled on the colonial border in the middle 1700's. The tough, resourceful Ulstermen were a superstitious lot who had thrown themselves into a wild, sometimes desperate place. "Let not the reader be surprised at the superstition which existed among the first adventurers into the western wilderness," Doddridge warned readers of his *Notes on the Settlement & Indian Wars*.

Often when he was a boy, he listened to the settlers — exiled from

society, exposed to the dangers of the frontier — tell of their dreams, omens, powers of witchcraft, charms, incantations, amulets. To this son of the wilderness, who eventually educated himself, all this was so much gibberish. "Superstition is universally associated with ignorance, in all those who occupy perilous situations in life," he wrote. "Philosophy alone can banish their use."

To Alexander West, however,

heeding his dreams was no superstitious practice. It was as useful and practical as learning how to read sign or shoot straight. His red doe had warned him too many times to be ignored or dismissed.

Immediately after West delivered his warning, the company of bordermen discovered the smoke from the Indians' fire. They attacked the Indian camp, killed one and drove off the rest. They collected the stolen horses and were about to ride

One of the most famous of Western scouts, Jim Bridger lived among Indians and picked up many of their beliefs. He believed supernatural warnings from spirit world had saved his life (Montana Historical Society).



away when the Indians doubled back and fired into them, mortally wounding John Bonnet. Bonnet died before he reached home and the members of the party considered his death to be a verification of the prophecy in West's dream.

* * *

THOSE WHO did not listen to their inner voices sometimes paid a dear price.

The McCullochs were among the earliest settlers of northwestern Virginia. Two of the four younger brothers, Samuel and John, were especially noted as scouts and Indian fighters. They were described as "firm, decisive, with untiring energy and perseverance, courageous in fighting Indians in open combat." They believed the intervention of an invisible Power had saved them on numerous occasions from certain capture and torture. The Indians hated and feared the McCulloch brothers.

In 1777, the bloody and infamous Year of the Sevens, Samuel built and commanded a small fort which guarded the rich farmland on a creek about five miles from its confluence with the Ohio River.

On July 30, 1782, Samuel and John rode out of the fort to scout the paths leading to the river to make sure that no Indians were around to disrupt the field labor. Halfway to the river Samuel jerked his horse to a stop. He had a sudden premonition that he was going to be

killed. He rode swiftly back to the fort.

He handed John's wife his watch and several other articles of value, instructing her that if he didn't return she was to give them to certain persons. He left a message for his young wife. Despite his premonition, because he still had his duty to perform, he then rejoined his brother in the scout.

They reconnoitered the river paths and, relieved at the apparent absence of danger, turned back to the fort, John in the lead. On a rocky summit known as Girty's Point, they were ambushed. Bullets tore into Samuel but they missed John, who turned to see his brother fall. An Indian sprang from the rocks and quickly scalped him. John shot the Indian just as he lifted the trophy, then wheeled his horse and raced for safety amid a shower of bullets.

When he and others returned to recover Samuel's body, they discovered that the Indians had cut out and eaten his heart, to partake of the dead man's courage.

The intervention of a mysterious invisible Power also helped some other frontier scouts.

John Young Nelson is representative of many of the young white men who felt more at home with the Indians than with the civilization in which they had grown up. From about 1840 to 1890, unheroic and unpretentious, he lived most of his

life with the Ogalala and Brule Sioux on the Midwestern frontier, occasionally leaving them to serve as scout and guide for various white parties. He guided the first party of Mormons to the Salt Lake region. His life was filled with hardship and danger. His survival is evidence of his skill, adaptability and wisdom in listening to his inner voice. In Nelson's case that voice spoke loudly.

In 1868 Nelson guided two companies of cavalry from eastern Colorado back to Fort McPherson in Nebraska. He was riding in his usual position, at the head of the column, when he heard a voice say, "Nelson, you are going to be shot."

He pulled up his horse and looked quickly around him. He and the soldiers were in the middle of a plain. There was no one around. As he reflected on all this, the commanding officer of the column rode up to him.

"Hallo, Nelson!" he called. "What is it?"

"I don't know what it is, General," Nelson said, "but I heard a voice."

"What did it say?"

Nelson told him and the general laughed, "Oh, that's merely your superstition."

"Superstition or not, General," Nelson replied, "with your permission I prefer to ride in the rear. I have had two or three warnings in my life and have learned not to challenge their accuracy."

The general told him to go to the rear of the column if he wished and graciously, skeptically, offered to ride in his place at the head of the detail and take the shot intended for Nelson.

They arrived at McPherson with no trouble. The officer chided Nelson about the incident but the scout, unable to get the idea out of his head, was haunted by the premonition and voice the rest of the day. He went to a saloon, had a few drinks with rowdy railroad men, then retired to his room, anticipating a good rest on a bed. It had been awhile since he had slept in one.

But before he fell asleep, he heard the trumpeter, a boy, yelling for help outside his window. A railroad man was mercilessly pistol-whipping him.

Hastily, thinking of the boy and not of his warning, Nelson belted on his revolver and rushed outside. The railroad man turned on him and shot him in the thigh.

Other soldiers took him to the hospital where after some days the bullet finally was extracted.

"So much for my warning voice and the General's remark about superstition," he wrote later in his memoirs, *Fifty Years on the Trail*.

* * *

INVISIBLE POWERS also aided another, more well-known plainsman, James Butler Hickok, known as "Wild Bill."

Volumes have been written about

this sharpshooter, army scout and peace officer. Hickok was the most celebrated pistol fighter of his day. His survival as a gunslinger was mostly attributed to his agility, quickness and undisputed skill with the handgun. Determined to be the fastest and most accurate pistol shot, he practiced daily at his craft. Reliable witnesses attest that he could hit a thrown can 12 times before it touched ground, drive a cork through a whiskey bottle at 20 paces and split a bullet on the edge of a dime at the same distance.

But Wild Bill attributed something else to his survival. He told the one biographer who knew him, J. W. Buel, that in all his fights he was surrounded by spirits who kept him cool and collected while they made fools of his enemies. Buel wrote, "The very few intimate friends Bill had were well acquainted with his peculiar belief in spiritualism. He claimed to be clairvoyant, especially when danger threatened, and the many narrow escapes he had gave some evidence of the reality of his spiritual sight."

Sometimes even the spirits can't help. As he entered Deadwood Gulch in the Black Hills in 1876, Hickok had strong premonitions that he would be killed. He told this to several of his friends who scoffed at him. But the feeling persisted for weeks, so strongly that on August 1, the evening before he was shot in the back of the head, he wrote his

wife that if they would not meet again, "With wishes even for my enemies I will make the plunge and try to swim to the other shore."

* * *

JIM BRIDGER heard his voices too, although they were considerably different from the ones heard by Nelson or Hickok.

By 1865, when he was hired by Genville Dodge to guide and be chief of scouts for the Powder River Expedition, Bridger had lived in the mountains for 43 years and had an unmatched reputation for caution, sobriety, industry and sound judgment. Formally uneducated, he could speak English, Spanish and French with equal ease and he was also fluent in nearly a dozen Indian tongues.

In his 40 years in the mountains he had picked up some other sorts of education also. Bridger had "gone Injun." Capt. Lee Humfreyville, an army officer who spent a winter with him in the confines of a post, recalled in his *Twenty Years Among Our Hostile Indians*, "I had ample opportunity to study his character and learn his peculiar ways and manner of living. He never did anything until he felt so inclined. For instance: If he grew sleepy in the afternoon . . . he went to bed, and when he awoke . . . he would arise, make a fire, roast meat, eat it and 'sing Injun,' to use his own term, the rest of the night. If he had a tin pan he would beat on the bot-

tom, making a noise like an Indian tom-tom."

This "peculiar" old mountain man with the unsurpassed reputation of being the best guide in the West was asked by Dodge to rendezvous Maj. Gen. Patrick Conner's column with two other columns of the same command at the junction of the Tongue and Yellowstone Rivers. Bridger was also asked to keep the inexperienced general's feet out of a trap; the officer had no Indian-fighting experience.

Conner's column left Fort Laramie in July 1865 and, with Bridger's assistance, surprised and whipped a large band of Arapahoes on the Tongue at the end of August.

On the first of September, before dawn, a single cannon shot was heard. No one, not even Bridger, could tell from which direction it came but it gave notice that somewhere the other two columns were near. Conner immediately dispatched scouts to find the columns. Bridger stayed in camp, lulled to sleep by the racket of thousands of gray buffalo wolves which had surrounded the troops all the way from Laramie. Bridger rested peacefully, knowing that where wolves were plentiful, Indians were scarce.

But this night was going to be different.

A wild, eerie, echoing wail suddenly broke into the noise of the gray wolves. Bridger and his fellow scouts bolted upright, looking at

each other over the embers of the dying campfire.

Although it sounded like the keening death wail of an Indian woman, it wasn't human. They recognized the howling of the Medicine Wolf, a spirit warning, a voice that Bridger and the other scouts knew signaled trouble. He and the others knew that when you heard it, you'd better make tracks.

Bridger quickly woke General Conner, advising him that the entire command must leave immediately. Conner, a rational, logical man, would have none of it. He wasn't about to move his victorious soldiers because of some crazy superstition. Bridger pleaded with the officer to move his command, citing numerous instances of disasters he had witnessed when the wailing of the Medicine Wolf was not heeded.

The officer laughed at Bridger's superstitions and refused to move, but not Bridger. He and two other scouts packed their gear as fast as they could and moved downstream.

From that hour on, one disaster after another hit the expedition. An early cold front swept down on them, freezing to death all the horses on the picket lines. When the two other columns, continually fighting off enraged Sioux, Arapahoes and Cheyennes, finally reached Conner, they were horseless, barefoot and starving. Conner and his defeated expedition limped out of Indian territory. When he reached

civilization, Conner received the last blow: letters relieving him of his command.

Whatever it was, the Medicine Wolf saw the future and when it spoke, Bridger had learned to listen.

These frontier scouts, like Bridger, trusted a mysterious power within and without themselves, a psychic power that established so-

ciety sneered at. In the hard, often perilous school of the frontier, however, these pioneers couldn't afford to ignore things that worked, that gave them an edge, that foretold the future. The astute ones learned from hard-bought experience that willingness to listen to their dreams, their presentiments, their inner voices was as useful as any other survival skill.



ANOTHER SENSATIONAL DISCOVERY

IN APRIL 1986 Associated Press reported that archaeologists have excavated the biggest ancient burial chamber found in China in this century, the huge tomb of a rich, slave-owning duke who lived 2600 years ago. The find is comparable to the Xian army of terracotta warriors positioned to guard the tomb of the first emperor of unified China, Qin Shihuang, who lived 22 centuries ago.

As deep as an eight-story building and large enough to hold 200 dump trucks, the duke's tomb is in the shape of an inverted pyramid and contains the bodies of 180 male and female slaves, according to one of China's leading newspapers, the *Guangming Daily*. Although plundered during the Tang and Song dynasties, the tomb was still found to contain more than

2000 artifacts of gold and jade, stone chimes, bronze and lacquer ware and exquisitely designed silk.

Experts think the tomb was built for Duke Jing of the state of Chin during the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) of the Chou Dynasty but they await the opening of the coffin for verification. This climaxes 10 years of work on the site in central China's Fengxiang County, Shaanxi province.

The newspaper quoted one archaeologist as saying, "The tomb of the duke reveals the spectacular site of a well-developed slave society." Tools, dyes and jewelry were found inside the coffins of some of the slaves, who were entombed to serve the duke in the afterlife. The size and richness of the tomb challenge the traditional view of the period as a poor slave culture.

BEWARE OF BOGUS GURUS

Is your spiritual guide trying
to save your soul or line his pockets? Here's how to find out.

By David Christopher Lane

THE 1980'S may be known in the future by spiritual aspirants as the decade of the fallen guru. Already a number of prominent and respected religious masters in India and elsewhere have had their secret, private lives exposed: hidden Swiss bank accounts, extensive cases of plagiarism, sexual misconduct, violent retaliations against detractors, egotistical power plays, drug trafficking and more.

It is no longer respectable to follow a guru. The New Age is growing old. The Aquarian Conspiracy is backfiring. The Golden Age of Enlightenment is rusting. What happened to the Consciousness Revolution?

Critical reasoning. Instead of a quantum leap into transformed dimensions of awareness, spiritual seekers have begun to develop a keen sense of discrimination. Ken Wilber, perhaps the most articulate spokesman of this emerging group, points out in his ground-breaking overview of human evolution, *Up From Eden*, that critical intelli-

gence is not an obstacle in the soul's progression back to God, but a beneficial and necessary step. To disavow reasoning and its strengths, Wilber emphasizes, is *not* a progressive way towards self-realization but a regression into mental infancy.

True saints and gurus, though their number may be few, do *not* ask for blind obedience. Quite the contrary, they demand individual responsibility and maturation in the face of one's real and eternal condition. Unlike their charlatan counterparts, genuine masters invite critical thinking. As one teacher put it, "Question everything (even your guru's actions and teachings) until you satisfy your intellect. Even if you spend your whole lifetime in such an endeavor, it is not time lost, but time gained. You will be building a foundation on rock, not sand."

But how does one know if his spiritual master is authentic or misguided? How can one distinguish between a legitimate and beneficial path and a self-serving and corrupt

organization? No doubt these are difficult questions, but they can be answered. This article is an attempt to clarify many of the muddled issues now facing the spiritual community by offering a unique "crucible" wherein a series of key questions are asked and examined. Each of these questions is designed to reveal the relative degree of legitimacy and authenticity of one's chosen master and path. For some it will be an awakening experience, while for others it will be an outward confirmation of what they already know intuitively. In either case the crucible will, I hope, spark deeper investigation of *all* aspects of one's spiritual development.

Although guidelines have been proposed by several religious groups to help would-be seekers decide which path or guru is the highest, almost all of them suffer from a clear case of what sociologists and anthropologists now call *ethnocentrism* (the tendency to see other people, cultures and religions solely in terms of one's own world view). Surely no critical guide will be exempt from a certain amount of prejudice or bias, but it can be minimized if the template we employ to appraise masters and new movements is drawn from transcultural sources and is interdisciplinary in scope.

To accomplish this aim, the following test was compiled from four distinct schools: (1) *Transpersonal*

psychology (Ken Wilber, John Welwood, et al); (2) *Advaita Vedanta* (Ramana Maharshi, Nisargadatta Maharaj, et al); (3) *Sant Mat* (Sawan Singh, Julian P. Johnson, et al); and (4) *Christianity* (Mother Teresa, Nicholas of Cusa, et al).

Naturally not all of these schools are in exact agreement with each other, but taken together they do provide a substantial framework with which interested practitioners can measure the claims of their respective guru and path. Each of the headings will contain examples of individuals or groups who have either embodied the ideal principle or gone far astray from it. All of the examples are based upon documented research.

Does your guru/path charge money for membership?

Perhaps the easiest question to ask and have answered by a spiritual guru/path is whether or not the organization charges money for membership. If the answer is yes it is a clear sign for the "buyer to beware," since almost all groups that assign a fee for their teachings are suspect. Although self-realization may entail many requirements, such as giving up ego, greed, lust and so forth, offering up your wallet or life savings is *not* one of them.

In America there is a tendency to make a commodity out of anything, even spirituality. Not only is making salvation a marketable item

absurd ("Sorry, you don't qualify for the highest, blissful heaven." "Why not?" "You forgot to pay last month's subscription dues for soul discourses."), but it allows for a number of unscrupulous individuals to make huge sums of money off naive seekers. Bhagwan Rajneesh, more than any other current Indian guru, illustrates this fact with his excessive wealth and predilection for Rolls Royces while living in the United States.*

Although money is necessary to keep movements functioning (the publishing of books, etc.), there is a distinct line between obligatory payments — even if they are disguised as "love offerings" — and unsolicited donations. The latter has justifiable reasons behind it, whereas the former makes religion a business enterprise, with a very lucrative tax shelter.

Interestingly, there are comparatively few spiritual groups which do *not* charge money for membership. Thus, this first criterion is a rather simple way to ferret out the possibly genuine guru/path from the less valid ones. Check out the movement's financial situation closely, keeping a close eye on where and to whom most of the money collected is going. If the particular organization is resistant to giving out such monetary information, then it can be safely assumed that the guru/

path in question is *more* concerned with fiscal matters than with uplifting of the mind and spirit.

Does your spiritual teacher have a high standard of ethical conduct?

A truly enlightened master is by virtue of his attainment a moral human being. For, unlike most of struggling humanity, the realized sage has transcended the ego and its limitations and become consciously aware of his real relationship as an indivisible part of God's Being. As such, an enlightened master would exhibit ethical qualities far *beyond* those manifested by even noble worldly souls. In light of this, it is particularly distressing to note that a large number of so-called gurus are quite unethical in their behavior. This ranges from improper business deals to sexual misconduct, personal violence and even criminal activity.

But even when teachers have been known to engage in immoral actions, naive followers try to find ways to justify such behavior. The problem with attempting to give metaphysical explanations for what otherwise would be considered "ordinary" human actions is that it enables ambitious masters to bypass standard morality in the name of a "higher" authority.

What is needed in appraising spiritual claims is a religious version of "Occam's razor" (the scientific/philosophic rule that requires

*See Martin Ebon's "The Decline and Fall of Rajneesh," March 1986 FATE.

that the simplest of competing theories be preferred to the more complex or that explanations of unknown phenomena be sought first in terms of *known* quantities), wherein seekers have a predisposition for the more logical, common-sense interpretation of allegedly transcendent actions. Is it really necessary to "explain away" a guru's lust or misdirected practices as being motivated by the Holy Spirit, God or Mother Shakti? Gurus don't hesitate to point out their devotees' weaknesses, nor should disciples hesitate to criticize their teacher's faults when they appear. Critical exchange is crucial for any type of relationship — including teacher/student ones.

Does your master make claims about his spiritual development, powers or attainment?

Almost all of the world's great religious scriptures universally acclaim that humility is one of the chief virtues of an enlightened human being. Yet many of the most popular gurus today speak out quite stridently about their spiritual attainments. Some, like Sathya Sai Baba of South India, even claim to be God incarnated. Others, perhaps less absolutist but nevertheless confident, allege that they have access to the Supreme Being on a day-to-day basis. It is roughly estimated that there are over 100,000 gurus in India. Most claim to have direct

contact with the highest Reality and Truth. What is the seeker to do? Whose statements should he believe?

None of them. Spirituality, according to true mystics of all ages, is an experiential science, one that demands not blind faith and belief but rigorous practice and application. Indeed, as Ken Wilber points out, authentic mysticism is a provable discipline since it enables a practitioner to see *directly* higher, transpersonal regions of consciousness. Therefore, the necessity for "belief" in a teacher's claims is uncalled for. Rather, what *is* needed is experimental verification of the path he advocates. All too often religious seekers become armchair speculators versus actual practitioners, thereby basing their judgments on a mere intellectual appraisal of the master and *not* on direct interaction with his teachings.

If any guru demands belief in his status, it is obvious that what he is teaching is *not* spirituality/mysticism but dogma and conversion. Truly, unless the would-be disciple is already God-realized, how is he to *know* the spiritual capabilities of his master? Mere allegiance will not suffice, nor will any amount of propaganda about the guru's greatness; only daily spiritual practice will do.

Throughout all cultures and all ages there have been a select number of saints who have embodied

the very highest qualities of enlightenment which, contrary to our notions of "other worldliness," can be manifested in their everyday lives. "By their fruits you will know them." Some beautiful examples in the 20th Century are Ramana Maharshi, Sawan Singh and Mother Teresa, each of whom in his or her own way has expressed an aspect of the Divine (Knowledge, Awareness and Love). Such rare individuals serve as reference points with which to measure the claims of emerging gurus in North America.

Does your guru/group proselytize vigorously for new converts?

Regardless of how proselytization is disguised, any guru/group that advocates a vigorous program of recruiting new converts acts as a dividing force in the society, cutting directly into family and relationships. Such conversionary emphasis has a tendency to create factions where none had existed before: "I am saved; you are still lost." "I found it; you haven't." And so on. This kind of dualism has many forms, ranging from the blatantly obvious (as we find in fundamentalist Christian and Islamic sects) to the subtly hidden (Est: "Did you get *It*?", Scientology: "Are you clear?").

Undoubtedly a certain amount of advertising goes on in every religious movement, even the ones that are adamantly opposed to spreading their teachings publicly (e.g.,

Soami Bagh and Dayal Bagh in Agra, India). Just the publication of books, texts and articles is itself a form of advertising, albeit a limited one. The fine line, however, is where *giving* out the message becomes consciously *pushing* the truth, as not only an alternative but a required necessity. Wilbur points out the danger of such development:

Such obsessive drive is always open to problematic occasions, not the least of which is the fact that if you have *the* way, then that end will justify virtually any means, up to and including holy war. And holy war, of course, isn't a sin, it isn't murder, because the people you are killing in order to save aren't really people — they're infidels.

If the guru/path really does provide a glimpse into the transcendental truth of the universe, then the concern will not be with "preaching" that insight but actually exemplifying it. As is well known in parental and teaching circles, the most accomplished parent/teacher is the one who says the most not with words but with actions. This simple truth, though used as a cliché, should be kept in mind whenever one encounters a "new" revelation.

Who appointed your teacher master? What is the historical tradition behind your movement?

Successorship controversies are some of the most intricate and con-

fusing issues that a spiritual seeker can face. A number of perplexing questions may arise: "Is my guru really enlightened?" "Did my teacher truly receive the mantleship from his master?" "Why is my movement's history disputed by outside scholars?" Etc. The forthcoming answers are rarely simple and airtight. There is always a strange twist, an odd fact, a peculiar story, which confuses even the most stalwart of followers.

The only remedy to doubt is not blind belief or dogma but the ability to allow the mind to question and to embrace the paradoxical nature of the world. This kind of recourse enables the discriminating mind to exist alongside the devotion-laden heart. But certain requirements of historical legitimacy must be met before the seeker can relax into his practice with relative confidence.

Most importantly the guru must have confirmation for his claim of mastership by *outside* sources. If this requirement is bypassed, then the neophyte runs the risk of having *only* his teacher able to validate his realizations. Such single-source legitimacy, as Wilber terms it, is open to a series of problems, not the least of which is narcissism on behalf of the guru who becomes by virtue of his self-appointment the final and only authority on spiritual matters. Verification, therefore, is not only helpful in determining the master's real status but is necessary

in moving religious endeavors out of isolation, where excesses and ethical transgressions are more likely to occur.

Are the central teachings of the guru/movement transrational or prerational?

Contrary to what most secular humanists (such as Paul Kurtz and Isaac Asimov) believe, mystical religion is a *transrational* endeavor to achieve higher states of consciousness beyond the verbal mind. Genuine mystics are not concerned with prerational forms of behavior, such as mythic logic, group-think, dogma, obedience without insight, and so forth. These types of thinking work *against* rather than promote spiritual enlightenment. An authentic tradition centers its teachings on direct, personal contact with the Supreme Reality by engaging in day-to-day meditation and prayer.

No true mystic will ever ask a student to believe in him blindly or follow his teachings uncritically. Comments Tulsi Sahib, a renowned 19th-Century saint in the Sant Mat tradition: "When with my *own* eyes do I behold, then shall I accept what the Sat-Guru saith." Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, says, "Until with my own eyes do I see, the world of the Guru satisfieth me not. . . ." And finally writes Shiv Dayal Singh, "Know thou thyself by thyself; believe *not* all what others say."

What are transrational practices? Disciplines which concentrate on *higher*, not lower, states of consciousness and which enable the student to *master* the lower tendencies of the mind. Hence, transrational engagements do not squelch critical thinking but actually help the reasoning process by allowing it to see more fully the vast potential of human life. As Wilber so clearly indicated, there is a fundamental difference between a sangat of meditating Zen monks and a clan of deluded Jim Jones devotees. The former is transrational because the monks *take* the intelligence with them into satori, whereas the latter is prerational because Jonestown members foresook their individuality for regressive magical-mythic belonging.

What are the day-to-day results of your interaction with the guru/path?

If the guru/movement is authentic, he or it will help you to better understand yourself, your family, your relationships and God. Such understanding, however, does not necessarily mean that your worldly life will improve accordingly. For instance, following a spiritual path does not insure one against losing money, facing natural catastrophes and struggling with domestic problems; it only helps one in coping better with all the various aspects of human existence.

Obviously, the results of your interaction with the guru/path should be apparent to your close associates: more openness, kindness, compassion, selflessness, honesty and loving devotion. If these qualities are not exhibited, it can be for two reasons: you are not practicing consistently what the guru/path advocates or you are following teachings which place more stress on selfish, prerational and antisocial behavior. Interestingly, it is easier to decide that a message is fraudulent than it is to own up to your immaturity and lack of discipline.

The effect of the guru on your personal life should be clearly evident, especially if you feel that your teacher is God-realized. Thus, there is as much responsibility on the shoulders of a disciple as there is on a guru. Both must be willing to surrender to a reality higher than themselves: the devotee to his master's instructions; the master to the living presence of God, to whom he has liberated his being.

How to score your answers on the spiritual crucible.

If after taking the "spiritual crucible" you find that your guru charges money for membership, lives an unethical life-style, self-proclaims his mastership, encourages proselytizing, alleges he is God-incarnated, emphasizes prerational choices and demands total obe-

dience, it can be assumed that you're on the wrong path and that your guru is a charlatan.

On the other hand, if your guru/path scores positively in all areas (such an accomplishment, by the way, is rare), then you are very fortunate to have been led to a beneficial and legitimate spiritual movement. The responsibility now shifts to your shoulders, as it is up to you to take advantage of the situation. Enlightenment is a two-way process, the outcome of two interacting forces: God's grace and the disciple's effort.

Most of the results, however, will be a combination of positive and negative scores, with some guru/paths meeting the criteria in three or four sections but missing the marks in others. In this case it is essential that the seeker fully weigh the pros and cons of his guru's mission. If one decides to stay in the movement, then it is necessary to discard those elements of the teach-

ing that do not coincide with his best interests. If one leaves the group, however, it does not mean that everything has to be forgotten. Rather, those features that are beneficial should be taken along as guidelines for the journey.

Ultimately, following a spiritual master or path requires a tremendous amount of maturity, self-control and discrimination. To achieve God-realization is *not* an overnight affair or the outcome of feeble effort; it is the culmination of consistent day-to-day application of transcendent mystical teachings. In the end, the greatest obstacle of all is not the guru or the movement. It is the disciple.

This article is an edited version of "The Spiritual Crucible: A Critical Guide to America's Religious/Cultic Renaissance," which first appeared in Understanding Cults and Spiritual Movements (Vol. 1, No. 3), Box 2508, Del Mar, Calif. 92014.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"BRINGING children out into the January sun is not as convenient as giving them a tablet containing Vitamin D. Pushing nails through an apple, allowing it to sit, removing the nails and eating the apple is not as easy as taking iron tablets after a doctor tells you that you're anemic," writes James Scala, a biochemist and nutrition researcher, in his book *Making the Vitamin Connection*.

"Brewing tea from pine needles or rose hips during the winter months is not as fast as popping a Vitamin C tablet," he writes. "In each case, however, the goal and the results are the same."

Old wives' tales often have sound nutrition principles behind them, according to Scala. The old methods of supplementation were a far cry from the tablets and capsules of today but often just as effective.

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.

A WARNING?

By Jim Sheriff

I WAS lying in bed one night in August 1972 when suddenly an image appeared on the wall. I saw what looked like a child's small arm, badly mangled all the way from the fingertips to the armpit. I had no idea what this vision meant.

Two weeks later, while I was sitting at the kitchen table, I heard bloodcurdling screams outside. Rushing into the yard, I saw my four children, Arnold, 14, James, 13, William, 8, and Rose Marie, 6, gathered around the old wringer washing machine. What I saw next sent a chill through me. There was the arm protruding from the wringer just as it had appeared in the wall image. And it was badly mangled.

My eight-year-old son William had been feeding tree leaves to the

rollers of the wringer and had put his hand too close. The rollers pulled his arm through all the way to the shoulder and were continuing to turn on his arm as though trying to pull his entire body through.

Because the rollers frequently separated and did not wring the clothes properly, I had clamped the



Jim Sheriff

rollers together. Therefore they could not be released. I was not aware of the "popping apart" safety feature should someone get his hand caught. So there was my son, a victim of his mischief and my ignorance.

I quickly pried the seemingly hungry rollers apart and rushed William to Mercy hospital in Orlando. (It is now called Brookwood.) There were no broken bones or permanent injury. Ruptured blood vessels just beneath the skin made it appear much worse than it actually was. William recovered fine.

Was the wall image a warning? Or what? For sure it was a lesson. Now, when I have no knowledge of the function of potentially hazardous equipment or machinery I consult someone who does.—*Orlando, Fla.*

GRETTA'S SORROW

By Audrey Leabo

OUR GERMAN shepherd dog Gretta was passionately fond of my husband Carlos Pruneda. His business took him away from home frequently and in his absence she slept on the floor of my bedroom.

Once in 1973 when Carlos was away I was awakened by Gretta's growling. I turned on the light thinking that some intruder was in the house. The dog's hair stood stiff. Her growls were deep and hoarse and very strange. Then she

began to howl mournfully, after which she ran into my closet and lay there whimpering.

Downstairs I found everything locked and safe. My two children were quietly sleeping.

Within an hour a long-distance message informed me that my husband had been killed in a job-related accident.

It is often suggested that animals have a sixth sense by which they apprehend things that are hidden from us. And I believe Gretta saw Carlos at the time of the accident and understood what had happened.—*Lancaster, Calif.*

MIND READING

By Lyn Venable

AT THE AGE OF 12 I took part in a mind reading experience which I still believe was totally genuine, without possibility of "hocus-pocus."

I was with my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry Wagman, at the summer resort Whiteface Inn at Lake Placid, N.Y., sometime between July and August 1939. This was long before the TV era and there was absolutely nothing to do there after dark. So the management planned entertainments several evenings each week. These ranged from bingo games to string quartets.

But the evening with Dr. Polgar was different. Right from the start he was very serious. He had no

gimmicks and he made no attempt at clever banter. He began by leafing through a magazine rapidly. Then he tore the magazine apart page by page and distributed the separate pages to the audience. The magazine had been picked at random by a hotel guest from those available in a rack in the lobby so there was no possibility he could have memorized it in advance. Dr. Polgar then asked various individuals either to name the number of the page they held or to read a few words from anywhere on the page. If the page number was given he would quote fluently from the article. If the guest read just a few words he would name the page number.

Dr. Polgar used no assistants. I know there were no "plants" in the audience because this was a very small resort. I had seen and spoken with everyone present over a period of weeks. Most guests stayed for the entire two-month season. There were no transients. Also, this was a wealthy enough crowd to preclude "payoffs." However, the proof of the pudding was in my personal experience.

After the preliminaries with the magazine, Dr. Polgar asked for a volunteer for a mind reading demonstration. Even then I was totally preoccupied with the unknown—whether in the vast reaches of the universe or in a small hotel lobby. I promptly volunteered. Dr. Polgar



Lyn Venable

was hesitant. He said persons as young as I did not make good subjects. Perhaps I pleaded; I do not in honesty remember what changed his mind but he accepted me as his subject.

Dr. Polgar asked me to think of an object in the room. I really wanted to test him so I not only thought of the fountain pen in a holder on the registration desk, but willed him to pick it up and hand it to Buddy Haines who stood leaning against the desk. (Buddy was the manager's son, about 20 and wildly good-looking. I had a mad preteen crush on him.)

As we both concentrated I noticed Dr. Polgar was sweating heavily. His face looked tense, like that of a man struggling to lift a heavy object. He then asked me to stand behind him. He extended one hand behind his back and asked me to place my fingertips on his. Then, with me walking behind him in fingertip contact, he began to move

about the lobby. I think we circled for a minute or two. Then he suddenly stopped and pulled an electrical plug from its socket. He turned and asked me if that had been my command. I said quite simply, "No." There was a stunned silence in the room.

It seemed to me that Dr. Polgar thought I was lying. He insisted with great conviction that he had received a strong signal to pull that plug. Suddenly a woman a few seats away from the lamp said, "Yes, that lamp was bothering my eyes. I wished that someone would turn it out." I must again emphasize that I knew the woman well; I saw her daily in the dining room, on the boat dock, etc. I don't understand why this woman's message blocked mine. Perhaps she was in distress because of the light and this might have added power to her thoughts.

The rest of this story is almost an anticlimax.

Dr. Polgar again extended his hand behind him and I again lightly touched his fingertips with mine. He walked directly to the registration desk, picked up the pen from its holder and handed it to Buddy Haines.

Nothing had been written down or spoken to anyone. Discussing this the next day, a skeptic remarked that Dr. Polgar might have been able to detect tension or a tremble or a change of temperature in my fingertips. This is not a valid option because:

(1) It could not explain the woman, seated at some distance, who wanted the light plug pulled.

(2) It could not explain handing the pen to Buddy because there were other persons standing there also.

(3) And there were other objects on top of the desk such as blotters, various circulars, etc. He picked up the pen without touching anything else so there is no way I could have inadvertently given him a signal.

I never acted as a subject again for any kind of telepathy and I do not feel that I have any special ability to project my thoughts.

In 1939, when this event took place, Dr. Polgar was already middle-aged so there is little likelihood that he is still alive.

I don't know if the Whiteface Inn still exists or if any of the Haines family still reside in the area.—
Walnut Creek, Calif.



AND THE MUSIC STOPPED

A MINNEAPOLIS woman discovered in the fall of 1985 that the music she heard in her head for three weeks was caused by too much aspirin. Doctors thought at first that her hearing aids were picking up radio waves but when the 70-year-old woman's aspirin dosage was cut from 12 to six tablets a day, the music stopped.

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.

MOTHER'S HAND

By Paul Swope

As told to Alice Swope

MY MOTHER Emma Swope died on July 4, 1926, when I was 10 years old. Her death precipitated an incident that has remained with me all my life.

I had an older sister, Hazel, who was Daddy's girl. She was always with my father Richard Swope, whether he went fishing or repaired the family car. My younger sister Babe was six years younger than I.

Our father paid no attention to me or to Babe and when the supper dishes were finished, Dad and Hazel usually went to the garage to stick their heads under the hood of the car.

Babe would snuggle on Mother's lap and I'd sit at her feet, leaning my head against her knees. Mother would read aloud to us, usually

from *Tom Sawyer*, *Black Beauty* or a Zane Grey western.

I'd savor the closeness of my mother's body as I gazed at the ceiling from my place on the floor, dreaming I was the hero of the story. As I daydreamed, her hand would drop to my forehead and push my unruly hair back into place. Those were happy, wonder-



Paul Swope

ful years. As Babe got older, she'd mischievously curl her fingers in my hair and pull. Without missing a word, my mother would untangle Babe's fingers and brush my hair back, patting my forehead soothingly.

One day, when I came rushing home from school, waving a particularly good report card, I found Hazel standing at my parent's bedroom door with a scared look on her face. Babe was in her playpen crying. I couldn't understand it. Mother never let Babe sit and cry.

I rushed to the bedroom and saw a doctor standing over my mother. Then he rose, snapped of his stethoscope and shook his head. Hazel began to scream and Dad moaned. Babe continued to cry.

After that day my grandmother moved in with us, in Ashland, N.J., but I couldn't forget my mother. Dad was never around anymore. Babe didn't seem to understand what had happened and soon she seemed to forget as she clung to Grandma's neck. I'd sit in my mother's rocker, trying to remember every word of the stories she had read us. It didn't ease the pain.

Then I'd sit on the floor and lean back against the hard wooden seat of her chair, trying to conjure up the feeling of her legs against my back and neck. It didn't work. I became more and more subdued and at night I'd lie looking at the ceiling with sobs welling in my throat.

One night, as I lay there sobbing, I felt a cool hand caressing my forehead and then I felt fingers untangle strands of hair, just as if Babe had pulled it again. I slapped my hand to my forehead and for an instant I touched soft, warm fingers and felt the love radiating into my soul. Then the sensation disappeared.

I can't say that from that day I was happy but from that day I knew I hadn't been deserted. I knew my mother was somewhere near and watching over us.

I'm a grown man now with a family of my own but I've never forgotten that hand on my forehead as the fingers tried to caress away my sorrow. I've never lost the feeling that somehow my mother is still near and watching over me and my children. — *Lebanon, Oreg.*

CARRY ME BACK

By Anne Fairbrother

WHEN OUR mother, Florence Duerr, died, Gran, also named Florence (Rex), left her lifelong home in Virginia and moved to Tucson, Ariz., to take care of the two daughters of her only child, my sister Florence Sundell and me. But during the years of our growing up, she often told us, "I'm Virginia-born and Virginia-bred and when I die, let me be Virginia-dead!"

After Gran's death on January 11, 1975, one month short of her 97th birthday, my sister and I agreed her ashes should be interred

in the family plot in Richmond, Va. As executrix I'd already sent our instructions on ahead. Although we did not realize it then, we know now why my sister made the trip. I was convinced of survival after death but my sister was not so sure.

The night before Florence left, she was lying awake, concerned about selecting cremation because of our financial situation. She also remembered how against this Gran was when her own daughter, our mother, died.

Suddenly the feeling of Gran's presence was undeniable. "There was a rosy glow about her and she seemed so *young*!" Florence said. Then she heard words in her head, "It's all right, dear. It's all right." Peace flooded over her and my sister went right to sleep.

Florence dreamed that she carried Gran in her arms and laid her in a bed with Grandpa, who had died many years earlier. She told me this the next morning but we didn't have time to discuss it.

As the plane landed in Richmond, over the loudspeaker came the strains of "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny." And when my sister reached the graveside in Hollywood Cemetery, she discovered our instructions had been misinterpreted. Instead of a new grave, Grandpa's grave was open, ready to receive the ashes. So Gran's last resting place was actually with Grandpa.

The experience and the dream



Anne Fairbrother

had a lasting effect on my sister. They confirmed not only Gran's survival but the faculty of precognition. — *Sedona, Ariz.*

MY FIRST GHOST

By Shirley Sumrall

UNTIL the summer of 1954 I took no particular interest in ghosts. But something happened that summer which left me with an interest in the paranormal that has lasted through the years.

Christmas 1953 was a tragic time for my family. My aunt and her son were in a train-auto accident that left her brain-damaged and in a coma for months. She eventually did recover but her son Tommy, aged five, died several hours after the accident. Almost every bone in his tiny body was crushed.

The months from Christmas of 1953 to the summer of 1954 were uneventful. Our family gathered

often throughout the year and especially during the summer months. The children (five cousins including me) often played late into the summer evenings catching fireflies and counting our trophies. None of us was afraid of the dark.

Every night at nine o'clock the passenger train *Nancy Hanks*, running from Atlanta to Savannah, roared by. As usual, on this summer evening all of us in the backyard dropped what we were doing and raced to the front. We could hear the lonesome wail of the train whistle as it crossed the river trestle. The summer before Tommy had been one of us. That night would prove he was still one of us.

No streetlights lit the country road that passed in front of my grandmother's house. The only light came from a bright moon and a weak light bulb on the front porch behind us. And, of course, as the train passed, we could see the light from its windows.

That night I stood at the back of our group. All the younger, smaller children were up in front. I recall glancing to my right, more or less taking a head count. I remember all

too well my sensation of both fear and weakness as I recognized one small figure as Tommy. He was dressed in a checkered long-sleeved winter shirt and he stood, quiet and unmoving, behind the others. No one else turned around. His face, which I saw in profile, was pale. His eyes appeared to be riveted on the passing train. He never turned to look at me. I felt my throat ache and tears sting my eyes. What should have been my most terrifying moment was simply "too" normal. He looked no different from the other children — just lonely, small and rather sad. I turned to ask the others to look, hesitated a moment and again looked toward where he stood. There was no one there. No one, except me, had experienced anything unusual.

I never saw Tommy's ghost again, although I continued to watch that same evening train pass through Oconee, Ga., many times in the ensuing years. I always visit Tommy's grave when I go home. I will always remember and wonder what about that evening made possible my experience with the unknown. — *Bradenton, Fla.*



CUTTING DOWN THE SALT

IN THE *New England Journal of Medicine* in November 1985, four San Francisco doctors reported that even chicken soup can be dangerous if too salty. The time-honored home remedy can cause a rare complication called hypernatremia — abnormally high sodium content in the blood. It all boils down to too much salt in the soup. Not just chicken soup — any kind.

NEW ENGLAND'S VANISHING VESSELS



How can sturdy, modern, well-equipped ships, manned by seasoned captains and crews, sail out to sea and disappear?

Part I

By Paul F. Eno

ON A CLEAR, crisp Saturday morning in January 1975, five men gathered on the dock behind Bigelow Laboratories in Boothbay Harbor, Maine. Laughing, joking and loaded down with gear, they boarded the 54-foot research vessel *Gulf Stream* for a routine three-day mission: the recovery of eight oceanographic buoys in the Gulf of Maine. But these men never made their scheduled stop at Gloucester, Mass., that night because the *Gulf Stream* was sailing nowhere but into oblivion.

The coast guard and navy launched a massive air and sea search that lasted a week and covered 77,000 square miles. But the *Gulf Stream* had vanished. An official inquiry into one of the

strangest maritime disappearances on record yielded nothing but more questions.

"It's a mystery, that's all I can say," said U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Michael Perkins who headed the investigation.

That understatement could apply to any of the vessels that seem to have ceased to exist in or near New England waters over the past 12 years. These include not only fishing boats large and small but a 642-foot tanker carrying 2.2 million gallons of oil.

It isn't all that easy for a vessel just to evaporate. The coast guard is a crack military organization and its searches are extremely thorough. The service has a fast, efficient system on the local, national and international levels for dealing with rescue emergencies and missing

craft. Not only are ships, aircraft and large numbers of personnel involved but so are advanced computers and other electronic gear as well. Local harbor masters, fishermen, boaters, police and fire departments are a regular part of all major searches. The navy, air force, national guard and foreign armed forces often pitch in.

In addition, ship-to-shore radio communication which is practically instant and virtually universal make work and travel at sea much safer than they used to be. This is especially true because the coast guard constantly monitors radio traffic and knows immediately when someone is in trouble — if that someone has the few seconds necessary to tell it.

Despite all this vessels seem to disappear in New England waters with disconcerting frequency, leaving little behind but official question marks and loved ones' pain.

THE GULF STREAM

THIS WAS no ordinary vessel. Built in 1963 as a crew boat to service oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico, the *Gulf Stream* was a tough, steel-hulled craft thought to be more than able to handle anything reported in New England waters that year. Owned by Nova University of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., the boat had just been overhauled. She carried five powerful radio transmitters which could have broadcast

distress signals to every possible rescuer. Her safety gear, including two self-inflating life rafts, was completely up-to-date.

Nor was hers an ordinary crew. Three of the five men were former naval officers and one was an internationally-known oceanographer. Four worked for Nova University and one for the Scripps Institute of Oceanography in California. All had sailed together on a number of similar *Gulf Stream* missions. Capt. William B. Campbell was known as a capable, no-nonsense skipper who was always where he said he would be when he said he would be there.

Aside from the disappearance itself, the oddest thing about the case was what appeared to be the vessel's inexplicable behavior after leaving Boothbay Harbor.

Departing from the Bigelow dock on Saturday, January 4, the *Gulf Stream* made a routine radio check, rounded McKown Point into the harbor, then headed southward and out to sea to retrieve a runaway buoy 77 miles southeast of Cape Cod. She was scheduled to come partway back that night and dock in Gloucester, go back out for more local buoy work Sunday, then return to Boothbay Harbor on Monday.

At about 10:00 P.M. Sunday, Leland Bugbee, the radioman on watch at Coast Guard Base South Portland, Maine, picked up the beginning of a transmission from

the *Gulf Stream* but it was cut off in mid-sentence.

"A unit called," Bugbee reported. "We asked if it needed assistance and it came back and said, 'Coast Guard South Portland, this is *Gulf* —'" Bugbee noted that the voice "had that overtone of nervousness. You can't really explain it."

He said he tried for an hour and a half to reestablish contact but couldn't. The boat was never reported in port again, although Bigelow officials said she would have had to refuel Saturday night.

In one of the most peculiar incidents in the whole affair, two lobstermen familiar with the vessel's comings and goings later testified that they saw the *Gulf Stream* Monday, January 6, the day she was supposed to return to Boothbay Harbor. Dicky and Paula Hammond were hauling lobster pots off Southport Island, just outside Boothbay Harbor, that morning and saw the *Gulf Stream* pass between them and Squirrel Island, about 500 yards away. The vessel was leaving the harbor, roaring off toward the south and out to sea just as if it were the previous Saturday.

At the subsequent coast guard inquiry Mr. Hammond insisted it was the *Gulf Stream* he saw. "Particularly at this time of year, there's nothing around here that even looks like it," he said. Not far away another lobsterman, Wilson Francis, was also hauling traps. He said that

he saw the *Gulf Stream* at the same time, although he had not noticed the name on her transom.

Both men thought there was nothing odd about this until they heard of the boat's disappearance — and of its departure on Saturday, not Monday.

That afternoon retired navy Comdr. William D. Howard, who had installed a new Motorola FM radio on the *Gulf Stream* the previous October, had his own radio on and heard a call from the boat.

"I recognized [Captain] Campbell's voice. . . . It was very calm, answering or finishing a conversation," Howard said. "He wasn't calling anyone repeatedly, which I would have noticed."

The *Gulf Stream*'s radios had all been in good shape when he had seen them in October, Howard said, noting that the one he had installed was within arm's reach of the wheel, required no warm-up time and was automatically tuned to channel 16, the coast guard's emergency frequency. The *Gulf Stream* could have summoned help literally within seconds.

On Tuesday the radioman at Coast Guard Station Point Allerton at Hull, Mass., thought he heard the *Gulf Stream* trying to contact Bigelow. Also on Tuesday a fishing boat heard the *Gulf Stream* trying to raise the Camden, Maine, marine operator. A coast guardsman who overheard this call de-

scribed it as "normal" and "calm."

Another coast guardsman, this time at the Halfway Rock Light Station on Massachusetts' North Shore, said he heard the boat attempting to answer a call from Bigelow. That happened at 2:00 P.M. and it was the last anyone ever heard of the *Gulf Stream*.

Meanwhile no one at Bigelow had heard anything from the vessel since it left Boothbay Harbor. So, late Tuesday, people there notified the coast guard that the *Gulf Stream* was overdue. This prompted the enormous search that grew to include three large coast guard cutters, numerous aircraft and small vessels from as far away as Virginia, the navy and even another civilian research vessel. The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Nova University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology all lent technical help of one sort or another to try to figure out where the *Gulf Stream* could be.

The search itself scoured the coast from New Jersey to Nova Scotia and up to 300 miles out into the Atlantic. On Wednesday, January 8, the day after the *Gulf Stream* was reported overdue, the weather started getting nasty and most of the aircraft were grounded.

Nothing at all turned up until that day, when a coast guard helicopter found a life ring from the *Gulf Stream* about 27 miles northeast of Gloucester. On Thursday,

with the weather deteriorating, the 270-foot cutter *Duane* recovered the body of research technician James Riddle, wearing a life jacket, some 15 miles southwest of the same spot. A report later said he had died of exposure. Two more life rings were found 15 miles northeast of Gloucester on Friday.

By Monday, January 13, searchers were no closer to an answer than they had been when they started. Some bits of debris had been recovered but these couldn't be traced to the *Gulf Stream*. The only other items that could be traced were a life jacket marked *Heldo*, the *Gulf Stream*'s former name, and a drawer from a desk in the boat's innermost cabin. An airplane reported sighting what looked like a small oil slick and what might have been a deflated life raft, but these couldn't be located by surface craft.

A coast guard board of inquiry released its report in May. The panel was stumped not only by the apparently senseless behavior of the vessel but by the lack of an actual wreck or the debris from one. Why did the cabin drawer end up floating away when the large stock of gear stowed on deck, including a 500-foot length of thick, floating plastic line, has never been found? Why was there no identifiable oil slick? What happened to the rest of the crewmen?

"We turned the Gulf of Maine upside down and wrung it out," one

officer said. "They're not out there."

The board concluded that "due to the lack of any eyewitnesses, the proximate cause of the casualty cannot be determined at this time." They speculated that inclement weather on January 7 and lack of a firm sailing plan may have contributed to some sort of accident.

All we know for certain is that the *Gulf Stream* entered the shadows as one of New England's most baffling mysteries of the sea.

THE ZUBENELGENUBI

ONE OF THE most publicized disappearances in recent times was that of the 60-foot offshore lobster boat *Zubenelgenubi*. Before the massive — and controversial — search ended, the President of the United States, the governor of Massachusetts, members of Congress and the commandant of the coast guard were all involved.

Two major storms struck while the *Zubenelgenubi* was presumably at sea, with winds up to 60 mph and seas as high as 35 feet. These things considered, its disappearance might not seem all that mysterious. But then again, the Newport vessel was big, brand-new and credited by those who knew it as being unsinkable, with a steel hull divided into four watertight bulkheads. Indeed, several lesser vessels rode out the same storms in the same area where the *Zubenelgenubi* disappeared.

The *Zubenelgenubi* left Newport

with a crew of four on Sunday, January 18, 1976. It was to be a 10- to 14-day trip to tend lobster traps some 80 miles south of Nantucket, on the edge of the continental shelf.

A fisherman reported the last sighting of the vessel on Tuesday, January 20, when it was evidently en route to its fishing grounds. One week later, on January 27, a crewman's wife called the coast guard to say the *Zubenelgenubi* was unreported, but because the captain's wife did not consider the vessel overdue, no search was ordered.

Coast Guard Station Brant Point, at the eastern end of Nantucket, reported what sounded like a routine conversation between the boat and a passing tanker on Friday, January 30. And three days later, on February 2, another fishing boat picked up what its captain thought was a transmission from the *Zubenelgenubi* reporting its position as Hydrographer Canyon, about 80 miles southeast of Nantucket. This was just before one of the storms struck. The captain's wife, Joanne Goodwin, reported the boat overdue the next day.

During a six-day search that combed 66,000 square miles and involved the coast guard, the navy and the Canadian armed forces, absolutely nothing was found. The only possible clue was oil bubbling up to the surface at a point some 50 miles south of Nantucket, in water 500 feet deep. The cutter *Dallas* was

asked to stop and take samples of the oil if it was passing the spot, which it never did. The oil was never tested but there was official speculation that it came from an old sunken tanker known to be at or near that spot. Coast guard officials said any connection with the *Zubenelgenubi* was dubious. Anyway, they said, it would take a submarine to find out.

The crew's families and friends refused to abandon hope after the official search was suspended on Sunday, February 8. A massive petition drive and a special town meeting in Marblehead, Mass., prompted Sen. Edward Kennedy, Congressman Michael Harrington, Massachusetts Gov. Michael S. Dukakis and then-Lt. Gov. Thomas P. O'Neill to have the search

resumed. The admiral refused, saying everything possible had already been done.

But other New England lawmakers joined the crusade and when the political temperature got too high, on February 12 President Gerald R. Ford personally ordered the coast guard to reopen the case for 24 hours. Once again nothing was found. Efforts by those who believed the *Zubenelgenubi* crew was still alive continued and so did criticisms of the coast guard for allegedly searching in the wrong places and not being careful enough.

No sign of the vessel or its crew ever turned up, although the total search area reached 106,000 square miles before officials finally gave up.

This is Part I of a two-part article.



HOW OLD IS WRITING?

XINHUA, the official Chinese news agency, announced in April 1986 that ancient inscribed bones found in central China may be proof that writing was used 2000 years earlier than was originally thought. The bones, inscribed with tiny characters, are thought to be up to 5000 years old — two millennia older than earlier finds that dated Chinese writing back 3000 years.

Archaeologists discovered the objects, known as "oracle bones," near the ancient central Chinese city of Xian, Xinhua said.

China's first oracle inscriptions, carved on tortoise shells and animal bones for use in divination, were found in central Henan Province in 1899 and seemed to indicate that Chinese characters, which evolved from picture symbols, dated back 3000 years.

by Betty Lou White

FATE'S LIGHT SIDE

A California golf foursome, taking a break for hamburgers at the clubhouse, saw a one-legged sparrow nearby and tossed it some crumbs. In no time at all, a dozen or more sparrows joined their one-legged friend to share the crumbs. It didn't take the golfers long to realize that *all* the newcomers had tucked one little leg out of sight, making it look as if they too were one-legged.



The *Commercial Appeal*, published in Memphis, reported in early 1985 that when Milton Montgomery answered the door, a strange man asked if he could enter the house to pray. A stunned Montgomery let in the man, who then asked if he could pray over Montgomery's wallet. When Montgomery handed him the wallet, the stranger put it in his pocket and left.



The Swiss newspaper *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* announced in April 1986 that the discovery of a Stone Age tribe of cave dwellers in the southern Philippines in 1971 was an elaborate hoax perpetrated by a self-aggrandizing minister under former president Ferdinand Marcos. It was called the ethnological find of the century. But the news-

paper described a visit by Swiss journalist Oswald Iten to the "Tasaday tribe" on the reservation Marcos set aside for it and quoted local residents as saying they had been forced to act as cavemen.



Did prehistoric women once rule the earth? Probably not, says Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, a Rhode Island College anthropologist who addressed the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in May 1986. The idea of women's dominance developed because human beings could never be certain who their fathers were but they always knew their mothers. Decades of research, however, have failed to uncover any evidence that women were traditionally heads of families.



Scott Alan Esterling, a Muskegon, Mich., teenager, hired a lawyer to ensure he can decide for himself where he goes to church and school instead of following his mother's rules. The lawyer told United Press International that the complaint filed in April 1986 asks that the 17-year-old be declared an emancipated minor so that he may establish his own residence.



THE TRAGIC GHOST OF SANDHILL GARDENS

The thing the ghost wanted so desperately existed only in its own deluded mind.

By Lorna Gulston

THE PHONE CALL knocked me sideways. Betty and I had been like sisters since our school-days. Even after Betty's marriage to American Don Morrison* in 1961, our closeness had spanned the Atlantic.

Don was an executive with a big multinational corporation and his business brought him often to Ireland. That delighted him as much as it did Betty, for he was fiercely proud of his Ulster ancestry. He never tired of telling about his great-great-grandmother Sadie Gillespie who in the 1840's was a nine-year-old "half-timer," attending school in the mornings and working, up to her knees in water, in a Belfast flax mill in the afternoons. At 17 she had wed John McBride, a carrier's boy who delivered flax to the mill, and emigrated with him to seek their fortune in the United States.

Don had planned to replant his roots in Ulster soil. For his retire-

ment he was having a bungalow built at Craigavad on the County Down coast. It would have been ready that autumn. Now he was dead, poleaxed at his desk by a massive coronary — big, kindly, vigorous Don who had looked nowhere near his 65 years. Despite an age gap Betty and he had been a devoted couple, even more so because they were childless. Betty would soon be on her way home to perform her last act of love for Don by laying his ashes to rest in Ireland.

"Can you find me a place to rent until the bungalow's finished?" she had asked me sadly. "Somewhere I can store my favorite things?"

I dashed around seeing estate agents in search of a "let." With Ulster's troubles places to rent in nonviolent areas were snapped up as soon as they fell vacant but I struck it lucky. Number 1 Sandhill Gardens was a three-bedroom, semidetached, red-brick Edwardian villa in a peaceful residential suburb of Belfast. It had been let-furnished on short leases for a number of years by an absentee landlord, so furniture and carpets were somewhat shabby. Still, it was spacious, quiet and within easy driving distance of the site of Betty's new bungalow. I felt sure she'd approve.

Betty looked tired and haggard but composed as she walked toward me in the passenger terminal at Belfast International Airport on January 29, 1976. She was holding tight-

*Pseudonym.

No. 1 Sandhill Gardens, a three-bedroom villa in suburban Belfast, Northern Ireland, was site of terrible domestic tragedy in 1920's.

ly to a blue vanity case. In it, she confided, was the casket containing Don's remains.

We buried him two days later in a simple, poignant ceremony at Roselawn Cemetery. Roselawn, high above the city, is a beautiful place in summer, with its rolling green sward and the fragrant profusion of roses from which it takes its name. That bleak February afternoon, however, it was cloaked in mist and buffeted by a gale which tossed the rows of slender memorial saplings.

As we drove home, Betty couldn't stop shivering.

"The radiators are on full blast in the house," I comforted her. "It should be really cozy."

I was glad I had taken a week's leave from my job to be with her. I live with my elderly mother and seven cats but Mother had insisted I stay with Betty for a week at least.

"She has no family left now and the poor soul's going to feel lost without Don," she said. "It isn't right for her to be alone at the moment."

As I swung the car through the gateway and round the path to the garage, I noticed something which made me jam on the brakes in shock.

"What's wrong?" Betty asked, rubbing her elbow, which my abrupt stop had bumped against the car door.

"That bathroom window — I left it closed!"

The window, an old-fashioned sash type, was pushed up to its fullest extent, curtains flapping across the sill. Betty and I exchanged a startled glance. Burglars!

I grabbed a large wrench from the glove compartment and we crept in through the front door, expecting to be pounced on. But a nerve-racking tour of the house revealed no trace of intruders. There was just that gaping window with its billowing curtains.

"I must have forgotten to close it after all," I said doubtfully.

About 11:30 P.M., as we were unwinding over a cup of coffee in the lounge, we heard a muffled noise overhead, as if someone had walked in slippers across the spare bedroom. White-faced, we set down our cups. Sticking close together, we tiptoed upstairs, armed with the poker and the fire tongs.

The spare-room window was open as far as it would go. I was certain I had closed that one too!

Again we searched every nook and cranny but could find nobody lurking. Puzzled and shaken, we gulped our cool coffee and went nervously to bed, keeping our doors ajar to hear each other yell if either of us was attacked.

The landing from which the bedrooms opened off was approximately 20 feet long, a thin corridor from the door of that extra front room to three steps down into the bathroom at the rear of the house. Just before

midnight, Betty and I both heard a heavy thump. Comparing notes, we agreed that it was as if a giant fist had slammed with all its might on the landing side of Betty's bedroom wall; but when we rushed to investigate, there was nothing to account for it.

NEXT MORNING, cheered by the brightness of a wintry sun, we dismissed "The Thump" as a hiccup in the plumbing. I even convinced myself that I'd been absent-minded about those windows. But that evening, at precisely the same time — a few minutes to midnight — came "The Drag." Behind the closed door of the mysterious empty bedroom, it sounded as if a heavy object were being dragged across the floor. We tumbled out of bed and inched the door open, but apart from a divan, a chair and a small walnut dressing table, the room was empty and apparently undisturbed.

Sleep was out of the question. I was glad I'd laid in a bottle of Scotch. We went downstairs and made strong, hot toddy.

Suddenly Betty clutched my arm, almost spilling my drink. "Lorna," she cried, "I've been so blind and stupid. It's Don!"

"Don?"

"He's giving us signs that he's trying to get through to me."

I sipped my whiskey, avoiding her gaze. I'd been a total skeptic of the paranormal until a chilling ex-

perience seven years previously, on the night my father died. Disturbed as I was by the odd goings-on in this house, I clung doggedly to the hope of a natural explanation.

Betty wrung her hands in agitation. "Have you ever done table-turning?" she asked.

I replied, "Only once, with a wineglass and the alphabet. I told you about it, remember? But never again."

Betty leaped to her feet, eyes fever-bright. "Please, we must," she implored me. "This time will be different. You won't be personally involved."

She ransacked the kitchen cupboards for a wineglass but there was none to be found. She was so distraught that, against my better judgment, I said, "If you feel *that* strongly about it, we'll buy one tomorrow. But don't get too built up. It mightn't work at all, especially with just two of us."

"It *will*. Don will talk to me now."

After tea that evening we prepared for our "seance." The whole idea depressed me. Still, I'd promised and there was no backing out now.

Almost immediately the glass sprang to life with a drive and urgency that took our breath away.

"FIND THE PAPERS," it spelled out.

"Don, is that you?" Betty asked tremulously.



POWER • LOVE • GOOD
EARTH
NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE
AMERICAN INDIAN
FOR
SACRED POW WOVES & HOW TO
GUARANTEED TO C

Dear Friend:

My name is Brad Steiger. You most likely have heard of me as I've written over 100 different books with total worldwide sales topping ten million copies.

Though I am of Scandinavian heritage, nonetheless I am one of a handful of outsiders to have been honored by being initiated into an American Indian tribe. For you see, the Seneca have claimed me as a Medicine Man and permitted me to witness many of their magical and highly spiritual rituals, and to learn firsthand many of the mysteries of the Sacred Pow Woves which have been kept a closely guarded secret until now.

Over the centuries since they arrived in North America from parts unknown (perhaps originating in the distant past on Atlantis or Mu, or in ancient Egypt), the native American priests—the Medicine Men and Women of the Amerindian tribes—have practiced a system of magic so powerful that it enables them to control the winds and the weather, to foresee coming events, and sometimes even to

turn your life around for the better in just one day.

• Prepare your own "Medicine Bag" containing common objects that after a simple ritual become sacred and highly charged to the bearer.

• Accurately understand your dreams, which the Indians say are really "messages" from the next world that are given nightly to our subconscious and which we are meant to act upon when awakening.

• Ward off evil spirits and protect yourself from any harm others might be trying to send your way.

• Create a direct "link-up" with the Earth Mother herself in order to generate peace and harmony in your life, and to get others to like you instantaneously.

• Develop your Third Ear as well as your Third Eye.

• View the future and change it to suit yourself.

• Become a great "Spiritual Alchemist," the American Indian way.

• Send out "smoke signals" using your mind to contact and influence others many miles away.

• Break the "shackles of time" and travel out of body.

In addition, I will instruct you on how to focus all your energies on that which you consider to be the most important in life. I will show you

Included will absolutely blow my dealings with

• The invisible tribes;

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For good luck American Indian

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the weather, to foresee coming events, and sometimes even to change the future. They have always possessed the ability to heal the sick, to walk over burning coals, to read minds, to send and receive telepathic thoughts, to communicate with the dead, speak to animals, and control others at a distance.

Now, after spending a great deal of time with these Medicine People, I have learned what I believe to be the most essential elements of Medicine Power or Native American Magic, which I am willing to share with those of you who sincerely wish to utilize this knowledge to better your own life, and, in general, bring about a more peaceful world.

## EIGHT STEPS TO PERFECTION

Though it may be presumptuous of me, I believe it is possible to distill into eight easy steps the very essence of the cosmology of the American Indians. Once learned, anyone may be able to master all aspects of their life and reap valuable rewards consisting of good luck, fantastic richness, improved health, love, power and influence. These "EIGHT STEPS TO PERFECTION" are outlined in the opening chapter of my new book and should take only a few minutes to put into practical use.

For the first time anywhere, I am going to tell you how to...

- Hold your own "Vision Quest."
- Communicate with spirits and angels, and get them to assist you in all that you desire.
- Take total command of every situation and through a formal agreement with the forces of nature, receive incredible benefits that will

how to focus all your energies on that which you consider to be the most important in life. I will show you how to attract all that is good for you, and turn negativity away before it can take root. I will teach you sacred Indian chants as well as a safe and easy method to meditate which will materialize into this world that which is deepest in your heart. And above all else, I swear none of this is difficult to accomplish, nor do you have to perform complicated and time consuming rituals. The Seneca showed me that the mind is your greatest tool, the most important friend you will ever have.

## HOPÍ PROPHECIES AND SURVIVING THE "GREAT PURIFICATION"

And there is more! I have been instructed to reveal to those wise enough to listen, the truth about what the Indians call "The Great Purification," which is predicted in Biblical Revelations. It is said, that we are living in the "End Times" or "Last Days", and that the Earth is about to undergo a "cleansing" period during which there will be drastic changes in both land placement and in the structure of society. The Hopi tribe says that those who survive will join together and harmony will overcome the land. Find out what the vital signs of this "Doomsday" prophecy are, and how salvation is possible to deserving souls. Learn the role UFOs play in these matters and how the American Indians, in line with God's divine plan for all of us now through the year 2000.

## SECRETS REVEALED

What I will tell you doesn't stop here, and I trust you are interested enough to send for my full illustrated, 200 page, book titled **AMERICAN INDIAN MAGIC: SACRED POW WOWS & HOPÍ PROPHECIES.**

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F/M

The glass raced round the circle of letters so fast we could scarcely keep contact with it.

"Don, darling, I'm missing you terribly!" Betty burst out. "We didn't even have the chance to say good-bye."

"NOT DON, NOT DON. LILY."

The blood drained from Betty's face.

"Who are you, Lily?" I said hastily.

"LILY NOBLE. FIND THE PAPERS."

An inexplicable sensation of pity and distress washed over me. Betty seemed stunned but her index finger stayed on the whirling glass. It told an astonishing story. Lily Noble was a 25-year-old girl who had lived with her father in our house when it was first built. In 1924, 52 years ago, because of some lost papers, she had stabbed herself to death on the landing.

"CANNOT REST. HAVE TO FIND PAPERS," the words came. "YOU LOOK. YOU LOOK."

"Where, Lily? Where must we look?"

"LOCKED TRUNK IN COAL SHED. FIND THE PAPERS. OH, FIND THE PAPERS."

Without warning the glass went dead. We kept our fingers on its rim and Betty sobbed and begged Don to communicate. Although we persisted for a good half hour, there was not the slightest response. Betty went tearfully into the kitchen to

brew coffee. When she returned, she was calmer.

"It wasn't Don after all," she sighed.

"No. I'm sorry."

"It was stupid of me. I know he's always with me anyway. You were right. We shouldn't have touched the glass. That poor girl — the kitchen knife." She shuddered. "The awful thump we heard — it could have been her body falling against the wall! Maybe we're meant to help her."

"How?"

"Well, she asked us to look in the coal shed."

Overcome with a sense of urgency, we couldn't wait for daylight. I fetched the powerful car lantern and we unbolted the rickety, creaking door of the tall brown hut next to the garage. There was no coal, just a stack of rotting wood inhabited by a creepy legion of spiders. The torchlight picked out a flat black one with windmill legs crabbing beneath something that glinted — the edge of a dusty metal trunk!

Betty and I hauled it from the mound of crumbling timber. It was padlocked but the lock was so rust-eaten that a sharp blow with the edge of a stone snapped it. Dry-mouthed with excitement, I pried open the lid.

All that lay inside were a mildewed pair of lady's strapped patent shoes, 1920's style, and a damp,

warped copy of an Edgar Wallace thriller, *The Frightened Lady*.

Feeling foolish, we shoved the trunk back into its cobwebbed corner. Whatever power, occult or otherwise, had activated the wine-glass, we had been the victims of a mischievous trick.

Or so we thought.

At about 11:45 P.M. Betty called to me from the bathroom, "What did you say, Lorna?"

"I didn't speak," I said.

"But there was a voice —"

"Probably me closing this drawer. It squeaked. I reckon we've given ourselves the heebie-jeebies."

But when my turn came for the bathroom, I could have sworn I heard a female voice, faint and whispering. Was it my imagination or had it *really* said, "Find the papers?"

We hid the glass at the very back of a cupboard and for three nights nothing happened. The weekend, too, passed without incident. We began to relax and tried to forget the eerie events of the previous week.

\* \* \*

ON MONDAY Betty was thrilled to receive an unexpected letter from a cousin of Don's inviting her to stay with the family at their farm in County Antrim. She phoned her eager acceptance. They'd fetch her on Wednesday afternoon.

I was pleased for her. It was just

the break she needed. So Tuesday would be our last night in Sandhill Gardens for at least a fortnight.

The evening passed pleasantly as I helped Betty pack. Again, it was around midnight when we made our way to bed. I'd just snuggled under the sheets when all hell broke loose. First the giant fist on the landing wall, then the dragging noise from the spare bedroom, louder than before. It lasted for perhaps 25 to 30 seconds.

Betty and I met fearfully in her doorway.

She asked, "What can we do?"

"I wish I knew. Recite the Lord's Prayer or something."

"Oh, my God, look!" she cried.

Betty pointed to the steps outside the bathroom. I saw an undulating shape, then — so clearly that I clutched the banister for support — a figure running down the stairs. At the bottom it turned and gazed up at us and we found ourselves staring into the pallid face of a young dark-haired woman wearing an expression of terrible anguish. She appeared to be crying. A gust of icy air surrounded us. Then the figure melted into nothingness.

At that moment my last vestige of skepticism died. I understood that we'd received a passionate plea for help — and we had failed.

After a sleepless night a subdued Betty was borne off to her friends' farm, while I went back home resolved to investigate Lily Noble's

story. I began by sounding out the house agent but he had handled No. 1 only for the past eight years and knew nothing of its history prior to that. Neighbors, the richest source of local gossip, looked to be youngish people who would not have been around in the 1920's. A search through all local newspapers for 1924 yielded no information about a suicide. Where could I go from there?

I toyed with the idea of consulting the Royal Ulster Constabulary station for that area. But, apart from the fact that the Ulster police were at full strength with the grim pressures of terrorism, they'd think I was a crank if I were to say, "Excuse me, but I'm trying to trace a ghost from 50 years ago." And yet, by one of those incredible coincidences which happen only in real life, it was indeed the RUC that inadvertently supplied the key to the mystery.

On the following Friday the agent phoned. Could I please go along to the house at once? Someone had thrown a brick through the bottom front window. A policeman would meet me there to check if anything had been stolen.

Unquiet spirits, bricks — where would it all end? I wished I had never set eyes on No. 1 Sandhill Gardens.

I was relieved to discover that the breakage had been sheer mindless vandalism. Nothing was gone.

"Pleasant here," said the constable as I signed my statement. "I live quite near myself. My kids love to play on that old railway track at the back. Not that you'd know it had ever been a railway now, except for the sleepers under the grass. And the ghost, of course."

"Ghost?" I said, nearly falling out of my chair.

The policeman, grinning, asked, "It's not been bothering you, has it?"

So I told him about Lily Noble. As it turned out, however, I'd got the wrong ghost. The one the constable meant was a male crossing-keeper mown down by a train before World War I.

"That's odd, though," he said thoughtfully. "Tell you what. I've an uncle retired from the force and living in Londonderry. He'd have been a young copper in our station about that time. I'll give him a buzz. If there was a suicide, the police should have been in on it."

The constable was as good as his word. A couple of days later he called back with some startling information.

His uncle remembered the case well. Arthur Noble, a widower, lived with his daughter Lily, an only child, in No. 1 Sandhill Gardens. He owned large portions of land in the district and he was selling the land for building. The transactions involved a lot of money but something went wrong. It came to light

that the young solicitor acting for Arthur Noble was swindling him. It was a doubly cruel betrayal because the solicitor was also Lily's fiancé.

For her sake no legal action was taken and the heartless scoundrel was allowed to abandon his practice and leave the country. As a result Lily had a nervous breakdown and spent some time in a mental hospital from which she was discharged, supposedly cured. A few weeks afterwards she plunged down the landing steps with a kitchen knife in her hand.

The merciful verdict had been "accidental death" and influential friends of Arthur Noble had kept the story out of the newspapers. Lily had refused to accept her fiancé's guilt. Her delusion was that somewhere were secret papers which would clear his name.

"It's the weirdest thing I've ever heard," the constable admitted. "Whatever was in that glass certainly got its facts right."

Well, now we had the confirmation I had been seeking. I wasn't sure whether to be glad or sorry.

When Betty came back to the house, I rejoined her, half fearing, half hoping that we might regain contact with Lily and ease her tormented spirit. There was nothing. No opened windows, no thumps or drags, no soft voice calling pitifully from the landing. Even when we plucked up courage to try the wineglass again, it stayed silent and

inert. The poor unhappy shade of Lily Noble had fled, leaving us with a host of unanswered questions. Where has she gone? Has she finally accepted the bitter truth or does she still wander somewhere in search of the nonexistent proof of her lover's innocence?

A decade later Betty is settled in her bungalow, with two dogs and a cat for company. She has found consolation and fresh purpose through working for handicapped children. At least one Sunday a month she spends a quiet hour with Don at Roselawn Cemetery.

Ours was the last "letting" of No. 1 Sandhill Gardens. After we left, the absentee landlord sold it. The new owner has given it a complete facelift. I drive past it often and see cars in the driveway and children playing in the garden. The once-troubled house has every appearance of being a happy family home.

Of the many casual tenants who occupied it over the years, were Betty and I the only unwitting spectators of a raw human drama which happened before we were born? Through our rash tampering with the wineglass, had we summoned poor Lily Noble back from beyond the grave to reenact her heartbreak? Was there more we could have done for our tragic ghost? If so, where did we go wrong?

We shall never know and, with lingering guilt, we shall never cease to wonder.

# Parapsychology Today

## ESP IN CHILDREN

Researchers are attempting to determine whether growth and learning suppress a child's "natural" psychic powers.

By Susan Blackmore

**"WE ARE ALL** born with psychic powers and lose them with age and learning."

This is a familiar notion and a fascinating one. Many parents feel so close to their babies that they are convinced they have a paranormal rapport. But if such a rapport exists, it seems to disappear when the infants grow into childhood. Then some parents feel that their child's education destroys this bond. While schooling helps the child to think more rationally, in some way it destroys his intuitive perception of the world. Thus it might be argued that education suppresses our inborn psychic powers. This factor might even relate to the frequent claims that psychic functioning is common among primitive peoples who do not have our education and insistence on rationality.

So are we born with ESP? And do education and learning suppress it? These questions are testable and parapsychologists have tackled

them repeatedly over the years.

In 1937, when experimental parapsychology was still a new area of research, Dr. Louisa Rhine, wife of Dr. J. B. Rhine, suggested that children might be especially gifted psychic subjects because they are more naive and less analytical than adults. She carried out experiments with children aged three to 15 years at Duke University and found that the youngest got the highest ESP scores. But these studies were not well controlled, so the results cannot be relied on.

More than 30 years later psychiatrist Jan Ehrenwald suggested that the special symbiosis between mother and infant could be the "cradle of ESP." A fellow psychiatrist, Berthold Schwarz, reported a series of apparently spontaneous telepathic events with his baby daughter, although no experimental tests were carried out. Later, in 1971, Dr. Schwarz published his book *Parent-Child Telepathy*, which reported 505 instances of presumed ESP between his two

growing children and him and/or his wife.

More formal suggestions came later from psychologists who argued that ESP resembles the modes of thinking used by children under seven or eight years of age and accordingly, ESP ability ought to decline after that age. Others have noted that *belief* in ESP is necessary for its functioning. Since children more readily believe in the possibility of ESP, that may help them demonstrate it.

In the 1950's, J. G. van Busschbach, a Dutch parapsychologist and school inspector, began a long series of ESP tests with literally thousands of children in the classroom. He used a guessing procedure with the children's teachers acting as "senders." During his initial tests, the primary schoolchildren did very

well but secondary schoolchildren did not. He confirmed this finding in later studies conducted both in Holland and in the United States, where his research was widely replicated by workers from Duke University. Busschbach attributed these results to the better rapport teachers have with children in the primary schools and the discouragement of children's intuitive thinking that tends to occur in secondary school. These studies, however, suffered from several experimental flaws so it is possible that the results were not due to ESP at all. When he modified the procedure for his final tests in America, the results came out close to chance. Nevertheless, these early studies certainly indicated that further research into the idea of ESP in children was worthwhile.

WHEN THE pioneering work at Duke University in the 1930's proved that the existence of ESP could be systematically explored, parapsychologists began positing theories about the sixth sense. They also began trying to learn whether any special groups of subjects were particularly gifted. The search for evidence of ESP in children started in 1936 when Margaret Pegram, spurred on by the Duke work, began experiments with a nine-year-old girl named Lillian. Pegram was testing children at the Wright Refuge in Durham when she met the girl, who soon became one of the few "star" subjects ever to guess correctly the order of all 25 cards in a standard ESP deck. Later experiments with children focused on the correlation between IQ and ESP. Research into ESP in childhood received an important impetus in the 1970's when Ernesto Spinelli reported his highly successful work in England. But as Dr. Susan Blackmore of the University of Bristol explains in this contribution to our "Parapsychology Today" series, Dr. Spinelli's research complicated rather than resolved the question of ESP in children.

Many more experiments using children as subjects followed over the next 20 years, especially between teachers and their students. Some experimenters found that positive scores resulted when the teacher acted as agent but not when an outside experimenter sent the targets. Other researchers felt that specific personality variables played a part in successful ESP scoring but these findings were not replicable. In other words, while some of the first experimental parapsychologists concluded that young children could demonstrate ESP, their tests were not always successful, and no one could discover any magic procedure for ensuring success. While some of these researchers uncovered hints that younger children might score especially well on ESP tests, no one ever formally tested this theory. Thus by this stage ESP in children was still an open question.

Recent research in the 1970's and 1980's has concentrated more closely on the specific link between age and psychic functioning, including the way ESP relates to psychological or cognitive development — the maturation of the child's thinking. Parapsychologist Sally Ann Drucker and her colleagues in New York tested several children at their homes or day-care centers. Before the test, each child's cognitive development was determined by the use of a simple psychological technique. The children were then classified

into logical, prelogical and "mixed" groups on the basis of their test scores. Developmental psychologists believe that shifts occur within children between the ages of five and seven when their thinking becomes more logical and analytical.

The actual ESP test each child took involved a bag of multicolored M & M candies. One was randomly drawn from a bag by the experimenter and the child had to guess its color. If the guess was correct the child got to eat the candy. The researchers expected the prelogical children to score the highest but in fact the only group to score significantly was the "mixed" group — that is, those children apparently still making the transition from prelogical to logical thinking. But even this conceivably successful result did not hold up when the experimenters tried to replicate their work. No relationship could therefore be established between ESP and cognitive development.

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**B**Y THE MID-1970's the results of various tests using children as subjects were a mixture of apparent success, failure and confusion. But this was to change dramatically when Ernesto Spinelli, a graduate student at the University of Surrey in England, undertook his research. He developed a theory of "para-normal cognition" suggesting that ESP should work best in immature organisms whose internal thinking

processes are poorly developed. This would allow more scope for external — or paranormal — influences to register and interact with the organism's normal thinking processes. He therefore argued that children under eight years of age should do particularly well at ESP tasks, since their sense of "self" would not be strong enough to "filter out" psychic information.

Spinelli proceeded to test 1000 subjects in pairs: one acting as sender and the other as receiver. The targets were groups of pictures instead of geometric symbols and the subjects ranged from three-year-old children in play groups to old-age pensioners.

The results were overwhelmingly significant. With five pictures to choose from, the subjects would be expected to score about 20 percent right by chance. But the youngest children (aged three and four) scored nearly 45 percent. This represents odds of 1000 to one against chance. The next older children (aged four and five) scored a little less but still way beyond chance. The older children (aged five to eight), like the adults, scored right at chance levels. It was finally looking as if an exponential relationship between chronological age and ESP was being uncovered.

Spinelli, who eventually earned his Ph.D. with this work, also made several other important discoveries. For example, he found that the best

scores were obtained when the pairs of children were matched for age *and* IQ. In other words, when the two children were similar in both chronological *and* intellectual development, they scored higher.

There were problems, however, with the experimental procedure Spinelli used and the critics were quick to point them out. To get the children more involved in the tests, he let the sender choose the picture target. This was a fatal flaw, one that could invalidate the entire experiment. A similarity might have existed between the order in which the senders chose the targets and the guessing biases of the receivers. That is, if the children happened to like similar pictures, both the senders and receivers might have picked the same ones *in the same order* for perfectly normal reasons. This might even explain Spinelli's secondary findings, since children of similar age and development would be more likely to make similar choices.

In response Spinelli pointed out that he had preselected pictures that would be equally attractive to the subjects. But for his later experiments he changed his procedure. For these tests the target pictures were randomly selected and the results were still significant — although far fewer children were tested. Some critics suggested that Spinelli himself might have something to do with the results, so a few tests were carried out under perfectly

controlled conditions but in his absence. The level of the scoring fell dramatically but the results were still significantly above chance.

Other parapsychologists immediately tried to confirm Spinelli's impressive findings. Working in an elementary school near Boston, Susan Shargal used a somewhat different method. She tested first-, third- and fifth-grade students, using not pictures but blank clocks as targets. She acted as the agent herself, looking at a clock face with one number marked on it. The children were asked to guess the number. As she predicted, the younger children did the best; only the first-grade students scored significantly above chance.

This study is not without flaws. Shargal made the error of remaining in the same room with the children while carrying out her testing. It is therefore possible that she might have conveyed to the children some idea of the correct response by normal means — sensory cueing. This seems even more viable on the basis of a follow-up study Shargal conducted later. She tested first-graders again but this time no one looked at the target and sensory cueing could not have occurred. The scoring rates in these tests were now lower and not independently significant. The poorly controlled conditions in Shargal's first experiment may have accounted for the positive results.

More direct attempts at replicating Spinelli's findings were carried out in Great Britain. In Edinburgh, Hilary Henegan tested a total of 150 children aged three to five years with a procedure similar to Spinelli's, but her results were inconsistent. This led her to wonder whether the problem might have been her own motivation, which was not as high as Spinelli's. He had been trying to prove a specific and personal theory about ESP. So she designed an experiment in which she was more personally interested. She arranged to test the children with their mothers working as the experimenter-agents. To serve as a control, a research assistant instead of their mothers worked with the children for several other runs. Naturally, Henegan expected the tests with mother-child pairs to be the most successful, but the opposite actually occurred!

I also tried to replicate Spinelli's work and even carried out my research at the University of Surrey where he made his findings. I worked with children of the same age as he had and first tried my hand with Sally Drucker's "M & M" experimental procedure from the United States.

These tests included both clairvoyance conditions with no one knowing the color of the candy and telepathy conditions with the sender another child of an age similar to the subject's. The results were uni-

formly close to chance expectation.

My next experiments more closely resembled Spinelli's. The targets were pictures and the children, aged three to five, worked in pairs. The target for each trial was randomly selected by computer so that no biasing factor could contaminate the results. My findings were quite different from Spinelli's. I found no sign of ESP at work and no correlations between age and ESP. The younger children did just as poorly, if not worse, than the older ones.

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**H**OW CAN the discrepancies in all this research be explained? Spinelli seemed able to procure dramatically significant results with his children and always in the direction he had predicted. Yet those of us replicating his findings under controlled conditions failed. This is a familiar problem in parapsychology — the best results end up unrepeatable.

There are several possible explanations. I personally followed Spinelli's experiments closely and even observed some tests in progress. Most of his experiments were flawed by the "guessing order" stacking effect. Spinelli denied the seriousness of this flaw and by pointing out that his later (successful) experiments had corrected the procedure. But in fact, the only experiments Spinelli conducted under perfectly controlled conditions were the few final series, and

these produced the lowest scores. I also pointed out that his stunning results were never published in a full-length journal article and this made it difficult for others to assess them.

Nevertheless, Spinelli remains convinced that his results did demonstrate ESP and he has suggested that those of us who failed to replicate his work didn't have the right personality, motivation or rapport with the children. These are all possibilities but go against the evidence, as Hilary Henegan demonstrated with her research in Edinburgh specifically using motivation as an important element. Using all sorts of variations, I was unable to find any evidence of ESP in children.

Could it be that there is simply no such thing? If this is the case, then we must ask why so many people believe there is. This question is easier to answer. Parents have a very special relationship with their children, especially a new mother with her baby. The experience of burgeoning motherhood may be unlike anything she has ever experienced before. Her baby is totally helpless and totally dependent on her. She spends hours every day holding the baby and looking into his or her bright little eyes. She watches every movement and listens to every little snuffle and every loud cry. She tries to understand how her baby feels and what it is like to be so tiny.

Through love and closeness

comes understanding and when parent and child are really close, each learns to know what the other needs, what the other is feeling or what the other is about to do. They sense it from facial expressions and body posture. It is easy in this state to feel that something paranormal must be going on but perhaps it is just the normal, special process of loving another human being. Perhaps we don't need to invoke ESP at all.

So now that we have looked at the research and the alternative explanations, can we answer the questions with which we began? Is each of us born with ESP? And do education and learning suppress our "natural" psychic powers?

The answers seem to elude us the more closely we seek them. If we look solely at Spinelli's results we

might say yes — and yes again. But his results proved hard to repeat. Science is a process of confirming preliminary results, testing theories from different angles and trying to understand the processes underlying our findings. This is how progress in science is made. But as parapsychologists search for evidence of ESP in children, the experiments continue to be contradictory. There has been little progress and the best controlled attempts to confirm Spinelli's findings eventually failed. I cannot help feeling that if children are naturally psychic, these years of research ought to have brought us closer to understanding the sixth sense.

The evidence for ESP in children is just about as confusing and contradictory as the evidence for ESP in general.



## WAR WITHOUT WOUNDS

**W**AR BETWEEN Holland and the Scilly Isles ended April 17, 1986, after 335 years. Both sides were wreathed in smiles — there never were any casualties — when peace was officially declared in the council chamber on the island of St. Mary's.

"I am extremely pleased to be able to visit the islands and tell the people who live here that the war is finally over," said Dutch Ambassador Jonkheer Huydecoper, who arrived by helicopter on the island 28 miles off southwestern England.

He presented the Scillonians with an elaborate scroll declaring an end to the state of war that has existed since 1651. The island authorities have always contended that Holland declared war on the Scillies that year and never made peace afterward.

Historical records show that a Dutch fleet did indeed sail for the Scillies to deal with pirates who were attacking merchant ships, but by the time the Dutch navy arrived an English force had dealt with the buccaneers. No shots were fired.

# Visions of the Heart

I had no idea where my "dream" came from but it changed my life forever. . . .

By Yvonne Y. Kernan

I WAS AN exceptionally pretty young girl with long auburn curls. My parents William and Lulu Taylor had a large family but sadly, out of nine children they raised only three, the first child (a boy), the middle child (another boy) and the ninth (me). The others died either at birth or in their early childhood.

From the beginning I was nearly killed with kindness and attention. My older brother Felix was married and away from home before I was born. I adored my other brother Cyril, who was 14 when I came into the world, and he became head of the family when my father died at his desk at the *Los Angeles Examiner* five years later.

Even with the hardships and tragedies I was happy with my life. As long as I had my mother and brother, all was well in my world.

I had never been very strong and when I was nine the doctor urged my mother to cut my hair, which now was below my knees, because he said it was sapping my strength.

Whether it was the haircut or

nature, I started growing at the rate of six inches in one year. When I reached 14, I was five feet seven and a half inches tall, skinny as a rail. I thought I was the ugliest person alive. I wanted my mother and brother to be proud of me but I felt I was a disgrace to them.

My mother and I slept in one room. One night she awakened me and said I had been reciting beautiful poetry. "Were you dreaming?" she asked.

Awake, I couldn't rhyme cat and rat but I remembered the dream very well. There had been an explosion in a niter plant and I could hear screams coming from inside the building. People milled around but no one did anything. Determined to save some of the suffering victims, I ran toward the plant, only to be held back by a man who grabbed my shoulder.

"Stop!" he commanded. "If you go in there now, you are wasting another life."

I looked up at the man who seemed to be Jesus. He wore a long white robe and had a beautiful smile.

I tried to explain that my life was of no value and that I should try to save the lives of the people in the building.

He said, "There is no such thing as a valueless life. For the people inside the building nothing can be done. It would be wrong to throw other lives away."

He started speaking in rhyme. Other persons stood around us. Finally He put his hand on another person and said, "This is my arm." To another He said, "This is my leg." To the person standing next to me, he said, "You are my hands." He went around the group naming different parts of the body and finished by putting his hand on my shoulder and saying, "You are my heart."

When I finished describing all this to Mother, she said she thought I had had a vision, not a dream. Whatever it was, it left a lasting impression on me and has influenced my entire life.

Over the years my "vision" has guided my life in many ways. At that particular time I began thinking about the situation and decided that, even though I wasn't beautiful, I could be good. I could be loving. I could be a necessary part of the whole. My mother and brother would be proud of me.

Some years later, when I had been married a few years and had a small child, my husband and I were having serious problems; I could

see no way out of them. It was during the Depression and we were very poor. I could live without money but I couldn't live without love, trust and understanding.

Then my "vision" returned. I thought of my child and realized I couldn't leave her. I couldn't hurt my mother and brother either. They had done their very best for me. The situation ended, not as I hoped it would but at least it was over.

I had to make a new start. My life opened up to an entirely new experience and happiness I never believed possible.

Through the years, as could only be expected, I had periods of trouble and depression. The worst occurred after my second husband Jack Kernan's death on January 3, 1976. We had been married for 37 happy years.

I didn't see how I could continue living without him. I remembered my "vision" and thought again that there must be a useful place for me somewhere. I didn't want to worry my child or her family. My own life seemed meaningless but I studied various activities trying to find a niche for myself.

A friend had given me several large pieces of stained glass. I loved color so I decided to take a class and with luck be able to make a window for my front door. I was in my 70's then and the teacher was so impressed with my advanced age that he could hardly teach me. He intro-

duced me to everyone who came in and told each one he was sure I was the oldest pupil he had ever had. I almost felt that I should be in a circus sideshow but I kept at it until I learned to do quite nice work. That was 10 years ago.

Eventually I felt confident enough to volunteer to make a stained glass window for the church if the minister and vestry approved. I visualized a small two-by-three window stuck in a corner someplace but they wanted a six-foot rose window over the altar!

My first inclination was to decline but then I thought, if they didn't believe in me, they wouldn't have asked so I should try. When I was finished, I gave the window to the church as a memorial to my husband. Working on it provided me with much happiness. The next year I made 12 smaller windows for the chapel and dedicated them to the memory of my mother.

In 1985 the bottom dropped out of my life again. My adored grand-nephew Bill, who had always been the epitome of responsibility, suddenly fell in love at age 28. If opposites attract, she was everything he wasn't: thoughtless in her relationships with others, careless in financial matters, crude in behavior. I felt strongly that the girl wasn't a good match for him. I was heartbroken and didn't know what to do.

One Sunday in church I was reading the bulletin and noticed this

statement: "There would not be a body if it were all only one part. As it is, there are many parts and one body."

I could hardly believe my eyes because it brought back my "vision" so clearly. A few Sundays later I read this in the bulletin: "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Lord is served. There are different abilities to perform service but the same God gives ability to everyone for all services."

Similar quotations appeared in other bulletins in the following weeks. Every time I came across one, it set me back on my heels because it brought my "vision" so clearly to mind. I tried to find out who was responsible for putting these sentences in the bulletins. When I couldn't learn immediately, I became obsessed. I had to know.

Then I asked another woman if she knew anything about them. Not only had she put them in the bulletin, as it turned out, she said they were from her favorite chapter in the New Testament. She took a Bible in hand and opened it to I Corinthians, Chapter 12, and there it was! The "vision" I had had so many years before was described on the pages before me. Goose bumps peppered my arms.

I'm in my 80's now and I thought I was fairly familiar with the Bible and its many stories. I had heard quotations from Corinthians before and I believe our minister even

preached from that chapter of the Bible not long before I made my discovery. But I know that when I

was 14 I had never read any part of Corinthians and yet it affected my whole life.



## MORE TROUBLE THAN THEY'RE WORTH

*By W. Ritchie Benedict*

**I**N AN article released by Canadian Press in late 1984, reporter Margaret Bruineman claimed that the Canadian Air Force had information about unidentified flying objects which was not followed up by the National Research Council. Although news of UFO sightings has simmered since the 1950's and 1960's, the Canadian government decided they did not threaten national security, according to files released to the public archives.

In 1968 the Department of National Defense passed the UFO file to the Planetary Science Section of the National Research Council where all interest ceased.

"No scientific evidence indicates that any of these objects are of extraterrestrial origin," said Dr. A. G. McNamara, head of Planetary Sciences at NRC's Herzberg Laboratory. "When this [UFO] phenomenon was at its peak, many investigations took place and they all came up with no conclusive evidence."

The Canadian investigation file,

now open to the public, documents the struggle of a determined few who were involved in a continuing investigations into UFO incidents. In a note dated November 14, 1967, Wing Comdr. D. R. Robertson show hope and optimism in turning over the UFO file to its new custodian.

"If the NRC accepts the responsibility of investigating UFOs and they work with the University of Toronto in cooperation with the DND, in my opinion we are on the right track," Robertson said. Clearly it was his pet project.

But undated and unsigned documents attached to Robertson's brief concluded that the DND should not continue the investigations of UFOs because "the primary interest of UFOs lies in the field of science and to a lesser degree... national security."

The recommendation to get the air force out of UFO research blamed high administrative costs and the overzealousness of the research team.



# PSI AND THE HUMAN BRAIN

Scientific studies document the link between electrical activity in the brain and a wide range of paranormal experiences.

By Michael A. Persinger

**D**OES THE human brain control the occurrence of paranormal or mystical experiences? Those researchers who believe that psi exists in a nonphysical dimension think the brain is not required. Other researchers believe that all experience is ultimately caused by the brain, including psi.

Be it due to cause or correlation, a particular portion of the human brain, the temporal lobe, is intimately involved with psi experiences. Natural or artificial stimulation of this portion of the brain can produce all of the major features of subjective psi experiences.

The temporal lobe makes up the side of the brain and is located approximately at the level of the ears. This portion of the brain underwent unusual development very recently in evolutionary history. The shape of this region has changed dramatically to make room for these developments. Some structures show remarkable asym-

metry, meaning that the same structure is visually different on one side of the brain from the other. This asymmetry has sometimes been paired with the emergence of consciousness itself.

Deep within the temporal lobe there are two structures that are important to human experience. One is called the *hippocampus*. It is involved with memory. Damage to this critical structure results in memory loss or amnesia. The other structure is the *amygdala*, involved with feelings of pleasure, pain and, most importantly, the experience of meaningfulness or understanding.

These two structures, the amygdala and the hippocampus, are sensitive to electrical signals sent by other portions of the brain. Modern techniques in neuroscience have shown that during periods of personal stress, such as job pressures or the loss of a loved one, these portions of the brain become more than usually electrically active for

very long periods of time.

For many years now, neurosurgeons have known that stimulation of these temporal lobe structures by small outside electrical currents, like the ones produced by the brain itself, can produce experiences. These experiences usually involve lots of emotion and meaningfulness. Many times the person feels that he is "somewhere else." Often the experiences involve vivid scenes of other places or the "apparitions" of familiar persons.

For example, one of the patients of Dr. Janice R. Stevens and her colleagues (at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School) reported being "far away, super-relaxed, pleasant and detached." These experiences occurred when the patient's deep temporal lobe was electrically stimulated for therapeutic reasons. The patient also felt tingling sensations and a "strange light" within the head.

Still other sensations were deep warmth and floating. Sometimes there were experiences of great pleasure, like "nirvana," followed by feelings of looking on a scene, including her own body.

The temporal lobe is important for the understanding of language. During brief periods when the wrong kind of electrical signals are occurring in the temporal lobe, people do not recognize what other people are saying. Or the person

may suddenly hear his name called. A word or phrase, appearing to come from somewhere else, may be "whispered inside the head." The voice may give an instruction.

Another important function of the temporal lobe is involved with balance or "vestibular" experiences. So when this portion of the temporal lobe is stimulated, a person may feel as if he is floating, often out of his body. Other experiences include the feelings of soft vibrations, like riding over a rolling road.

All of these experiences can be produced by stimulating the temporal lobe. The persons who report these experiences are *not* crazy. Usually they are normal people who may have brains that are slightly more active electrically than other people's. But *all* of us have the potential to experience these feelings.

\* \* \*

**T**HESE EXPERIENCES are similar in many ways to paranormal experiences. Sensations of floating and moving out of the body are often called out-of-body experiences (OBEs) or astral travel. The experience that something is familiar, although you are seeing it for the first time, is called *deja vu*. Some parapsychologists think that *deja vu* may be related to precognition. From this approach, the *deja-vu* experience is a forgotten precognitive dream. But there are many other interpretations.

Like the experiences produced by surgical stimulation, most paranormal experiences have great meaning to the person. No matter if it is telepathy, precognition or post-mortem phenomena (experiencing a person's presence after his death), the experiences are personally profound. They appear so real and meaningful that the experiencers write them down or tell members of their family or close friends. Often they are given deeply religious interpretations.

The normal periods of electrical activity within the temporal lobe occur during the early morning hours, particularly during periods of dreaming. Fatigue, fasting, developmental crisis (feeling that you are growing old) or the sudden loss of an important person can influence this activity.

Psi experiences are also dominant at night, usually occurring between the hours of midnight and 4:00 A.M. They often take place during a time of crisis or death to a friend or family member, or shortly thereafter. A few occur when private crises become too much to bear.

Recently Dr. Vernon Neppe, a psychiatrist, reported that sensitives, persons who reported frequent and complex psi experiences, also described symptoms that indicate temporal-lobe activity. These persons showed alterations in memory and reported perfumed or

pleasant smells. Many of these individuals "felt" presences of other "beings."

Members of the Neuroscience Laboratory, here at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, have been looking at the brain correlates of psi for many years now. We have tested unusual individuals, such as those who speak in tongues or have peak, God-nirvana experiences. These individuals are rare. During their experiences we have found specific electrical changes only in the vicinity of the temporal lobe.

We have found that persons who claim many psi experiences also report behaviors that are found in persons with above-average electrical activity in the temporal lobes. These individuals, who have excessive electrical activity because of certain chemical properties in small areas of the temporal lobe, are seen by others as being highly perservering. These persons are likely to keep extensive diaries or records and to write poetry. They are unusually fascinated with esoteric and mystical philosophy and religion.

But we have been much more impressed with the experiences of everyday people. Our data indicate that *psi experiences are normal things*. Regardless of the kinds of interpretations that are given to these experiences, they occur frequently and, when they do, they seem very real.

Normal persons who report psi experiences also undergo intense, meaningful experiences, particularly between two and four o'clock in the morning. They report that at least once in their lives they have felt the presence of "other beings" or have come in contact with a "cosmic consciousness." These experiences appear real, regardless of what kind of psi they report: telepathy, precognition or out-of-body experiences. Psi experiencers are also more likely to have sensed soft vibrations throughout their body just before they fall asleep or oscillating movements like moving over a rolling road while they are sitting quietly.

Many of them have heard their names called by an "inner voice" at least once in their lifetimes. They feel that when a personal crisis is occurring, a special sign will be given to them. They are more sensitive to smells and often report experiences of smells from childhood.

Psi experiencers are normal in many other respects. They report normal fears and are just as honest as persons who don't report these experiences.

Age is not a factor, although in our population of university students older persons tend to show more of the characteristics of the psi personality. When given psychological test batteries, psi experiencers are, on the average, quite normal. Con-

trary to many popular beliefs, they are *not* abnormal.

Although some psi experiencers are religious and score very highly on dogma scales, such as literal interpretation of the Bible, a surprisingly large number of psi experiencers do not go to church. They have unusual interests, what we call exotic beliefs. They would like to travel through time and they believe in life on other planets.

We have also found that the more psi experiences and temporal-lobe signs a person has, the more frequent specific changes are noted in electrical recording from the area on the scalp immediately over the temporal lobe. These recordings are not evident from other "control" areas over the brain.

More questions are raised than have been answered. What stimulates these experiences in the temporal lobe? Are there means by which these experiences can be encouraged? Do certain kinds of temporal-lobe activity make us sensitive to things we usually cannot perceive? Can we develop behavioral tests that can identify those individuals who are more likely to report these experiences? Did psi experiences evolve to allow us to cope with death and trauma?

These intriguing questions are only the first step as modern neuroscience begins to investigate psi and the human brain.

# Frank's Dead [REDACTED] and I Killed Him! [REDACTED]

At first it was just a terrifying dream,  
endlessly repeated. Then one day nightmare became reality....

By C. Kutac

**I**N 1976, when my son Eric was 17, he took a summer job in a nearby resort town in Colorado. His job was to tend the horses that were used to take tourists for wagon rides, a job for which he was well-qualified because he rode horseback daily and had cared for our own four horses for several years.

After a week of work he came home bubbling with enthusiasm for his job. Some days he even got to drive one of the wagons; other times he acted as outrider, keeping the teams in line, helping with traffic problems. There was a job for an extra stable hand, so when he drove his pickup back to work, he took his best friend Frank Elliot with him. I was glad he'd have someone with him, especially Frank. The two of them had gone to school together for years and attended the same church nearly every Sunday.

About a month after he started the job, Eric came home unexpectedly one evening. He was troubled and only after a few cups of coffee and a lot of conversation did he

blurt out the real reason for his spur-of-the-moment trip home.

"Mom," he said as he toyed with his empty coffee cup, "I keep having the same dream nearly every night. There's nothing but a voice, screaming over and over, 'Frank's dead and I killed him!'"

I was at a loss what to tell him and when he left he was still troubled, unable to shake the uneasy feeling that the dreams had left him with.

Two days later I received a call from a friend with terrible news. There had been an auto accident in La Plata Canyon and Eric had a head injury, but as yet no one knew how serious it was. Three other boys were in Eric's pickup when it rolled over: the two Kolz brothers, who escaped with minor cuts and bruises, and Frank, who was killed.

I rushed to Mercy Hospital in Durango, Colo., where Eric was being treated. Although he seemed dazed, he did recognize me. I sat down and held his left hand, which was cold and clammy — not a good sign, I thought. Pushing back a lock of brown hair from his forehead, I

looked at the indentation put there by God only knew what. Wordlessly he turned over his right hand and showed a large red burn which covered nearly his entire palm. There was a lump the size of an egg near his elbow. I saw a large bruise on his thigh. His back was scraped raw over a large area and bumps covered much of his head.

Sitting there, grateful that Eric was alive, I felt guilty also, because somewhere nearby Frank's body lay waiting for his parents to come and identify him. Every time I thought of Frank, I couldn't help remembering the voice that had haunted Eric's dreams with the message "Frank's dead and I killed him!"

Eric's head injury had robbed him of any memory of the past 24 hours, so I had to explain to him that he was in the hospital because his pickup rolled over on a curve. His next question was how bad was his pickup and I told him it was totaled. Then he asked in a panic-stricken voice about Frank and I had to tell him Frank was dead. Every 10 or 15 minutes Eric would sit up in bed and ask how he got there and I'd explain the whole thing over and over. Since he hadn't been driving the pickup at the time of the accident, at least he didn't feel responsible for Frank's death but he was devastated by the loss of his best friend.

After a few days Eric was released

from the hospital. He was weak and shaky but more than anything else he wanted me to drive him to the spot where the accident had taken place. I wasn't sure it was the wise thing to do but after he pleaded with me, I gave in.

The site of the accident wasn't hard to find, because there were skid marks on the pavement. Scattered everywhere were the wood chips the pickup had been carrying when it overturned. The rocks by the side of the road bore scrape marks and spots of oil were splattered all over the ground. Weeds in the area looked as if they had been scalded with boiling water. Branches were broken off a nearby scrub oak, marking the spot where the pickup finally came to rest.

As he stared at these sights, Eric shook his head, frowned and remarked, "I can't remember a thing." His face paled and he hurried back to the car. "Let's get out of here," he said.

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Taylor, friends of ours, had been first on the accident scene. They lived a few miles farther up the canyon. I had been wanting to learn firsthand what had happened and Eric couldn't remember, so I wanted to ask the Taylors. We drove up to see them.

One of the Kolz brothers had run the two miles to get help and when the Taylors reached the scene, Eric was single-handedly trying to lift the pickup off Frank, who was

pinned under it. That's how his hand got burned, I realized.

Then someone added, "But it was the driver I felt sorry for."

"Why?" I asked. "He wasn't even badly hurt."

"No, but he was hysterical. He just kept screaming over and over, 'Frank's dead and I killed him!'"

Eric and I exchanged glances. As

soon as we got in the car, I said, "So that's the voice you kept hearing in your dream."

Sadly he nodded. "Too bad there wasn't more to it, enough to warn us what was going to happen. This way, what good was it? Why that glimpse into the future at all?"

"I wish I knew, Eric," I replied. "I only wish I knew."



### THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON

**T**HE GREAT Fire of London happened September 1, 1666, and in June 1986, the bakers apologized to the Lord Mayor for setting fire to the city.

The Worshipful Company of Bakers gathered in Pudding Lane at the place where the fire began. Watched by a small crowd of dignitaries and bemused bystanders, the bakers formally acknowledged what Londoners have known for some time: that the fire was started by Thomas Faryner, the king's baker, who failed to douse his oven before turning in that fateful night.

Wearing his robes and chain of office featuring sheaves of wheat and a scale, John Copeman, Master of the Worshipful Company of Bakers, presented the Lord Mayor of London, Allen Davis, with a scroll written by the bakers "as an acknowledgment of their regret

for the great damage caused by one of their number. . . ."

The five-day fire caused no fatalities but destroyed 13,200 houses, 89 churches and 44 livery halls over an area of 450 acres. To this day it is known simply as the Great Fire.

The City of London is a small area in the center of the great British capital where today financial institutions are remarkably concentrated within half a mile of the Bank of England. The Pudding Lane ceremony is the kind the City of London relishes — comradely, slightly comical, yet serious enough to be more than a tourism stunt. It shows how Britain's history, never having had a violent revolution to sweep out old institutions and privileges, tends to have peaceful continuity, wherein change comes slowly and is invariably regarded with suspicion.



# COME FLY WITH ME

I've found a new way to travel: it's fast, it's cheap and I don't even have to bring along my body.

By C. R. Anderson

**I**N LATE 1984 I became interested in astral projection. I read books about it, listened to subliminal tapes which help induce the astral state, and practiced, practiced, practiced.

Each night as I fell asleep, my last conscious thought was of projection. Each morning I arose frustrated with no positive recall of projecting my astral body and traveling. Several weeks passed and I was on the verge of giving up when sometime in January 1985 my friend Jess Edwards telephoned.

Jess is a longtime telephone friend of mine in Columbia, S. C. I usually commented when he called that I had just been thinking about him. We laughed often about this coincidence.

Jess asked hesitantly, "Have you been trying to project your astral body?"

"Yes," I replied, "but I've had no positive results."

"Well, I saw you last night."

I was stunned — and elated. I could hardly believe what I was hearing. But I immediately doubted. I wondered if Jess had just imagined

I was there. I told him I would visit him again and have a specific question for him to answer when we talked afterwards.

Two weeks later the test came. As I visited him that night I asked him what color gown I was wearing. The next day when he called he rightly said it was blue. I decided to test him again. After all, he might have made a lucky guess.

About a month later, Jess called again and said, "Do me a favor. Get a deck of cards and pick out 10 cards."

I did as he asked.

"Okay," he said with confidence, "I'm going to tell you what you drew."

I listened and replied "yes" eight times and "no" twice.

Jess was distressed. "You came to see me last night," he said. "You told me you would draw the 10 cards I gave you. I tried to remember them as you gave me the list but I suppose I forgot two."

Although I didn't know the odds against such a high score, I was impressed. I realized there was some significance to what we were doing but I was still not completely convinced that Jess was actually seeing

me. I decided to test him one more time.

In March, in the astral state I told him the name of a character in a book I was writing. On the telephone the next day he mentioned the character's name without my prompting him.

Jess' telephone conversations finally convinced me that I was actually projecting.

In April 1985 I made a trip overseas. On my last night in Europe, I decided to tell Jess to contact me when I got home. In the astral state I told him to call me on April 21 at exactly 6:15 P.M. When I arrived home, I was pleasantly surprised to hear his voice on the exact date and

at the exact time I had specified.

Now, of course, my visits are not limited to Jess. I find myself regularly frequenting such places as England, Russia and California.

For me astral projection has been an exciting new dimension to enjoy. It also has several distinct advantages over normal modes of communication and travel. I no longer have to worry about carrying a passport and traveler's checks or going through customs. I have no bags to pack. I just go the way I am. Astral projection is rewarding. It enables me to visit places and see people I might never have the opportunity to see under normal circumstances. Best of all, it's cheap!



### A FISH THAT FIGHTS BACK

**W**HEN GLENDA Kinnebrew of Shreveport, La., felt a tug on her line in Old River Bayou in April 1986, she envisioned pulling in a bass or catfish or some other good-to-eat fish. But what she had is a fish that fights back.

A Wildlife and Fisheries official identified her catch as a six-inch piranha, the terror of the Amazon River. Piranhas live only in the streams of eastern and northwestern South America, primarily in the Amazon. A Shreveport winter would kill them, said wildlife specialist Ted Rumbaugh.

"It's my guess someone had been keeping it in an aquarium and dumped it in the bayou," he said. Piranhas were sold in the United States as aquarium fish until 1961 but since then have been banned by federal import laws.

Wildlife officials did not plan to search for more piranhas in the bayou.

"There's no cause for alarm," Rumbaugh said. "It's kind of like all the panther and cougar reports we get. The only difference is that when we checked this one out, the fish was really there."

# SPIRICOM OR SPIRICON?

Has an inventor found a way to communicate electronically with the dead? He says yes but the evidence tells another story.

By Terrence Peterson

**"ONE OF THE** most exciting events in the long history of man... The long silence has been broken. Lengthy, two-way, normal voice conversations with persons who have died are now a reality, they have taken place, they have been recorded."

This is how George W. Meek of Franklin, N.C., described his half-million-dollar investment in what is called "Spiricom." The name comes from two words; spirit and communication. The inventor and operator of Spiricom is a medium and electronics experimenter named William O'Neil. He and his wife

Mary Alice live north of Pittsburgh.

The promotional Spiricom tape recording I have sounds different from any taped "spirit" communication I have ever heard. The sound, similar to what might be produced by a mouth harp, has a twanging metallic quality. The precise significance of this sound came to me only later, when I remembered where I had heard it before.

Three different male spirit voices were recorded on this particular tape. The most impressive voice, Meek says in his narration, was that of Dr. George Jefferies Mueller, who died some 14 years before he

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Mary had a little lamb.

Baylor University scientist David Rivers demonstrates that voiceprints taken of normal speaking voice (as here) and same voice speaking through artificial larynx will produce different readings.

began communicating electronically on September 22, 1980.

The procedure worked this way:

O'Neil, the Spiricom inventor, would phone Meek, the promoter, to inform him that communications had occurred, then send tapes with the latest spirit voices. As Meek grew ever more excited about the importance of Spiricom, he set up a foundation known as Metascience. In April 1982 he went before the National Press Club in Washington to announce this breakthrough to the world. As it happened, shortly before this meeting the spirit of Dr. Mueller spoke via Spiricom for the last time. No other voices have come through to date.

Harold Sherman, the well-known author and psychic, sent me a copy of the Spiricom promotional tape for my hearing and evaluation. I listened to it a couple of times, then laid it aside. Something about it

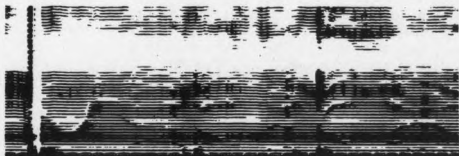
was oddly familiar but I couldn't put my finger on just what it was.

For five years the tape rested in my file. Then in June 1986 I bought a book, *Ghost of 29 Megacycles*, written by John G. Fuller and published by Signet. The new information in Fuller's book rekindled my interest in Spiricom.

As I read the book, I couldn't help noticing the author's obvious discomfort with his subject matter. He does not seem entirely convinced of Spiricom's validity. On the cover page he writes, "This is a strange story. It is either true, or it is not. That determination has to be left up to the reader."

I found several clues, first in the promotional tape, then in Fuller's book, that suggested answers to a number of questions about Spiricom. The first clue was in the odd usage of words on the tape. The authorship of many historical doc-

TYPE R/W BUSHMAN & KAY ELECTRONIC CO. PINE BROOK, N.J.



Mary had a little lamb.

Claim that "spirit" voice and voice of living Spiricom "inventor" William O'Neil are different because they show different voiceprints is proven meaningless in experiment with artificial larynx.

uments has been proven or disproven on this basis alone.

The tape I have is edited and incomplete but a careful listening uncovers much that is revealing.

The three spirit voices that speak via Spiricom are male and sound alike. The speakers are identified as Dr. Nick, Fred Engstrom and Dr. George Mueller.

In a brief exchange, while speaking to O'Neil, Dr. Nick calls him Bill six times. In a longer conversation Fred Engstrom also uses the name Bill six times. Dr. Mueller, the star of the show, speaks the name William some 53 times! Fred Engstrom uses the expression "oh boy" eight times and Dr. Mueller says it five times. On the same tape O'Neil, operator of the Spiricom, says "oh boy" 10 times.\*

When most of us speak on the phone, we rarely use the other speaker's name more than once, unless we have a particular speech habit which leads us to do otherwise. It also seems curious that three persons who are conversing with each other should all be so fond of the same expression.

\* \* \*

ON THE TAPE George Meek says, "We were constantly amazed that Dr. Mueller could see

everything in the lab." Yet elsewhere on that tape we hear Dr. Mueller's voice calling, in long drawn-out tones, "William, William, William, are you there, William?" This from a spirit who can see everything in the lab?

Immediately after the name William is invoked the last time, I noted a change in pitch as if the speaker were moving away. Then a few seconds later William O'Neil's voice in the distance calls, "I am coming, Doctor." To Meek this is evidence that Dr. Mueller and William O'Neil were two different persons. To me it only raises additional questions.

We must accept the word of William O'Neil that the Spiricom voices are legitimate. No scientist—or even Meek, for that matter—was present during the 18 months the spirit voices were taped.

As the story goes, Dr. George Mueller introduced himself to medium O'Neil when he materialized as a spirit and gave his name and history. O'Neil next heard from him as a voice speaking through Spiricom. The communications continued for a year and a half, ending when Dr. Mueller went to a higher spirit plane and communication was no longer possible. All that remained were the voices on tapes and the word of William O'Neil.

In this context it is interesting to review the sequence of events leading to Mueller's silence. Meek

\*According to Eric Partridge's *Slang Dictionary and Unconventional English*, the expression "oh boy" did not come into usage until about 1920. Meek says Engstrom died in 1830.

started planning his Washington press conference in August 1981, to take place eight months later, in April 1982. Also in August Meek wrote to author John G. Fuller and asked for a meeting.

Presumably O'Neil was informed of this. In late September or early October Mueller announced over Spiricom, "I cannot be here forever. I cannot guarantee how long I'll be visiting here. However, I will do my best. Do you understand, William?"

According to Fuller, George and Jeanette Meek arrived at the Fuller home in Weston, Conn., on November 22, 1981. Meek's *Metascience Newsletter* for the summer of 1986 reports, "The instrumental contact with Dr. Mueller continued until November 1981." In other words, just before the Meeks met with Fuller, Mueller spoke for the last time. If Dr. Mueller was uninterested in being subjected to investigation, he chose a good time to depart: a noted author was about to come on the scene and the press was to hear the whole story in the near future.

\* \* \*

**I**N HIS BOOK Fuller writes that that when they met, Meek "was in the process of having several speech and electronic experts analyze the voices." The preliminary reports showed that voiceprints indicated clearly that there were two separate voices. He had sent some of the Mueller tapes to his col-

league, Dr. Hiroshi Motoyama, founder and director of the Institute for Religious Psychology in Tokyo, and author of 30 books on the subject.

"Motoyama had submitted the Spiricom tapes to a voice synthesis expert at the University of Tokyo, who carefully analyzed them. The conclusion was that the voice of Dr. Mueller was clearly not that of either O'Neil or Meek."

Fuller recounts this conversation between Meek and an unnamed scientist:

" 'I've been wondering,' Meek said, 'have you or some of your associates tried to make a voice-print analysis or otherwise studied the conversation between O'Neil and Dr. Mueller?'

" 'Yes,' the scientist replied. 'Some rather extensive tests were made. The opinion was divided. There were some who were quite convinced that it was a valid exchange between two parties. Yet there were the others who took the position that it would be a very easy matter to stage or create these conversations.' "

My own interest was in the mechanical, robotlike tone of the spirit voices, which all sounded very much alike to me. Moreover, the sound was strangely familiar. Finally it came to me where I had heard it before.

When a person's voice box is removed by surgery (usually be-

cause of cancer of the larynx), the patient sometimes elects to use an artificial larynx. The Spiricom voices, I suddenly realized, sounded as if they were coming through just such a device.

I called an old friend, David Rivers. Dr. Rivers is a speech and language scientist, inventor and professor at Baylor University in Waco, Tex. I was sure he would be able to help me.

I told him about Spiricom, then said, "I have a gut feeling that if your natural voice and your voice using an electromechanical oscillator are acoustically different, it couldn't be proven that the artificial voice was yours."

"That's correct," he replied.

I went on to say, "Some of the strongest evidence Mr. Meek has is that a voiceprint of the spirit voice of Dr. Mueller and the natural voice of William O'Neil are entirely different."

Rivers was not impressed. "Send me your tape and I'll duplicate what Dr. Mueller says with my voice," he said.

"A voiceprint will show differences between the two voices?"

"Of course," he replied.

Within two weeks I received a package, tapes, voiceprints and a letter. Rivers, true to his word, reproduced the essential wording of the Spiricom tape using his voice and an artificial larynx. He used a Servox unit, manufactured by Sei-

mens. It is an electromechanical oscillator, hand-held and battery-driven. I couldn't tell the difference between this artificial larynx voice and the spirit voice of Dr. Mueller.

After explaining in detail how the artificial larynx device works, tuning the pitch up and down and using the device in the proper manner against his throat, he said, "I am now going to hold the Servox in front of my lips. This would never be done for normal use in communication. But I'm going to hold it in front of my lips and I will ask you to judge whether this sound that I produce in saying, 'Mary had a little lamb,' is not *extremely* similar to that sound obtained on the tape titled *Spiricom, Its Development and Potential*."

I was stunned. I was hearing a voice that sounded exactly like Dr. Mueller's.

Rivers had voiceprints made of the words "Mary had a little lamb" using both his normal voice and the artificial larynx. The two prints are not at all alike. As Rivers wrote, "The identity of the speaker is *not* ascertainable."

He concluded, "No one, save the person(s) present at the time, can say precisely how the Spiricom recordings were made. However, the most simple explanation is that they were made by a *living* agent utilizing an audio frequency oscillator. Based on my judgment of the information contained on the Spir-

icom tape, reliable documentation of the authenticity of the recordings of 'spirits' has not been provided."

In short, it appears that Spiricom

is considerably less than "one of the most exciting events in the long history of man." It is, it appears, no more than a fairly transparent hoax.



### FOUND: ANCIENT JERUSALEM GATE

**A**RCHAEOLOGISTS told United Press International on April 21, 1986, that they have uncovered what may be the oldest gate to Jerusalem ever found. It dates to the time of the First Temple more than 2500 years ago.

The prophet Ezekiel wrote that there were 12 gates to Jerusalem in that period, said Eilat Mazar, the archaeologist who headed the Hebrew University excavation, "and this could be one of them."

The gate was found in a maze of excavations in the Ophel area just southeast of the present walled Old City. It is along the inside edge of the road now circling the Old City.

"The significance is that it's the only gate we know of to Jerusalem at that time — the most complete and most preserved," Mazar told reporters. She speculated that the gate may have provided access between the area of the ancient City of David, several hundred feet south, and the area of the Temple Mount, a few hundred feet to the north.

The stone gateway, on bedrock, is nine feet wide and the symmetrically arranged structure on both sides of the gate is 45 feet wide and 54 feet long, Mazar said.

The gate is Solomonian in design but could have been dated any time between King Solomon, about 950 B.C., and 586 B.C. when the First Temple was destroyed. This was the time of the biblical kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

In the six symmetrically arranged "cells" or rooms, three on each side of the gate, 40 complete jars and other vessels were found which date to the same period.

Mazar said the gate was similar to one found in Megiddo, an ancient site overlooking the Valley of Jezreel and according to Christian belief, the site of the climactic Battle of Armageddon.

Ophel, which means acropolis, was probed by British archaeologist Charles Warren 120 years ago and excavated in the early 1970's by Benjamin Mazar, Eilat Mazar's grandfather.



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# BOOKS

## NEWS & REVIEWS

by D. Scott Rogo



### PSYCHIC LIVES

THERE ARE many good books published on psychic subjects and even more bad ones. But there are few genuinely pleasant ones. *Double Vision* (Celestial Arts, Berkeley, Calif., 1985, 269 pages, \$9.95, paperback) by the mother-daughter team of Judith Skutch and Tamara Cohen is a pleasant book.

Mrs. Skutch is one of those unsung heroes who have funded research in parapsychology. She was instrumental in channeling the funds that led SRI International to work with Uri Geller in the 1970's. Her daughter (by her first marriage) likewise has been active in parapsychology, both as a subject for experiments and as an experimenter teaching color perception to blind children.

Mrs. Skutch got interested in parapsychology when her daughter began displaying psychic powers in early childhood. This led her to meet with many of the leading parapsychological researchers who helped her deal with her family "crisis." *Double Vision* is a joint autobiography in which Mrs. Skutch and her daughter discuss their psychic lives together, from Tamara's infancy to her college graduation.

The first part of the book deals with

the purely psychic aspects of the Skutches' lives. These chapters, which parents of psychically-gifted children will find valuable, demonstrate how a caring, open-minded attitude toward paranormal phenomena can help psychic children grow and nurture their abilities. *Double Vision* also examines ways of accomplishing this goal without placing these special children on a pedestal, which so many perplexed parents do.

The real "star" of these chapters, however, is Tamara Cohen. Her writing is even more down-to-earth than her mother's. She writes primarily of her disenchantment with being a psychic child. This disenchantment came not from her experiences but from her desire to be considered normal by her friends and relatives. Cohen never disparages her psychic gifts but she did become annoyed by the fuss people made over them. Her account of her frustrations and the problems she coped with is insightful and often moving. Not, I hasten to add, that *Double Vision* is a brooding, depressing book. It isn't. Tamara Cohen's mildly cynical and wisecracking prose keeps the book from lapsing into sentimentality.

The second part is concerned more

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with Judith Skutch who in 1975 met an extraordinary research psychologist in New York. The late Dr. Helen Schucman, an elderly, atheistic psychologist, "channeled" for an intelligence who dictated Christian-oriented spiritual teachings. These teachings transformed the lives of the Skutch family and Mrs. Skutch and her husband later had them published as *A Course in Miracles*. Mrs. Skutch became less involved with established parapsychology and more involved with her own spiritual fulfillment. In the meantime her husband Bob used the teachings as a springboard to develop the gift of psychic healing.

Tamara Cohen has also contributed to these chapters but in her usual earthy way. She treats sympathetically her mother's spiritual transformation but she writes disdainfully (though cogently) of the people who saw her mother as a guru.

In fact, *A Course in Miracles* is a particularly interesting example of channeled writings. These writings are more provocative and wise than most of the pabulum published as "spiritual" discourse. For this reason I wish Mrs. Skutch had written more about Dr. Schucman who remains too much in the background of *Double Vision*. We learn little about her, which seems a shame.

Fortunately, those who do want to know more can turn to Robert Skutch's *Journey Without Distance* (Celestial Arts, Berkeley, Calif., 1985, 137 pages, \$7.95, paperback), a biography of Dr. Schucman.

Schucman was raised in an essentially religionless family of Jewish heritage. She was drawn to religion but in later life turned to science and psychol-

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ogy. During these years she became a dogmatic atheist. While working as a research psychologist at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, however, she started to have psychic and transpersonal experiences. These frightened her and she grew even more apprehensive when an "inner voice" started dictating the *Course*. Horrified at the thought of becoming a channel for this voice, Dr. Schucman fought against it. Her ambivalence toward her own role in the *Course* lasted until close to the time of her death in 1981.

*Journey Without Distance* is a fascinating study of the psychology of channeling. Even for those who (like me) have no interest in metaphysical philosophy, Skutch's book tells an exciting story which is both psychologically and spiritually challenging.

## A REVIEW REVIEWED

IN MY MAY 1986 column I reviewed — negatively — Robert A. Monroe's *Far Journeys*. Part of this review contained background information about Monroe and his previous book *Journeys Out of the Body*. Monroe has taken strong exception to my comments. Since that time we have exchanged letters and I would like to correct and clarify some of what I wrote.

Monroe objects to my statement that his earlier accounts, published under the pen name of Bob Rame and appearing in Andrija Puharich's *Beyond Telepathy*, attributed his first OBEs to glue-sniffing. Monroe tells me that, while for a brief period he did experiment with the inhalant after accidentally discovering its effects, he ceased the practice six months before his OBEs began. The

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Rame account came about when during a subsequent illness his (former) wife turned over his notes to Dr. Puharich. She wondered whether her husband's sickness and his OBEs were related. Puharich subsequently edited and rearranged these notes for inclusion in a book he was writing but he neglected to ask Monroe to check his work. The result (the Rame account) was a series of errors. The worst of them makes it appear that Puharich's informant's experiences were caused by the inhalation of fumes. This account was published without Monroe's knowledge and consent.

In the light of this information I retract my statement that Monroe's first experiences were caused by glue-sniffing.

Monroe also takes exception to my reliance on David Black's *Ekstacy* which asserts that Monroe responded evasively to questions about witnesses to his experiences. Black visited me in the summer of 1973 at which time he told me he could not find anyone who could corroborate Monroe's accounts.

Monroe wrote me on June 23 to say, "I can state without qualification that Black's investigation was minimal if at all, if he made the statement you claim he did. If he had made even a cursory examination, he would have found that every person named in *Journeys* existed, [was] real and participated as noted in the book." He also wrote, "If I was evasive, it was to protect those who still wished to remain anonymous."

In response to this information, I asked Monroe to identify and document the existence of some of the persons mentioned in *Journeys*. I was immediately supplied with the real

names and identities of most of the individuals cited. Black's claim is therefore obviously in error and I was in error in drawing on it.

While I retain certain reservations about *Far Journeys*, there appears to be no reason to question Monroe's integrity. I am glad to set the record straight. I would like to thank Monroe for spending so much time clarifying these issues.

### OTHER REVIEWS

**THE FINAL CHOICE** by Michael Grosso, Stillpoint Publishing, Walpole, N.H., 1985, 348 pages, \$10.95, paperback.

In *The Final Choice: Playing the Survival Game* Michael Grosso develops a fascinating thesis concerning human evolution: if individuals who have near-death experiences undergo a transformation of consciousness, maybe the world itself can be drastically changed if mankind as a collective whole envisioned (emotionally and practically) its own extermination. In other words, the next step in evolution may be generated by the very thing that haunts the human race: nuclear holocaust.

Underneath this portending doom, Grosso argues, man must for the first time in history come to grips with the fact that he can die as a species. This universal fear, however, may be part of nature's larger plan to awaken human beings to a more spiritual and peaceful level of existence. Grosso contends that we are "playing a survival game" in which certain decisions may turn out to be "the final choice" (as in the case of an all-out nuclear war).

By his own admission Grosso's book

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lacks a clear and precise methodology and thus at times reads like a patchwork of New Age metaphysics on death and enlightenment. Occasionally this makes for some questionable interpretations, such as Grosso's overreliance on the validity of the Shroud of Turin as a psychic artifact. Moreover, Grosso has a tendency to lump religious visions, UFO encounters, Marian apparitions and so on into the same camp to advance his overall argument that human beings are receiving paranormal messages from the "Mind at Large" (Carl Jung's collective unconscious) about a forthcoming global catastrophe. Grosso's analysis lacks sophistication, since transpersonal experiences represent a wide range of higher possibilities and cannot be ad hoc reduced to a single overall pattern.

Nevertheless Grosso has written a compelling book which touches on many topics of interest to FATE readers, including OBEs, psi in evolution, reincarnation and the "inner arms race." In fact, what is most impressive about *The Final Choice*, besides its unique thesis, is its incredible array of ideas. Grosso has provided a framework, however shaky, which enables the reader to see how the paranormal may be affecting human development. — *David Christopher Lane*.

**MRS. O'LEARY'S COMET** by Mel Waskin, Academy Chicago Publishers, Chicago, Ill., 1985, 174 pages, \$6.95, paperback.

On October 8, 1871, "clouds of fire" and "red-hot sand" fell almost simultaneously over vast areas of Michigan and eastern Wisconsin. Driven by

hurricane-force winds and accompanied by bizarre electrical phenomena, "tornadoes of fire" consumed dozens of towns and thousands of square miles of forest and killed over 1200 persons in a single night. But these events are largely forgotten because the Chicago fire also began within the same half hour as the other fires that evening.

Ignatius Donnelly's *Ragnarok: The Age of Fire and Gravel* (1883) first suggested that combustible gases from Biel's Comet had caused the disaster and Vincent H. Gaddis' *Mysterious Fires and Lights* (1967) picked up on the idea but otherwise the subject has been neglected by Fortean writers. Mrs. O'Leary's Comet therefore fills a need, even though it does it ineptly.

Mel Waskin commits himself to an excessively specific version of the comet theory, when there is actually no direct evidence that the comet was the culprit. The most that can be claimed is that something strange and unexplained happened and that it seems to have had some connection with the atmosphere.

Even as an account of the events, this book is grossly inadequate. Subtract the padding and you will find that only 70 pages are devoted to the fires. This is the result of superficial research. Even a brief survey of contemporary records reveals that much worthwhile material awaits resurrection. For example, many witnesses "received electrical shocks while they saw electrical flames flash in the air."

In the absence of anything better, Mrs. O'Leary's Comet will serve as an introduction to an extraordinary mystery. But readers who are already acquainted with the subject will be disappointed. — *Michael T. Shoemaker*.

**PSYCHIC SENSE** by Andrew Fitzherbert, Angus & Robertson, 16 Golden Square, London W1R 4BN, England, 1986, 137 pages, £3.95, paperback.

*Psychic Sense* is a gem — a book I've been wanting to write for years. Andrew Fitzherbert has done it probably better than I could have.

"Good psychics are as rare as diamonds," he writes. "First-class psychics are found as often as 100-carat rubies." In a chapter entitled "Illusion and Delusion and How to Avoid Them," he shows how to recognize psychic con men. He points out traps for the unwary in past-incarnation readings. "Proof" of reincarnation, in his view, comes only from those who have "natural memories of their past lives" such as in those cases reported by Ian Stevenson. He is adamant that hypnotic regression is a "fraudulent system" producing only pseudoreincarnation "memories."

He says most psychic healers are honest although only a few are effective. The most flagrantly dishonest practitioners, he warns, are in the Philippines where "fake psychic healing is endemic." Noting the difficulty of accurately assessing one's own abilities as a healer, he offers suggestions for practicing healing in ways that will not delude or harm anyone.

In his comprehensive treatment of the psychic world Fitzherbert touches on a number of interesting phenomena, including hauntings and how to deal with them. He has some pointed criticisms of the limitations of experimental parapsychology, a "surefire method" for developing one's own ESP, warnings about absurd "psychic predictions"

in tabloids and other dubious sources and telling insights into the curious nature of precognition.

In what is perhaps the most valuable chapter, "The Higher Path of Spiritual Development," he observes that spiritual development and psychic development are not synonymous. After all, there is evidence that Hitler had excellent ESP! He recites various relaxation/visualization techniques to assist the reader in improving his mental, physical and spiritual well-being. These exercises alone are worth the price of the book.

The final chapter offers advice on how to find a psychic reader, what to expect from a reading, how to distinguish good readers from frauds and how to conduct yourself when you go to a reader — all in all, a thoroughly worthwhile account.

Fitzherbert clearly knows the psychic world. He is also obviously an honorable man who wishes to educate the public about the realities of psychic phenomena and the dangers of psychic fraud, illusion and self-deceit. He does a splendid job.

I have only two complaints: (1) This book may be difficult for American readers to obtain. (2) I didn't write it! —*Rosemarie Pilkington.*

#### ALSO NOTABLE

**THE SUN AND SOLAR SYSTEM DEBRIS** edited by William R. Corliss, *The Sourcebook Project*, Box 107, Glen Arm, Md. 21057, 1986, 282 pages, \$17.95.

This wonderfully absorbing "Catalog of Astronomical Anomalies," the sixth volume in Corliss' ongoing Catalog of Anomalies series, is an annotated collection, taken from scientific journals, of unexplained events associated with comets, meteors, unidentified astronomical bodies and other such phenomena.

# 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.

## FOR THE RECORD

I strongly protest D. Scott Rogo's remark about me in "Books, News & Reviews" (March 1986 FATE). He writes, "Emily Williams Cook. . . recounted her own inability to replicate her boss' [Dr. Ian Stevenson's] work while checking into Lebanese reports [of cases of the reincarnation type]."

Since Rogo has given no source for this remark, I can only guess that he is referring to a paper I read at a conference in November 1983 at the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man, Durham, N. C., when I spoke in part about my work in Lebanon. I would like to challenge Rogo to find anywhere in that paper that I said, or implied, that I failed "to replicate" Dr. Stevenson's work. In fact, I clearly stated in that paper that although "many of the cases I investigated seemed to me to provide little or no evidence for paranormal processes. . . there were several in which it seemed quite likely that the child had had correct knowledge that he did not learn normally." The point of my paper, which Rogo apparently missed or ignored completely, was that cases pro-

viding evidence for paranormality are rare and must be sifted carefully from the cases providing no such evidence, but that they are definitely there and we should be concentrating on identifying them.

I suggest that Rogo read and listen more carefully before he makes statements completely misrepresenting other people's opinions or work. — *Emily Williams Cook, Edinburgh, Scotland.*

## CHANGING TIMES

"The Man Who Wouldn't Listen" by Victoria S. Benham (June 1986 FATE) is an interesting story but obviously only a story. She had tried to warn a neighbor of an impending ferry collision on the Hudson River but he "wouldn't listen" and was killed. In her last paragraph she wrote that as she walked toward her house she saw the black hearse.

I work for a funeral home and I know that whenever a person dies unattended by a doctor, the body is automatically taken to the Medical Examiner's office in the county where the death occurred. The body is not released until cause of death is established. Even when cause

of death is obvious, this whole procedure — taking the body from the scene, determining the next of kin, notifying them, then making a complete examination or autopsy — can take not only hours but sometimes days. There is never a time that the body is brought back to the residence and then taken to the funeral home by hearse. — *Ann Alu, Rochelle Park, N. J.*

#### THE AUTHOR REPLIES:

Having been a newspaperwoman for 30 years, I am well acquainted with coroners and mortuary details, but the hearse in my story did indeed come directly to the victim's home — probably after the ferry company's report via doctor and coroner.

My story took place many years ago. There were few funeral homes then and none in our town. The hearse had to come from Newark, N. J., the town closest to the scene of the accident. The undertaker delivered the victim in a basket and stayed at the house to prepare the body for burial. Then two and a half days later, he returned with the hearse and two other cars for the funeral, also held in the home, and afterward all left for interment in another state. This is a far cry from funeral procedures today but that's the way it was then. — *Victoria S. Benham, Los Angeles, Calif.*

#### IN ALL FAIRNESS

D. Scott Rogo is not fair in his review of Margot Grey's book *Return From Death* (July 1986 FATE). He writes, "She never explains why visits to paradise should be accepted literally and visits to hell should be viewed symbolically."

He must have missed her statement in Chapter 12. She wrote, "When one realizes that heaven and hell are not places to which we 'go' when our earthly life is ended but rather a 'state' which we create ourselves and which can be changed by us at any moment, one starts to understand that instead of 'going' to a place in space, we find ourselves in one of the 'planes' of existence that abide in our 'world within.'"

Margot Grey deals with heaven and hell quite evenhandedly. — *Terrence Peterson, Wowata, Okla.*

#### RIGGING THE GAME

Physicist Bernard Leikind has a theory that explains why fire walking is just a normal "stunt" anyone can do ("Report from the Readers," September 1986 FATE). He has arbitrarily defined and then "tested" fire walking as a rapid trot over 10 feet of warm ashes.

A somewhat different fire walk was observed in the Fiji Islands in 1898 by a Dr. Hocken and reported in *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute*:

"... a pit, eight feet deep, 30 feet in diameter, with sloping sides, [was] filled at the bottom with stones. These stones [were] heated for 48 hours until white-hot. The natives (only a few could do this) walked for 30 seconds. . . ."

Would Leikind accept this as a test of his theory? — *B. Fox, Cleveland, Ohio.*

#### WHAT EVER HAPPENED. . . ?

In the mid-1960's FATE published an article entitled "Whatever Happened to Annalee Skarin?" about a woman who was reported to have "translated." Mrs. Skarin wrote several books (most published by DeVorss & Co.) in which she

described translation as the front door and death as the back door for leaving the limited mortal existence on earth. She gave methods for achieving translation and said thousands had already done so. Since then there have been many odd claims about her. Some persons claim to have received messages or to have seen her at meetings where she appeared and left mysteriously. Mrs. Skarin strongly warned against occult practices and especially against giving your mind over to discarnate entities who might work mischief. She also did not accept reincarnation theories.

There have always been stories of people who could teleport from place to place. Such stories go back 2000 years or more in both the East and the West.

So now does anybody know, 20 years later, what ever happened to Annalee Skarin and the thousands of others? — *John Herron, Blanding, Utah.*

### THE SKY WATCHERS

The county reservoir in Thomaston, Ga., is a popular place among my high school friends who hope to see unidentified flying objects. I never believed they existed and I only speculated on the existence of extraterrestrial beings. But the night of September 7, 1985, with a couple of friends, I saw something bizarre.

When we arrived at the reservoir the water was glittering in the light of a million stars. Nothing seemed unusual — until we all noticed some bright stars spaced above the horizon at what appeared to be even intervals. We were looking over the thick black pines at about a 45-degree angle.

Suddenly someone called out, "Hey, look at that star on the far left. It's

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moving!" Sure enough, as I gazed at the star light-years away, it moved slowly away from its "fixed" position in the heavens. But that wasn't all. The second star repeated this movement while the original star picked up speed and flew eerily across the sky. Then it disappeared above the trees into the inky blackness to our right.

Now the remaining star of the pair moved into the position where the first had been while the other three stars began to exchange places in a sort of astronomical leapfrog.

Although I don't believe in evolution and I seriously doubt that our Creator populated other worlds in the galaxies, I was awestruck. What were these things and what were they doing up there? Stars don't move — at least not like lost and confused airplane pilots.

I don't know how long we watched these five stars but it was only a taste of what was to come. Suddenly one of the stars began to creep across the right side of the reservoir. It was above the tree-tops — no higher than a low-flying aircraft. We were beside ourselves with excitement. The object seemed to be full of light, gleaming like a huge glass door or mirror traveling through space, making no sound and leaving no trail.

As it came nearer we could discern its shape. It was no taller than six or seven feet and shaped like a pyramid covered with gleaming mirrors. They were like diamonds, picking up the light from the starry night. The object was not 50 yards off, then overhead. It swooshed upon us and passed by quickly. The only sound was a strange swooshing noise like escaping compressed air.

The object had come straight toward us, as if it had been watching us, as if it

wanted to investigate us. Then it was gone over the treetops as quickly as it had appeared. We got in our cars to give chase down an old road into the country but the "UFO" was gone. It must have traveled at the speed of light. We never saw it again. — *Chip Braddy, Thomaston, Ga.*

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Is it possible that underground nuclear tests past and present are triggering earthquakes and volcanic eruptions? Perhaps these gigantic underground detonations disturb the layers of rock supporting certain critical areas of the earth's crust.

Personally I feel that all nuclear testing, regardless of which nation is doing it, is totally insane, totally criminal and totally unnecessary. — *John R. Miller, Enola, Pa.*

### UP FROM THE APE

Evolution has many proponents and opponents but I see it in progress everywhere. The many subspecies of birds, animals and plants are new species evolving in an unimaginably gradual process. I am in some doubt, however, as to the origin of man because of the vast gulf between his brain and that of any other known creature on earth. There is evidence that he was indeed a special creation of God.

Nevertheless, the striking resemblance between higher apes and man cannot be ignored — although we should not rule out the phenomenon of parallel development. Dr. Leakey has unearthed many fossil remains of hominids closely resembling both man and ape but there is still the "missing link." No one has yet found a fossil showing a halfway devel-

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(Signed) **Curtis G. Fuller, Publisher**

## REPORT FROM THE READERS

(Continued from page 116)

tember 1986 edition of *Scientific American* finally admitted, "A cloud of interstellar gas is now streaming through the solar system. Past encounters with denser clouds may have substantially affected the earth's climate." This is the first time a scientific publication has admitted that this cloud is already in our solar system.

It was hard to keep the secret. In the January 24, 1986, issue of *Science*, an article titled "The Sun Is Fading" told readers that something is wrong but the scientists refused to admit that an interstellar cloud is responsible.

The article in *Scientific American* still does not tell us the whole truth about the coming disaster which will cause a new ice age and perhaps the end of all life on this planet. Its authors tried to prove that the cloud was not dense enough to do any harm.

Obviously the scientists know the truth but are afraid of causing a panic by revealing it too quickly. We may feel the terrible cold before we read about it in the press. — *Michael Cohen, New York, N. Y.*

### ROMANTIC NOTIONS

In "Ghost Ship of the Goodwins" (October 1986 FATE) Michael Goss proposes that the date of the ghost ship's reappearance, February 13, has been chosen because the eve of St. Valentine's Day is appropriate for this tragic, romantic tale.

I would say that the name of the vessel, *Lady Luvibund*, is in the same category — deliberate selection of detail meant to create a properly romantic atmosphere. What better name could be given to a love-bound ship carrying the captain and his bride on a honeymoon voyage?

These are legitimate literary devices, albeit timeworn, that tend to support the idea that Goss' story is a supernatural Valentine's Day tale, nothing more. — *Marina DeMett Kurkov, Rocky River, Ohio.*

### BADLY-CONTROLLED STUDY

I can't dispute Michael Mahoney's sincerity in his study of the honesty and unbiased judgment of the scientific community ("I See by the Papers," October 1986 FATE), but I can dispute the integrity of his study. He used 15 physicists

and 15 psychologists with 15 clergymen as a control. His control group throws the entire effort to the dogs.

The clergymen were college-educated (even if it was theological college) and certainly had some training in science and research methods. They were admittedly Protestant and conservative by faith and training and undoubtedly biased to some degree.

For a valid control Mahoney should have picked 15 people at random with two conditions: First, they are not involved in science or research and second, they are not college graduates. This would have given a far more accurate comparison of the scientific community and society in general.

In my own profession, many companies give the same type of mathematical sequence tests and similar logic tests to new job applicants. I have been a computer programmer-analyst for about 20 years and I have to face these tests every day. I think possibly Mahoney's results were fairly accurate but not because of his "scientific method." — *Ronald Burger, Sr., Hickory Hills, Ill.*

### IN SEARCH OF...

I would like to find some of my shipmates from the tanker *S. S. Nickajack Trail* which went down off Japan toward the end of World War II.

It could have been sometime in 1944 that we came into Japan on the right side of a red buoy — which is the wrong thing to do — and we ripped out the ship's bottom. We had 172,000 barrels of fuel oil for the navy and we pumped it over the side to try to float the tanker off the reef. With four seagoing tugs and four sets of beach gear, we couldn't get the ship off the reef and we had to

leave her there. I hope to hear from the sons of the deceased tanker *S. S. Nickajack Trail* — *Harold W. Taylor, 3368 Decatur Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10467.*

\* \* \*

Like many Americans, I once was involved with a religious cult — almost three years with the "Moonies," in my case. Ten years passed before I could at least forgive the cult and myself for what happened. Now I want to write a book on how to put one's life back together after leaving the sacred nest. I want to publish the book which was not available when I most needed it and which still is not available today.

For this book to be most valuable it should contain the collected wisdom of other former cult members. I want to hear from people who have been involved in all-consuming religious or spiritual organizations of every kind, including monastic orders, charismatic sects, mystical or magical groups, human potential organizations or any of the mainstream religious cults. — *Ken Freed, P. O. Box 20552, Evergreen, Colo. 80439.*

\* \* \*

My research concerns ceremonial magic. I am seeking rituals that actually work — or proof that none do. Please help a novice magician. — *T. Lee, 1200 Laurant Ave., Caruthersville, Mo. 63830.*

\* \* \*

Does any FATE reader have or know where I can find a booklet called *Apparitions of the Virgin Mary at Zeitun, Cairo, Egypt*? It is illustrated with numerous photographs and was published by a research organization in Cleveland. — *Ralph O. Howard, 417 Reed St., 14A, Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401.*

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