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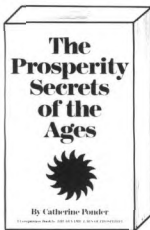
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FATE

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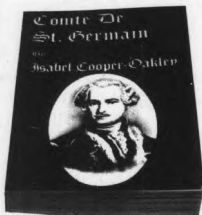
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I SEE BY THE PAPERS

by Curtis Fuller



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

As the antianomaly hysteria has escalated, even some skeptics have begun to express alarm. Psychologist Ray Hyman, a respected critic of parapsychology, speaks of a "frightening fundamentalism" in all this, a "witch-hunting" mentality that has nothing to do with real science. CSICOP cofounder Marcello Truzzi, a sociologist who left the organization when he grew concerned that it was becoming an "inquisitional body," says that some debunkers have gone "berserk."

— Jerome Clark
Omni, February 1987

I FIND IT disappointing that Carl Sagan, whom I have always admired, has joined the ranting, lump-everything-together, knee-jerk critics of anomalous phenomena epitomized by the members of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal.

In the February 1 issue of *Parade*, under the title "The Fine Art of Baloney," Sagan leads off an attack on "pseudoscience" with two pages

of free advertising for Paul Kurtz and company.

Here is some of the "baloney" Sagan rails against: evidence for life after death, psychic surgeons, astrology, UFOs, clairvoyance, weeping statues, psychic detectives, spoon-bending and so on. In addition, "An Honest Magician" named Randi is praised in a sidebar on the same spread (for another view see psychologist Hans Eysenck's comments quoted in my February column) and so is *Skeptical Inquirer*, CSICOP's magazine.

CSICOP is against even more than Sagan is, it appears, and there is a laundry list of 38 specific additional subjects it opposes. These include ESP, the Shroud of Turin, dowsing, remote viewing, faith healing, fire walking and "cult archaeology" (whatever that is).



OPEN-MINDED SCRUTINY

SAGAN STATES that there are two basic attitudes at the heart of science: "an openness to new ideas, no matter how bizarre or

counterintuitive they may be, and the most ruthless skeptical scrutiny of all ideas, old and new." Then he blathers on about the ability to construct and to understand a reasoned argument.

Well, let's take a look at just one subject — UFOs — and see how well he applies these rules in practice. As an astronomer he presumably knows what exists in the skies. The caption for the lead illustration of his article describes a fake UFO photograph and says in part, "No one has ever provided firm physical evidence for alien visitors." Evidently Sagan's opinion is based on little more than self-righteous ignorance.

Just off the top of my head, I can think of three meticulously-docu-

mented reports which come awfully close — just in themselves — to establishing the reality of UFOs. These are the Roswell, N. Mex., event (see William L. Moore's account of his exhaustive investigation in the *MUFON 1985 UFO Symposium Proceedings*); the McMinnville, Oreg., photograph (see Dr. Bruce Maccabee's paper in *The Spectrum of UFO Research*, recently published by the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies); and the extraordinary Trans-en-Provence, France, landing-trace case, investigated by the French government's UFO project GEPAN (a translation of GEPAN's scientific analysis of the incident appears in the March 1984 issue of the

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MUFON UFO Journal). Something tells me that Sagan has never heard of any of these cases.

Where is his vaunted "openness to new ideas"? When physicist Peter Sturrock polled members of the American Astronomical Society in 1976, 80 percent agreed that the UFO phenomenon deserved scientific study. I would like to hear Sagan on a panel discussing some of the subjects he condemns, just so that I could learn exactly what he knows — or doesn't know — about them.



FIRE OR ICE?

SAGAN'S attitude is even more puzzling when we consider that he stands before the bar of science accused of the same kind of unscientific practices he accuses "pseudoscientists" of. Sagan is in trouble with his colleagues because of his espousal of the theory of "nuclear winter" which he and several other scientists have warned would be the consequence of a nuclear war.

In brief, the theory proposes that a nuclear war would end the world not by fire but by ice. The burning of forests and cities would shroud the entire world in smoke which would cool it so rapidly that we would have freezing weather even in summer and the drastically-changed climate of the globe would destroy life on earth.

This theory has been challenged by various scientists, most notably

Stephen Schneider and Stanley Thompson of the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo. Their studies find no risk of a nuclear ice age and on average, they believe, the maximum temperature drop in the northern hemisphere would be 12 degrees during the first week or so after a nuclear attack.

Some of Sagan's critics have accused him of backing the nuclear-winter hypothesis for political, not scientific, reasons. They charge that this is part of an effort to counter President Reagan's Star Wars program. It would indeed be wonderful if Sagan's analysis were to prevent future nuclear wars but unfortunately it is, unless he can prove

otherwise, "The Fine Art of Baloney."

It is also worth noting here that a number of scientists have been scathingly critical of Sagan's extra-terrestrial-life obsession. Sagan is a true believer in aliens (so long as they keep their distance, of course) and has suggested that the mere detection of radio signals from extraterrestrials would be enough to save the human race from self-destruction. In his recent book *The Extraterrestrial Life Debate* (reviewed in April 1987 FATE) historian of science Michael J. Crowe cites this strange observation as evidence that Sagan is peddling "the myth of modern times," a "religion or alternate religion."

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- What happens after **death**? (page 240)

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It appears that in accusing other people of "pseudoscience" Sagan is throwing stones out of a glass house.



IN A MAYA CAVE

THE FANTASTIC archaeological discovery of a cave called Naj Tunich, in the Maya lowlands of Guatemala near Belize, is now being studied. Naj Tunich is rich in ancient Mayan artwork, containing close to 100 paintings, including 500 hieroglyphs and 44 figures. James E. Brady and Andrea Stone, writing in *Archaeology*, report that the cave possesses features unique to our knowledge of the Mayas, including evidence of child sacrifice, ritual bloodletting and sexual intercourse. They say that "the magnitude of this find might be likened to the discovery of a new Maya codex, of which only four are now known. Even more important, the many inscriptions and scenes evident at Naj Tunich provide a new context for the interpretation of Maya art and writing."

The cave was discovered early in 1980 when Bernabe Pop, a Kekchi Maya Indian, was hunting. His dogs chased a peccary down a dark trail into the cave's enormous entrance chamber. Naj Tunich is in the foothills of the Maya Mountains five kilometers (something over three miles) from the border of Belize and Guatemala. Artifacts within the cave have been counted, mapped

and photographed and detailed drawings are now being made. A number of U. S. universities and institutions including the National Geographic Society are involved in various aspects of the research.

The entrance hall which Pop first entered is an enormous room 100 feet deep and 500 feet wide, from east to west. From the entrance chamber a tunnel, approximately 50 feet in diameter, runs for nearly 1000 feet before forking off in two directions, one leading east, the other northwest. The cave also contains a standing pool and another that no longer holds water, both of which were the center of ancient ceremonies.



STRANGE RITUALS

THE EVIDENCE for child sacrifice is speculative. Of the first 20 human remains discovered at Naj Tunich four were of small children and four of juveniles. The best-preserved specimen of a small child has a skull with three holes which show no signs of healing. It is suggested the child may have been sacrificed to one of the Maya gods. A similar skull bearing three unhealed holes has been found at the Eduardo Quiroz cave in Belize.

Six tombs on a balcony in the entrance hall appear to have been looted in ancient times. Three of these tombs are quite simple but the other three are masonry. Tomb

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Structure 2 is the only one that has been scientifically explored. Its walls are nearly three feet thick and the floor was leveled and paved with flat stones. Amid the debris left by the looters were several jade beads and a small plain jade plaque. Large quantities of pre-Classic pottery (100 B.C.—A.D. 250) have been found.

Most interesting perhaps are the large number of excellent paintings. One group shows men next to or drinking from a bowl. Another group shows men involved in the Mayan ritual of piercing the penis with a sharp instrument and dripping the blood onto paper to be burned. Yet another group shows the cave as the abode of underworld gods. Caves appear to have had great significance to the ancient Maya and they figure largely in their religion and in the fragments of our knowledge of their myths. Naj Tunich was not used as a cemetery, however, but seems to have been associated with Mayan fertility rites.

Much of this is conjecture but the bloodletting, the scenes of sexual intercourse, some of the paintings of gods related to rain and the growing of green crops probably depict magical rituals designed to increase the fertility of the people and of the fields. This is supported by long racial memories. During the 1982 archaeological dig season, write Brady and Stone, a group of Kekchi

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Maya inquired about the cave because they believed it to be the dwelling of the corn god and they wanted to make offerings in the cave to assure a bountiful harvest.



THE SWARMING

NO SOONER had the drought in the Sahel region of Africa broken and the rains arrived than the bleak sub-Saharan regions of Africa were threatened with a new disaster—swarms of locusts. Where did these billions of grasshoppers me from? So suddenly, as if by magic?

John Walsh discusses the strange phenomenon of the locusts in the October 3, 1986, issue of *Science*.

Most of the time these voracious insects live as isolated creatures, never traveling far from the places where they were hatched. But when they increase in numbers and become crowded a strange metamorphosis occurs. A group hormone takes effect which changes their physical appearance and behavior. They actually prepare to become a plague.

David Nickle, an entomologist, says that for their behavior to reach the swarming stage the crowding must start while they are wingless nymphs. They change. They consume more oxygen and have a higher metabolism and are a different color and have different body proportions than their solitary an-

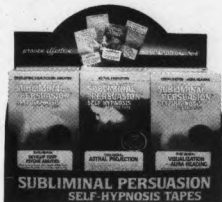
cestors. They become much more active.

Typically they hatch after the seasonal rains have begun because there is more food for them. The more rain, the better the hatch, all of which contributes to their swarming behavior. Carl Aspliden, an atmospheric scientist who headed a U.S. Food and Agriculture organization, has described the life cycle of a desert locust swarm.

The swarm might start from Saudi Arabia in April or May and fly across the Red Sea on the trade winds to Sudan. Near Khartoum atmospheric conditions might produce rain and the locusts would then lay their eggs, burying the pods in the sand; there are about 100 eggs to the pod. "Six weeks later the hoppers come out and the ground is black with them," says Aspliden. From there they may disperse widely. Each locust in the swarm weighs about 3.5 grams and eats its own weight each day. A swarm may number a billion insects and 100 swarms may be on the move.

They are incredibly hardy. Although they can fly only in warm temperatures and must land on the sea when the air cools at night, they stay afloat by stacking up on each other. Aspliden reports that swarms have landed in the Atlas mountains, been snow-covered for weeks and then take off again. They may cover 200 miles a day and travel 2000 miles.

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WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

A BIBLICAL scholar at the University of California at San Diego presents a difficult problem to biblical purists. Richard E. Friedman, professor of Hebrew and comparative literature, has uncovered data suggesting that a substantial part of the Old Testament was written by Baruch ben Neriah, a secretary or special assistant to the prophet Jeremiah.

Friedman says the evidence is written on a 2500-year-old clay seal bearing the scribe's signature. The seal confirms that Baruch ben Neriah lived and also makes it possible to link his writings with Old Testament scriptures which have been attributed to Moses and others, according to the Associated Press. Last November Friedman made his findings public at a science briefing which was cosponsored by the National Science Foundation and the Council for Advancement of Scientific Writing.

Friedman says it is clear that Baruch wrote most of Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1st and 2nd Chronicles and 1st and 2nd Kings. As assistant to Jeremiah, Baruch also wrote most of Jeremiah's prophecies. In addition to the information from the clay seal, Friedman arrived at his conclusions by comparing the style, language and construction of Jeremiah with the other books believed to have been written at that time. Deuteronomy is one of

the five books generally attributed to Moses, for example, but it is the only one that reads a great deal like Jeremiah.

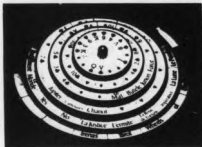
To place these attributions in historical perspective, it should be remembered that many key figures of those days were not literate and therefore employed scribes. Such may have been the relationship between Jeremiah and Baruch ben Neriah. It is obvious that the Bible has been written and rewritten many times since the first edition of the Old Testament in Hebraic times. Some of these many versions are quite recent. The King James version represented a thorough Protestant revision but even it has been modified since its first writing.

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foot snowbank and was lying unconscious and covered with blood. Felty lifted the man into his own car and drove him to Harrisburg Hospital.

William M. Miller recovered consciousness four days later and eventually learned the name of his rescuer. The men saw each other by chance several times after that but did not become really acquainted. Neither was aware when the other joined the army air force and became a B-17 pilot. Nor did they know that the other had been shot down over Germany, captured by the Germans and herded with 4000 other prisoners toward Nuremberg, just ahead of the advancing Russian troops.

It was the dead of winter in 1944. The men were weak from hunger and freezing as the Germans marched them along the road toward Nuremberg. They were ill-clad and some of them couldn't make it. "They just dropped out of sight along the way," Felty said later. "Probably froze to death in the snow."

As Felty marched along, he saw a body lying in the snow alongside the road. He kicked it "and there he was, Bill Miller. Unbelievable." Felty dragged, tugged and half-carried the semiconscious Miller to Muskau, a destination many prisoners from Stalag Luft III never reached that winter, the coldest Germany had experienced in 80 years. From Muskau they were taken to Nuremberg and thence to a detention camp at Moosburg from which

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For those of you who have never seen one, a leech is a nasty sort of tubelike worm. Leeches can live in moist tropical jungles where they lie in wait and drop upon unwary mammals and proceed to dine. Most fishermen in inland waters call them "bloodsuckers." As a kid I occasionally found them between my toes after swimming.

In modern medical practice they are sometimes attached to patients to suck blood from tissues that aren't returning it to the heart after an operation. The accumulation of blood in such cases can cause serious complications. According to Dr. Charles Lent of Utah State University, writing in *Nature*, leeches are

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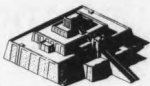


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But leeches may serve other medical purposes as well. A report from the University of Pennsylvania states that a giant leech called *haementeria* secretes an enzyme in its saliva; this enzyme inhibits the growth of lung tumor cells. And Soviet research has suggested that enzymes from some leeches may dissolve the atherosclerotic plaques that cause most heart disease and hardening of the arteries.



POLICE SEALS?

NEW YORK police and other public officials recently witnessed a demonstration in which three 18-month-old harbor seals retrieved guns, tools and other objects from the water and even entered a diving bell to breathe. The demonstration was conducted by the North Wind Undersea Institute, a nonprofit private organization which operates a museum and research center and is dedicated to educating the public to protect and preserve marine life.

As part of the demonstration the seals dived to the bottom of a tank of clear water to return a facsimile of a gun and to aid a diver. One seal returned a dropped wrench to the diver and entered a diving bell with him in order to breathe.

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Pozovich was a member of a five-man construction crew working in the mountains about 60 miles from Ridgecrest, Calif. All members of the crew saw the figure early in August 1986 while building a bridge across the south fork of the Kern River. The area is in the newly designated South Sierra Wilderness.

The sighting began with a “blood-curdling scream,” said Pozovich,



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33, who lives in Fresno. "It sounded like a woman was having the flesh cut off her but it was so loud that any creature would have had to have enormous lung capacity."

Crew boss Clay Paulson fired a warning shot from his rifle to scare away whatever was making the screams but they continued "so loud they sounded like a stadium loud-speaker." The screaming continued, seeming to come closer. After the third scream the workers said they saw the creature Pozovich described.

Whatever it was let out another scream, then lumbered away. A few minutes later it screamed again. "It's like it was saying this was my territory," Pozovich said.

The sighting took place about 8:30 P.M., before sunset. The sun was behind the creature. "I'm pretty sure I saw Bigfoot," Paulson declared.



ARE YOU HAPPY?

ARE YOU happy? If you aren't, perhaps you were born with the wrong temperament and can never be happy. These are findings recently reported in the *New York Times* by Daniel Goleman.

Goleman writes that researchers at the National Institute of Mental Health and the University of California at Berkeley have shattered some widespread beliefs about what makes for happiness. The usual

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values — pleasant social relationships, a happy marriage, financial security — all contribute to contentment but “they are weak predictors of who will be satisfied with life and who will not. Altogether such factors explain [fewer] than 30 percent of people’s reports of satisfaction.”

In fact, even achieving a goal one has sought for a long period appears to be less satisfying than “simply avoiding unpleasantness from day to day.”

The researchers seem to conclude that temperament changes little during one’s life and your temperament when you are young is an important indication of what your temperament will be when you are older. Another important factor in

achieving happiness is doing the things you are good at, take pleasure in and find useful and worthwhile.

The bad news is that if you are unhappy today you are quite likely to be unhappy tomorrow. Still, it is possible for people to change. Some of the ways this can be accomplished include actively solving problems instead of stewing over them; talking over personal problems with other people; undergoing therapy or having a good marriage. And of course good health is important.

Despite all this, Rutgers University psychologist Daniel Ogilvie says that “being neurotic, sick, poor, lonely and the like” accounts for only about 30 percent of people’s dissatisfaction.



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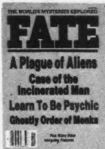
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A NEW LOOK AT KING SOLOMON'S MINES

Here miners of ancient Israel extracted
tons of a precious yellow metal, one more precious than gold.



By Bill Clark

NOW THE weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold. — I Kings 10:14.

A biblical quote like this is enough to raise any fortune-hunter's eyebrows. That's 666 talents of gold! During the days of King Solomon, nearly 3000 years ago, a talent was the equivalent of 1000 shekels and a shekel weighed about a quarter ounce. So the wise king's annual

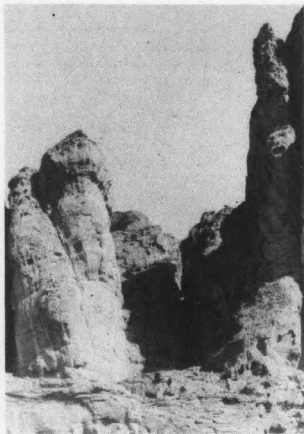
gold income was in the neighborhood of 166,500 ounces (or about 5.2 tons). Multiplying by today's going rate of about \$380 an ounce yields a hefty income of \$63.27 million each year from gold alone.

But there were also a few shipments of silver, precious stones (rubies, emeralds, diamonds), a bit of ivory, some rare spices and perhaps a peacock or two. It is certain that the son of David the shepherd boy lived very well indeed.

Biblical reports of Solomon's great

Timna Valley, as seen from high sandstone cliffs of the Negev Mountains, is barren; rainfall averages about one inch a year. Contrary to popular belief, all one needs to find the mines is a standard Israeli road map.





Towering wind-eroded sandstone cliffs, known locally as "Pillars of Solomon," form a gateway which tourists pass through today for a view of Timna Valley, a dramatic desert landscape.

wealth have convinced numerous adventurers that somewhere on this earth there is a hidden cleft among some rocks within which they will find the fabulous treasures of King Solomon's Mines. Expeditions have scoured the most remote valleys of the towering Himalayas and probed the depths of tropical Africa's verdant rain forests. Some scholars have even speculated that Solomon had contact with the ancient Incas of Peru and sent his agents to bring

gold from the heights of Machu Picchu.

So far, however, the only people to reap fortunes from King Solomon's Mines are the cinema producers who create exotic settings on Hollywood back lots and make high adventure films with all-star casts. On several occasions I have seen Johnny Weissmuller swinging on a jungle vine, fending off the assaults of hostile savages and rescuing from the deadly jaws of innumerable beasts

KING SOLOMON'S MINES

some innocent damsel in distress. Usually, the damsel is accompanying her absent-minded-professor father who believes he has acquired a valuable map that shows the way to the fabled King Solomon's Mines.

But anybody truly interested in visiting King Solomon's Mines doesn't need a secret chart. Any standard Israeli road map will do. You just get into your car and drive to Beer Sheva. From there, proceed east about 40 miles to ancient Sodom at the southern tip of the Dead Sea. Then turn south along the broad desert valley known as the Arava. After about 90 miles, a small road

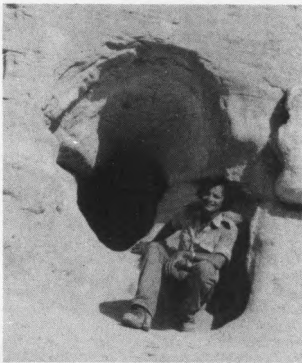


*Rock carving of Egyptian chariot
at Timna*

branches off to the right, goes past Kibbutz Elifaz and enters the spectacular Timna Valley.

Here, among these barren and jagged peaks, the miners of ancient Israel extracted tons of precious yel-

A nature warden sits alongside entrance to mine shaft cut thousands of years ago. His size gives an idea of the dimensions of the mine.





At the base of a cliff in Timna Valley, archaeologists identified a temple dedicated to Hathor, the Egyptian goddess of mining. Abrasion of base of cliff occurs because sandstorms rarely lift sand more than about six feet.

low metal. Indeed, this metal was even more precious than gold. The yellow liquid flowing from the smelting furnaces of Timna was pure copper — better than 99 percent pure, quite an achievement for ancient metallurgy. And copper is the prime ingredient in the production of bronze (usually about nine parts copper to one part tin). Without this, mankind would have had some difficulty getting out of the Stone Age.

Bronze was the metal that brought change. True, iron had been recently discovered but it was still very diffi-

cult to smelt and cast. Also, iron was brittle and tended to rust. Bronze was eminently more practical. With this metal, a wise king could build a mighty nation. He could forge swords for the defense of the land and when peace arrived, those swords could be beaten into bronze plowshares. Effective defense and productive agriculture — swords and plowshares — were the key elements in the creation of civilization. These are what lifted humanity out of the oblivion of the Stone Age.

Solomon knew this. He also knew that his kingdom possessed the magic

metal. The Almighty spoke of it when delivering the Children of Israel unto a land "out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper" (Deuteronomy 8:9).

* * *

MYSTERY surrounded the location of King Solomon's Mines until the 1930's when Rabbi Nelson Glueck, an archaeologist, trekked down the entire length of the blistering Arava Valley. Rabbi Glueck was a romantic adventurer in love with the desert and the land of Israel. Exploring the remote Timna Valley, he discovered several ancient smelting sites, collections of copper nodules and some shattered pottery. After piecing together some of the pottery, he pondered the objects with awe — for he was certain that the pottery came from the 10th Century B.C., the time of King Solomon.

Subsequent expeditions to Timna have unearthed more objects, pushing back the date of the first mining activity in the valley to the Chalcolithic period, nearly 3000 years before Solomon. Through the work of Israeli archaeologist Beno Rothenberg, Timna is now regarded as the oldest copper mine in the world. Indeed, this stark and desolate valley may have been the home of Tubalcain, "an instructor of every artificer in copper" (Genesis 4:22).

The Jewish National Fund (JNF) is currently creating an archaeological museum in the Timna Valley. When it is finished, visitors will be

able to see how humanity emerged from the Stone Age. The ancient peoples left their primitive cave dwellings by digging new ones — but the new caves were mines.

These ancient miners dug copper ore from the earth, mostly from the soft white sandstone deposits which yield easily to crude tools. The ore was then crushed beneath stone hammers and mixed with charcoal and a small amount of iron oxide ore. This mixture was dumped into a firepit in the ground and ignited. Fanning the fire made it burn hotter and before long the copper ore powder was melted.



*Ramses III cultic offering to Hathor
(Rock engraving at Timna)*

In the melting process, beads of copper separated from the ore and sank to the bottom of the firepit. Once the fire burned itself out and the pit cooled, the pieces of copper could be easily picked from the debris and hammered into tools and utensils.

This was the earliest known use of metal and the term used to describe the culture — Chalcolithic (pronounced kal-ko-lithik) — encompasses the transition from stone (*lithos*) to copper (*chalcos*). These prehistoric people had no writing but they did leave records of a sort: some primitive rock carvings and a small, ruined temple dedicated to some unknown and now-forgotten god.

Centuries passed and brought with them greater experience and efficiency in the mining and smelting processes. By the 13th Century B.C., Egyptian metallurgists were running a sophisticated mining operation at Timna, exploiting the copper on a commercial scale. At the same time the pharaohs were persecuting their Israelite slaves, Egyptian miners were extracting tons of copper from Timna and returning the metal to the Land of the Nile.

The Egyptians introduced two important innovations. First, they built small ducts in and out of the smelting furnaces. The entering duct provided passage for air from a bellows to increase the temperature of the fire. The exiting duct provided

passage for slag so the furnace could be emptied without having to cool completely.

The second innovation was a plunging rod — a heat-resistant stick that could be plunged into the furnace to scoop out the fiery hot copper. These innovations permitted continuous operation of the smelting furnaces.

It is likely that slaves worked the pharaoh's mines at Timna. Few men would volunteer to come to this remote and hostile corner of the desert. This part of the southern Negev is barren — hardly an odd saltbush or a few blades of desert grass can be seen on the lifeless landscape. There is no nearby spring for water and rainfall averages about one inch a year — and that scant amount evaporates quickly in the summer sun. The Israeli weather station at Yotvatah, about 10 miles north, has registered temperatures of 122 degrees F. in the shade. My own measurements of ground temperatures on rock and sand exposed to the direct rays of the sun have reached 163.4 degrees F.

Timna Valley is even hotter. The valley itself takes the shape of a great natural amphitheater of 30 square miles. To the north, west and south, great cliffs, soaring more than 2300 feet vertically, form an extraordinary palisade of gritty sandstone. To the east, Timna Valley opens to the great Arava, a major valley which served through-

out antiquity as a prime trade route between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea. Because Timna is sheltered by those tall cliffs, hardly a breeze ever stirs. In the summer Timna can be suffocating.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the Egyptians used Midianite and Kenite labor in these mines. It's also likely that they conscripted some Amalekites and Israelites, although not much evidence of this has been found. The Israelites in particular were prohibited by the Commandments from fashioning "graven images" and thus there would be little evidence of their existence within the Egyptian slave camp.

Artifacts found at the site indicate that the period of the most intense mining came during the 19th and 20th Dynasties of ancient Egypt. During the reign of Sethos I, a 19th Dynasty pharaoh (1318 - 1304 B.C.), an Egyptian temple to the goddess Hathor was built upon the foundations of the ruined Chalcolithic temple. During several glorious weeks of excavations some years ago, Professor Rothenberg uncovered more than 10,000 artifacts within the confines of this 28x22-foot temple compound. Beads, pieces of wood and glass, jewelry of copper and bronze, bits of pottery — many inscribed with hieroglyphics — and a great mass of decayed cloth were retrieved from the site. These were probably offerings made

by Timna's workers to the Egyptian goddess of mining. Their unusually fine preservation is attributed to the extremely arid climate of the desert canyon.

* * *

MINING continued through the 20th Dynasty, the time of the Exodus. Inscriptions to Ramses II (reigned 1292 - 1225 B.C.) and Ramses III (reigned 1198 - 1167 B.C.) have been deciphered at Timna and there is a fine engraving of Ramses III offering libations to the goddess Hathor.

It was Ramses II who fought with Moses and pursued the fleeing Israelites into the Sinai. Some of the archaeological discoveries at Timna have become important supportive evidence for the Exodus narrative. It is also extremely likely that Moses passed very close to Timna during those 40 years in the desert.

One of the routes of the Exodus was "the way of the plain from Elath" (Deuteronomy 2:8). Elath, present-day Eilat, is located at the northern extension of the Red Sea's Gulf of Eilat, a mere 20 miles south of Timna. Another stop on the Exodus was when Moses "pitched [tents] in Yotvatah" (Numbers 33:34), an oasis only 10 miles north of Timna.

Only one route connects Elath and Yotvatah — the Arava Valley. All other ways are blocked by formidable mountains. It would have been virtually impossible for anyone

traveling this way to miss seeing Timna, its high palisaded red sandstone cliffs and centrally located Mount Timna, a block of black granite standing dark and jagged against the bright desert floor.

One of the unusual objects uncovered during the recent archaeological digs at Timna — and slated for exhibition at the new museum — is a gilded copper snake. Bible scholars may recall that while wandering in the desert, Moses “made a serpent of copper” (Numbers 21:9). Archaeologists identify the copper snake as a cultic item associated with the Midianite snake worship. And Bible scholars may also recall that Moses married Zipporah, the daughter of a Midianite priest (Exodus 2:21).

After the Exodus, when Joshua had led the people into the Land of Canaan, Egyptian presence at Timna declined and eventually disappeared. While the Israelites were settling their land, the pharaoh was trying to defend a failing kingdom. Invasions of the Libyans and Sea Peoples put Egypt on the defensive and colonies and dependencies began to rebel. Economic problems tore the Nile Valley and the kingdom came to the brink of division.

The Egyptians had to abandon Timna. They left their mining operations and the temple to the Midianites and Amalekites and perhaps some Israelites who had worked as slaves. It was at this time that many

of the Egyptian artifacts were defaced. Faces were cut away from idols of Hathor and a sphynx, and one suspects that either the Israelites, whose law forbade “graven images,” or their Midianite friends and relatives had a hand in this.

Archaeologists also find evidence that Hathor’s temple was cleared and replaced with a tent-shrine similar to the *ohel mo’ed* used by the Israelites during the Exodus. Within such a tent-shrine the Israelites kept the Ark of the Covenant — humanity’s first tabernacle — during their four decades of wandering in the desert.

All of the evidence pointing to a visit by Moses during the Exodus is very appealing and very circumstantial. No one scratched “Moses was here” on a sandstone cliff at Timna. Indeed, Timna’s history for the next 1000 years is a blank.

The next bit of archaeological evidence found at Timna dates from the Roman period, when soldiers of the Roman III Legion carved into a cave wall a memorial to their fallen comrades Aurelius, Eutuchis, Zanthius and Theon. The inscription dates to the Second Century A.D.

* * *

BUT WHAT of King Solomon’s Mines?

Not a trace of Jewish occupation has yet been found at Timna. There is a great void — an extraordinary blank space — from the time of the Exodus until shortly after the Ro-

mans' destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersal of the Jews. It is a suspicious void. Indeed, it defies common sense.

Let's consider a few important points. First, the Bible contains several references to Solomon's lavish use of copper and Timna is the only significant copper mine anywhere in Israel. Would a king as wise as Solomon have imported all his copper when he must have known about this rich domestic deposit?

Second, copper was a commodity extremely important to ancient Israel — what today would be regarded as a "strategic commodity." Would Solomon have relied solely on foreign sources for such a vital resource?

Third, copper was in great demand all around the civilized world at that time. And it was one of Israel's very few good export commodities. We know Solomon had a tremendous income in gold, silver, precious stones and other wealth, none of which was found naturally in Israel, and we also know Solomon set up large trading consortiums which voyaged to the distant lands of Ophir and Tarshish. What could Solomon's traders offer in exchange for rubies and gold? Israel's most valuable natural resource was copper.

Fourth, we know that Solomon commissioned a great merchant fleet to sail from a base at Ezion-Geber "which is beside Elath, on the shore of the Red Sea" (I Kings 9:26) and this fleet returned with "gold, four

hundred and twenty talents" (I Kings 9:28). The major import station for most of Solomon's gold was a mere 20 miles from Timna — and the highway leading up the Arava Valley from Ezion-Geber toward Jerusalem passed within two miles of the Timna mines.

Is it possible that Solomon didn't know about these rich mines? Or that he chose not to use them? Would Solomon, who worked for the peace and prosperity of Israel, purposely ignore an extremely important part of that prosperity?

So why is there no trace of Jewish presence at Timna? No Star of David has been found carved into a wall, no old menorahs or Hebrew inscriptions or Israelite coins. Perhaps the Jews didn't litter, or perhaps the archaeologists haven't dug in the right places yet. After all, 30 square miles is a big sandlot.

And possibly that Roman III Legion had a purpose at Timna. Perhaps the soldiers were ordered to obliterate all traces of Jewish presence. As they had done elsewhere in Israel, they may have destroyed every object of Jewish origin.

It is important to consider the historical context. Ever since Rome conquered the independent Jewish state in 63 B.C. and installed the puppet King Herod on the throne, there had been much unrest. Small rebellions festered perpetually — especially when the Romans insisted that the Jews worship their emperor.

In A.D. 66 a general revolt broke out after the Romans insisted that Nero be worshipped as a god in the great Temple of Jerusalem.

Through the first several years, the revolt was successful. Small groups of well-motivated Jewish irregulars embarrassed several Roman legions, defeating them time and again. The tide turned against the Jews only when Titus, the son of Emperor Vespasian, arrived with the most powerful military force ever assembled within what was then the most powerful empire on earth.

The war lasted seven bitter years. In that time Jerusalem had been destroyed along with the Temple which would not tolerate idols of Nero. Fighting was tenacious and in A.D. 73 the Jewish defenders of Masada committed suicide rather than surrender to the Roman legions massed around them. And still it didn't end.

In A.D. 132 the Jews mounted a new general uprising against the Romans — the Bar-Kokhba Revolt. Again the Romans had to bring their entire might to crush the insurgents. By A.D. 135 the Romans decided to eradicate every trace of the Jews. Jerusalem was leveled and the Roman X Legion was stationed amid its ruins to enforce an imperial decree: No Jew was to be permitted within the city's precincts on pain of death. That legion remained on its station for nearly two centuries.

About this time the Roman III Legion was at Timna. They began to exploit the copper and, quite likely, also had orders to obliterate every trace of the Jews who had so bitterly resisted their occupation since the day Pompey marched on Jerusalem centuries earlier.

* * *

TIMNA'S rich history continues. In this century its silent sandstone cliffs witnessed a lively international intrigue. In the 1930's two "archaeologists" were scouting the vicinity and both paid visits to Timna. One, Fritz Frank, was a German national who, while Hitler ruled in Berlin, wandered around what was then the British Mandate of Palestine making copious notes about British installations.

The other archaeologist was Rabbi Glueck, an American, who had quite another job. He was an operative of the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) working at the pay grade of lieutenant colonel. His most important task was to chart every path, water hole and natural defensive position in the Arava Valley because the British Army planned to retreat in this direction if German Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps was victorious in North Africa.

If the British Army had not routed Rommel at El Alamein, it is entirely possible that England's flamboyant Field Marshal Montgomery would have evacuated his Eighth Army across Sinai into the Arava and set

up a defensive position in the vicinity of Timna.

Others have passed across these sands: Col. T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia), for one, and thousands of camel caravans. Visitors come here, especially in the "winter" when the thermometer can dip to 60 degrees F. or so. They climb into the great fluted sandstone cliffs, called the Pillars of Solomon, and view the dramatic desert landscape below. Some ponder the ruins of a goddess' temple and the ruins of slave camps. Both are now just so many stones. There are many inscriptions to deci-

pher and drawings carved into the sandstone depicting chariots, wild animals and Egyptian soldiers — all produced by long-forgotten artists.

I see Timna through the eyes of a wildlife biologist. Periodically I wander its gothic landscape to keep track of the state of nature's fragile beauty. Lithe dorcas gazelles live on the valley floor while nimble ibex inhabit the mountainsides. The leopard also prowls these barren cliffs and insectivorous bats sleep through daylight hours in the 7000 mine shafts and galleries of what I am certain are King Solomon's Mines.



BUILDER AMONG THE BIRDS

By Buel B. Buzzard

MORE THAN 2300 years ago the philosopher-physician Aristotle suggested that what separates man from the rest of the animal world is not his intelligence but his hands. These enable him to write, sculpt, paint, build and so on. Of course the theory was scorned by men who have always imagined themselves to be the kingpins of the universe, created in the very image and likeness of God himself.

An example of avian intelligence seems to prove Aristotle right after all, but how the bowerbird, a native of Australia, learned his skills is a mystery. The male of the species builds not a nest but a house. He lays twigs across two adjoining tree branches; then with moss, grass

and other twigs, he begins to erect a sort of cottage. He roofs the structure with the same materials and when finished he has a tree cottage complete with front porch.

He decorates the outside walls with anything blue he can find, mostly wild flowers, but anything blue will do — a child's blue toy, a blue rag or garment or even blue clothespins which he snatches from the clothesline. What is even more amazing, the bowerbird makes his own house paint, mixing the juice of berries and charcoal. When the two ingredients are thoroughly blended he uses a piece of bark for a brush, dips it into the solution and applies the paint to the exposed sticks and twigs.

Who taught the bird all this?

WONDER-WORKER OF THE SANTA FE TRAIL

The strange old man could heal the sick and perform miracles but he could not escape his enemies' deadly wrath.



Photograph of author at Hermit's Cave in Council Grove, Kans., shows odd white light in lefthand corner and smaller light at cave mouth.

By Maurice Schwalm

COUNCIL GROVE, Kans., is a friendly small town of many trees. It is located in the Flint Hills area of central Kansas, noted for the best pastureland to be found anywhere in the world.

What brought me to the place, however, was something I had seen on a state map: an intriguing marker known as the "Madonna of the Trail." In a state not known for a strong Catholic influence, this struck me as unusual and worth a trip to see.

The marker is indeed interesting but my visit to Council Grove in the summer of 1985 led to the discovery of an item of more compelling in-

terest. The Council Grove Historic Tour pamphlet describes the "Hermit's Cave" this way:

1863 — Matteo Boccalini, "Hermit of the Trail," was a Franciscan friar. Upon his arrival here, to effect a bit of atmosphere for his dwelling, he erected a cross. People who lived down the hillside have recounted hearing him strumming his mandolin and singing his vespers. He wandered from one Indian tribe to another teaching the gospel and administering the last sacrament to the people of the trail.

I located the Hermit's Cave with little difficulty, took some pictures and left with a determination to learn all I could about Matteo Boccalini.

Matteo Boccalini, "Hermit of the Trail," left Rome to flee threats on his life. He came to Council Grove and took up residence in this cave, then left on Santa Fe Trail.



Not long afterwards I came upon Arthur L. Campa's *Treasure of the Sangre de Cristos* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1963). Chapter 13, "The Hermit's Trail to New Mexico," reported that the Hermit was born on the Isle of Capri off the coast of southern Italy. He was from a noble family and frequently showed photographs of himself dressed in aristocrat's garb. As a young man he was elected a papal secretary. In the course of his work he met opposition from certain members of the Jesuit order. The opposition was sufficiently fierce that he abruptly fled to South America.

Eventually he arrived on the North American frontier and found his way to Council Grove, where the Santa Fe Trail began. He was afraid that someone from Rome was following him and planning to kill him.

Naturally the citizens of the frontier community found him enigmatic. The various photos of him show a sort of Charlton Heston figure with a magnificent white beard and staff, wearing what appears to be a hooded Franciscan garment. People would see him sitting on a projecting ledge at the mouth of his rocky, isolated retreat and sweeping the strings of his mandolin as he sang vespers or played the soft airs of his native land. He kept a mysterious diary that he would not allow others to view or understand.

He suddenly departed from Council Grove, saying he had been identified by somebody from Rome. But before he left, he asked for and received a letter of introduction from the commander of the garrison at Council Grove. The letter identified him as a man of good character, a missionary to the Indians who lived in caves, and a vegetarian.

On May 28, 1863, he approached Don Manuel Romero, part-owner of one of the wagon trains that regularly plied the Santa Fe Trail, and showed him the letter. The Hermit asked to accompany the wagon train to New Mexico and Don Manuel gave his permission.

The company was surprised by the old man's refusal to ride in one of the wagons when offered the opportunity to do so. "All I want is the privilege of accompanying you to the mountains of the West," he said. "I prefer to walk, thank you, sir."

Don Manuel was touched and from then on he and the Hermit were close friends. This friendship is historically important because Romero is our prime source of information about the Hermit's life.

* * *

THE HERMIT ministered to all who were sick or in need of last rites along the trail. He refused all meat dishes and subsisted entirely on atole, a cornmeal mush or gruel of Aztec origin.

When the wagon train reached its destination, the Hermit lived for a time in the Romero household in Las Vegas, N. Mex. But he began to worry that his enemy might find him there, so he moved to a small village where he found a natural cave in the east wall of a canyon and moved in.

He was not living in isolation, however, for soon his reputation was spreading and large groups of people approached him seeking healings. They pitched tents and windbreaks near the cave in order to enjoy his influence. The practice appears something like the Catholic equivalent of what the Hindus call shaktipat diksha. This term describes the yogic initiation in which the guru transmits spiritual energies to the chela and thereby awakens the kundalini energies in that person. This can be accomplished through touch, words, gaze or thoughts.

The Hermit prescribed potions and rubefacients (a substance for external application that produces redness of the skin) to ailing patients, much in the manner of the prescriptions given by Edgar Cayce while in trance. Already, in other words, the Hermit was regarded as a miracle worker.

But even there the Hermit found himself fearful of his mysterious enemy from Rome. He soon left the Romeroville canyon area and sought a mountaintop. He found

one in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Owl's Peak, as the mountain was called, became identified with the Hermit and in fact today is known as Hermit's Peak. It is located at the head of Gallinas Canyon, 18 miles northwest of Las Vegas, N. Mex.

From the top of the mountain the Hermit was able to survey the valleys below. At a point about 300 feet below the eastern side of the peak he selected a hollowed cave, 10,000 feet high, and lived there almost until his death.

Here members of the La Sociedad del Ermitano and other friends of the Hermit come, even to this day, to pay tribute to his memory. The niches of the cave are filled with images and religious pictures. At the entrance an old timber cross, weathered by the elements, has been placed as a reminder of his presence. The society comes here on feast days, such as the Feast of the Holy Cross, to burn fires in memory of him and perhaps to invoke his presence.

It is here that his full powers became manifest, according to Elba C. de Baca's *Legends of a Hermit* (1984), a catalogue of oral traditions about the old man and his "miracles."

When the Hermit first located his cave, he asked the men of the villages to help him clean it up. When they had finished, he asked them to cover the front of the cave and leave

only a tiny opening. The men were taken aback; they had no idea how he could enter and leave the cave under these circumstances. As if reading their minds, he told them, "Do not worry. I have my ways and means of getting out of the cave." The men understood him to mean he had supernatural powers.

As the Hermit was settling on the mountain, Don Margarito Romero and several of his men helped the old man on occasion. Once they pointed out to him that he would need a well. He responded by striking the earth with his staff. Water gushed forth.

That spring still exists. It is an unusual one: it rises up from the ground only to be swallowed up by the ground again a few feet away.

Every afternoon the Hermit would come down from his mountaintop retreat to the Gallinas Canyon area where he spent time in the natural beauty of that canyon in prayer and meditation. Usually, when he finished his meditation, he found someone there to help him with his briefcase full of prayer books. On one particular occasion a young man named Hosea was waiting. He saw the holy man kneeling with hands folded, reading his Bible. Although there was no breeze, the pages were slowly turning, as if an invisible being were performing this service for the Hermit.

On one occasion the Hermit

demonstrated the power of precognition. Talking about the hills near the village of Gallinas, he told a group of pilgrims, "There are many different kinds of minerals down there. There is much gold — gold veins as thick as vigas [beams]. However, it will be well into the future before the gold is discovered and it will be strangers from afar who will discover it." All this proved true. That area now contains several abandoned gold mines. It is known as Mineral Hill.

Another story has it that one day a local peasant named Pablo, notorious for his arrogant personality, decided to go up the mountain to see the Hermit. Pablo, a musician, wanted to learn some new hymns. When he asked the Hermit if he would teach him a hymn, the old man agreed, suggesting "Corazon Santo" (Sacred Heart). Annoyed, Pablo ridiculed the Hermit for offering to teach him such an ancient, familiar hymn. Pablo's manner angered the Hermit, who told the young man that he would be severely punished that very day.

Pablo, unconcerned, mounted his horse and rode off whistling. Suddenly a thunderstorm erupted and a bolt of lightning killed both Pablo and his horse.

There is also the story of a Mr. and Mrs. Eulogio Ortega who lived in the village of Gallinas. One day they were on their way by wagon to attend Mass at Our Lady of Sor-

rows Church, which is several miles distant from Gallinas. They spotted a figure on the road ahead of them. When they caught up with the lone figure, they realized it was the Hermit — or, as he is sometimes known locally, El Solitario. They offered him a ride to church. He said he didn't need one but urged them to hurry because they would be late to Mass.

The couple went on their way, amused because they were riding and he was walking and they felt that they had plenty of time. But when they arrived at the church, they saw El Solitario going up the steps to the church ahead of them. By the time they entered the church, the last bell was ringing and Mass had already started.

* * *

ANOTHER paranormal power legend credits to the Hermit is levitation, as shown in this tale:

The Hermit requested that the pilgrims who visited him help him set up the 14 stations of the Cross for his devotional use. The families of the area responded. On the Fridays of Lent many pilgrims would go up to the mountaintop and join the holy man in observances surrounding the Stations of the Cross. One young woman attended with her daughter Anita.

After a while Anita got restless and asked to be excused so that she could play. The little girl ran to the edge of the cliff. She slipped and

fell, landing on the ledge below. The ledge was not in any way accessible. Yet the Hermit levitated down to the ledge and brought her up safely.

The Hermit never explained how he could do such a thing. As a matter of fact, no explanations were ever offered for any of his supernatural feats. All these things were simple adjuncts to his ministry.

On another occasion a pious woman of Las Vegas, one Antonia, wished to visit the Hermit to obtain some herbs and his blessing. She asked her neighbor Consuelo to accompany her. Consuelo agreed, saying she would like to see if the Hermit could really read minds as he was reputed to do. Antonia got the herbs she requested and also a promise that the Hermit would remember her family in his prayers.

Then he turned to Consuelo and said, "Please come with me. I want to show you something." He led her to another cave a short distance from there. "Look in that cave and tell me what you see," he said. "I hope your curiosity is satisfied." She was taken aback when she saw a rattlesnake, coiled and ready to strike. She fled and the Hermit followed her. He said, "You wanted to see what there was to see in the cave. Well, that's all you'll see up here."

Perhaps the message was that he wasn't running a magic show. It is one thing to use the siddhas for the benefit of others. It is another to satisfy idle curiosity.

Telepathy with an ethical tinge is commonplace in stories about the Hermit. In one instance, a Mr. Atencio, wishing to go on a pilgrimage to the Hermit, asked his wife to prepare some food. She did it but only after considerable protest. When Atencio arrived, he was greeted kindly. But when he offered the food to the Hermit, the holy man said, "This food was grudgingly prepared. However, I will accept it since you were so kind as to bring it to me."

In another instance, a young boy, Aduardo, stole some apple pies from his mother and took them to the Hermit. The Hermit simply told him, "Take these pies back to your mother. And the next time you want to bring me something, please don't bring me anything that has been stolen."

The siddhic powers of the yogas included garima, the ability to make objects become extremely heavy, and laghima, the ability to make objects or persons very light. These powers were applied aptly in tandem in a situation involving a young boy, Willie, who wished to assist the holy man with his briefcase. Here again, the Hermit was in the Gallinas Canyon for his afternoon meditation. Willie was allowed to carry the briefcase but was puzzled because it kept getting heavier and heavier.

The Hermit asked if the briefcase was getting too heavy. When Willie

said yes, the holy man replied, "Perezos [lazy one], it is not the briefcase that is heavy but your sins. Your sins are the ones that are weighing you down. Say an act of contrition and perhaps you will find some relief." When Willie prayed as he was told, the briefcase lightened.

* * *

ALWAYS HAUNTED by Rome, the Hermit, after predicting his own death, fled the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. This time he wandered as far south as San Antonio. Then he circled back to New Mexico and took up residence in a cave in the area of Old Mesilla. He established social relations with a Colonel Fountain, a close friend of the Romero family, and began his ministry again. His friends persuaded him to establish a fire signal so that they could tell whether he was alive and well on his mountaintop.

The miracles resumed. The Hermit healed the sick. He materialized food and water to feed poor pilgrims. It is said that on one occasion he psychokinetically started a fire to assist food preparation.

In April 1869, when the Hermit was nearly 70, Colonel Fountain and the others became concerned when they had not seen the Hermit's fire signal for three days. Forming a posse, they went to the top of the mountain.

There they found the old man dead on the ground, with a dagger

in his back. Had his mysterious enemies from Rome caught up with him at last? The crime was never solved. We do not even know if the killer's enmity was religious or personal in nature.

But even after his death the tales of supernatural events associated with the holy man continued. Those

who prayed to him are said to have been healed. In 1898, so the story goes, he paranormally imprinted an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on a picture taken of members of his continuing devotional group, La Sociedad del Ermitano.

The "Madonna of the Trail" has found a true son in the Hermit.

A HIGHER HAND THAN OURS...

By Chris Collier

A CACHE of some 496 jewels discovered in the foundations of St. John's Uniting Church in Booval, Queensland, may mean no more financial difficulties in the erection of a new church on the site of the original built in 1917. The find in mid-1986 included ruby and sapphire rings, gold chains, bracelets and brooches wrapped in a 1922 newspaper and encased in two biscuit tins.

Parishioners were demolishing the old church to make way for the

new one when the treasure popped up.

"The stumps were being pulled out with a chain and four-wheel-drive when the boxes just popped up with the stumps," said Rob Imhoff, one of the workers.

The jewels were placed in a bank vault to await police investigation.

On learning of the windfall, the minister for this Australian church, Norma Spear, said, "I shake my head and wonder. A higher hand than ours is at work."

STORAGE COMPANY BANKS ON CRIME

AN ADVERTISEMENT for "U-Store It," a Holliston, Mass., company that rents storage space, reads: "We Stored \$7,000,000 for a Wells Fargo Robber! We're Talkin' Security!"

For many months, U-Store It employees dealt with customers bringing in or picking up lawn chairs, lamps and graduation rings, unaware that a mobile home parked on the property held the loot from one of the biggest cash thefts in U.S. history. The money was

stolen from the Wells Fargo depot in West Hartford, Conn., sometime in 1983.

Reputed terrorists fighting for Puerto Rico's independence allegedly kept the mobile home at storage companies throughout the region, moving it from one to another, a U-Store It employee said.

Owner Robert Heavey said he thought the ad was more attractive than a dry recital of his company's rates.

THE POLTERGEIST IN THE BEDROOM

No spirit of the dead, this ghost belonged to a real person — someone communicating an angry message.

By Ed Gould

WEBSTER'S dictionary defines "poltergeist" as "a mischievous ghost; a spirit capable of making mysterious noises or rattlings." Thousands of incidents of poltergeist activity have been reported around the world by a wide variety of persons ranging from civic authorities to priests to ordinary folks. To be present when these noises or rattlings are happening can be disconcerting, even — at least in retrospect — amusing.

My wife Jan and I hadn't been married very long when in the fall of 1960 we went to visit my parents Elmo and Janet Gould, who then lived in Ocean Park, a small seaside resort in southern British Columbia, Canada. Here we were treated to an example of a playful "ghost."

Our visit did not start off well. My mother was still upset over my having married an English girl, a "Sassanach," the derogatory term the Scots use when they refer to the English (the term dates back to ancient times when England invaded Scotland). To make matters worse, my 15-year-old sister Sandra had

been asked to give up her bedroom to the newlyweds. She was to sleep on the couch in the living room and couldn't go to bed until we had seen the Jack Paar Show or the late movie on television.

Sandra pouted through dinner and after the dishes were done fled to her room, where she stayed until Jan and I invaded her premises about 1:00 A.M. She didn't speak to us, just whisked out of the room in her robe and slippers.

Her bedroom, at the far end of the hallway from the living room, was spotless. The walls, covered with her own prizewinning art and award certificates, reflected my sister's competitive attitude toward life. She made most of her own clothes and always maintained an orderly environment.

"No wonder she was mad about having us take over her room," Jan said.

"It wasn't my idea," I said.

As soon as Jan and I got into the bed, the springs began to complain. They squeaked and squawked and made such a racket that we were



Sandra Gould's unhappiness at losing her room to her brother and his bride may have contributed to outbreak of paranormal high jinks.

embarrassed. Since my parents' bedroom was right next door and the walls were thin, we were keenly aware of the possible interpretations of the sound. Jan tried to stifle her giggles, but I didn't think this was funny at all. After all, it was my home and I knew my parents were prudish about sex.

"Lie still!" I finally insisted.

"I *am* lying still," she hissed.

We lay there stiff as two zombies while the bed went right on squeaking. I accused Jan of indulging in her habit of wiggling her toes. Sometimes she did it in her sleep.

"Stop wiggling your toes!" I whispered.

"I'm not wiggling my toes!" she shot back.

"Well, why is this bed still squeaking?"

It was true: the bed was making regular squeaking noises just as if someone were bouncing up and down on it.

I was determined to get to the bottom of things, so to speak. I climbed out of bed and in the darkness crouched nearby and listened. The bed continued to squeak its merry tune.

"Aha," I declared. "I was right. It has to be you, Jan. I'm not even touching it."

At that my wife rolled off the bed and onto the scatter rug beside me on the floor. As we both sat there, shivering in the early autumn cool, the bed squeaked on.

* * *

BACK IN BED we tossed and turned but finally fell asleep. About an hour later I was awakened when something hit me lightly the face. As I sat up to turn on the light, I was struck again. In the glow from the reading lamp attached to the headboard, I saw what had struck me. Two tiny Dutch dolls were lying on the bedspread in front of me.

I didn't wake Jan. She was enjoying her rest and I saw no reason to disturb her. But I did inform her the next morning —because the two dolls were lying on the bedspread again, the same dolls that I had placed back on the windowsill.

After breakfast I took Sandra aside and told her about our experience. I told her that I had been reading about poltergeist activity and wondered if this phenomenon could explain what had happened to us. What Sandra told me confirmed my suspicions.

She said the dolls were continually falling off the windowsill, always landing on the bed, never on the floor where they might break. With her in tow I returned to the bedroom to examine the area around the window. Perhaps it was open and a breeze had blown them down. No. Sandra said my father had painted them shut and she hadn't been able to raise a window for more than a year.

Also I distinctly recalled placing the dolls behind the curtain. Surely this would have deflected if not actually stopped the little Dutch folk in their precipitous voyage.

"Anything else strange happen in here?" I asked.

"Yes," Sandra said. "My slippers are always turning around backwards."

She related how she always got into bed, sitting down and kicking off her slippers so that they would be in a position to slide into in the morning without her having to touch the cold floor. That made sense. What didn't make sense was the fact that morning after morning the slippers were faced the wrong way around.

I had no reason to doubt my sister's word. She was a most meticulous person, very neat — which made the next incident even more bizarre.

"I hang my clothes in my closet with the hangers all facing the same way," she said. It certainly seemed logical to a well-organized person. "Almost every morning I get up and find them every which way. It drives me crazy trying to untangle them."

At first she accused our younger brother Larry of playing tricks but when he denied it and the "tricks" continued, she learned to live with it.

Her ability to "live with it" was another indication of Sandra's strong character and determined attitude. When she was young, she was given her first two-wheel bike which older sister Eleanor was to teach her to ride. Sandra refused lessons, just got on and rode it first time out.

When the doctor told my mother that Sandra should drop out of the May Queen contest because she had a high fever indicative of chicken pox, Sandra refused. She would not have spots. She went on to win the contest, *then* broke out in spots — at her convenience.

She had never heard of poltergeists. Neither had my parents but they were aware of my interest in the occult and had witnessed my success with the Ouija board. I tried to explain my theory about the strange goings-on in Sandra's room:

"The way I understand it, someone who is under a great deal of emotional and physical stress — say a person who is dying or a young person who is in puberty — may throw off an invisible part of himself or herself, an alter ego. A second self which somehow takes up a brief life of its own — without the conscious knowledge of the host."

"Do you mean to say that Sandra was responsible for the mischief in the bedroom last night?" Jan asked.

"I do. And the other incidents in her room were also of her doing."

"But why would Sandra do that to herself?" my mother wanted to know. "I can understand now why she was so upset at being evicted from her room and then going back in spirit form — or whatever — to 'haunt' you two. But why drop dolls on her own bed and mess up her own cupboards?"

"To get the attention she feels she isn't getting at home," I said. "Conflict over schoolwork. A smarter older sister. Boys. She's worrying about all sorts of things. Some kids break out in pimples. Then there are those who break out in poltergeists."

"Remember, 'poltergeist,' a German word, translates as 'playful spirit.' It's not under Sandra's control and it's liable to do things that will embarrass or annoy her since some of the tricks don't reflect her usual attitude."

Sandra, the logical thinker, found the explanation quite sound. My

parents were less convinced.

About six months later my parents briefly separated. A major cause was Sandra's increasing demands. My father finally told my mother that either the teenager shaped up or he was shipping out. He stayed away for two weeks until I interceded by getting my parents to seek counseling.

While my mother and Sandra were alone in the house, there was a flurry of poltergeist activity. Books fell from bookcases and pots and pans clattered from shelves in the kitchen. Sandra's clothes cupboard

became a rat's nest of clothing and hangers. My mother got totally fed up.

After my father returned and the family was reunited, the activity ceased.

Today Sandra is the mother of two teenaged daughters and lives in the farming community of Aldergrove, about 60 miles east of Vancouver. Whenever the family gets together, we have a good laugh at the playful spirit which once squeaked its way into the newlyweds' bed and — in a way — helped unite a family.



WANTED: SPACESHIP FOR ONE-WAY TRIP

THE CITIZENS of Damanhur, a town of 180 persons near Turin, Italy, have agreed unanimously to find a spaceship to carry them on a one-way trip to outer space.

In an article under Uli Schmetzer's by-line, the *Chicago Tribune* reported in September 1986 that NASA responded to the town's plea by saying it isn't yet working on a project that "utilizes so much human material. But we will keep your requirements in consideration."

"It is not important when we leave," said Roberto Sparagio, 31, the town's spokesman. "What is

important is that we are ready to depart in the spirit of colonizers at any time."

Damanhur is no ordinary town. It was founded 10 years ago as an animist colony practicing aquaculture. The residents are mainly dropout intellectuals and professionals who think they live in communion with nature and its spirits and thus have conquered the negative aspects of human existence. In Damanhur a workday is 12 hours long, no one smokes or takes drugs and everyone has adopted the name of an animal or plant spirit. There are no social classes and no bosses.



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.

THE COVENANT

By Dorothy Smith

ONE RAINY Easter Sunday in 1981, my husband Oden was driving me around Elmhurst, Ill. We were looking at homes for sale. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon and because of the holiday, we encountered little traffic.

Suddenly the rain ceased, the sun came out and a huge rainbow arched across the sky. At the exact moment I saw it, a strange message filled my head — indeed, seemed to fill the car: "This is a sign of my covenant with you." What could this mean?

Then my husband said, "Look at that rainbow!" We looked at it in silence, watching it fade. I did not tell him of the strange words I had heard.

Moving on slowly, we halted at a four-way stop sign. No traffic was approaching from any direction.

The car started to roll into the intersection but my husband suddenly hit the brakes, stopping the car abruptly. I was thrown forward, totally surprised.

I asked, "Whatever are you doing?" Just then a large, heavy sedan hurtled into the intersection, lurching from side to side, barely missing lamp posts — and us. In amazement



Dorothy Smith

we watched the car roar away at high speed.

Shaken, we continued on our way. Rounding a corner a few blocks away, we pulled up behind police cars at an accident scene. The big sedan had smashed the rear of one car and sideswiped two others.

My husband has no explanation for his sudden impulse to stop the car but I believe it saved our lives. And I think the "covenant" had something to do with it. —*Lombard, III.*



Dixie Shepler

FIERY VISION

By Dixie Shepler

I WENT to Panama City, Fla., to visit my relatives over the Fourth of July in 1977. Two days before I was to return home to North Carolina, I went to bed about 10:00 P.M. and fell asleep as soon as my head hit the pillow. A few hours later I was awakened by the sound of a male voice singing. I looked at the clock — it was 2:00 A.M. — and wondered who could be up so early. The song kept repeating, getting louder and louder, and each time it broke off in a horrible laugh.

When the singing finally stopped, I had a feeling that I was floating and opened my eyes to see my body lying on the bed. I was looking down from the ceiling! In the blink of an eye the scene changed. I saw a large truck with my car behind it. I put my foot on the brake and the car slid right into the truck. In the next

instant flames were shooting up around both vehicles.

I closed my eyes and said a prayer I learned as a child. "When I am afraid I will trust in Thee." I kept saying this over and over until I felt something pulling me down. When I opened my eyes again I was lying in bed. I jumped up and ran through the house, turning on every light as I went.

The next morning everyone laughed when I told them of my out-of-body vision. I begged them to let me fly home but they said I was being silly, that it was just nerves.

The next day, July 6, I headed home. I had just gotten around Atlanta when a highway patrolman pulled me over to tell me one of my headlights was out. He told me to have it fixed in the next town and I said I would. When I did get to the next town it was already daylight and I knew I would be home before



The Aftermath

dark so I decided not to have the headlight fixed.

About an hour and a half from home I stopped for gas in Martin County. Pulling out onto the road I found my car behind a gas tanker. Exactly as in my vision, I put my foot on the brake and slid right into the tanker. Car and truck were in flames in an instant but I was able to jump out and run. If I had stopped and had the headlight fixed I probably would have avoided the accident. I have since learned to heed such warnings as that in my fiery vision. — *Lima, Ohio.*

DADDY'S HOME

By Gwen N. Prayer

IN THE summer of 1958 my family consisted of a middle-aged husband and two teenage daughters. One beautiful summer day my husband had gone to work on the evening shift (three to 11). He

worked in a glass factory in Toledo and we lived in a suburb, Oregon, Ohio, about 18 miles away, on the bay.

Ours was a small, two-bedroom cottage consisting of a living room, kitchen and of course the two bedrooms. The living room and kitchen were aligned. A living room window in the front of the house was near the front door and anyone coming to the door could be seen through that window.

Sometime between 5:30 and 6:00 P.M. we decided we'd have a light supper. Hamburgers seemed to be ideal. I was in the process of cooking the burgers and the girls were preparing the "trimmings" when they suddenly exclaimed in unison, "There's Daddy!"

I hadn't heard the car but saw him coming up the walk. He paused before he reached the door and looked in the window. The girls meantime had made a dash for the door only to discover there was no car in the drive, there was no one on the porch, there was no Daddy!

At approximately 11:30 that night my husband came in from work; it was his usual time. I heard the car this time and went to the door to greet him. Immediately after saying, "Hi," he asked, "How were the hamburgers?"

I don't know if anyone else has had a similar experience and I don't know a scientific name for this but I do know we will never forget it.

When I asked my husband how he knew we had hamburgers he said he didn't know; he had been thinking of home and just believed we were having hamburgers for supper.—*Toledo, Ohio.*

MY BIRDS

By Lillian Parks

IN JUNE 1948 I was living on a farm 80 miles south of Denver, Colo., with my husband and our three small children. As I was preparing to do the laundry on our large glass-enclosed sun porch I saw a small bird frantically going from one window to another beating its tiny wings in an attempt to come inside. I felt a chill as I watched it.

The night before we'd had a flash flood which had washed out the bridge at the edge of the nearby town. Traffic to and from Denver was temporarily cut off. I looked to the top of the hill above the house and saw my neighbor coming through the trees toward our house. I knew she was bringing bad news.

I screamed at my husband, "She's bringing us word of a death!"

She had a note from my sister and mother who could not get to us

because the bridge was out but they had found a trucker who detoured and left the message with my neighbor. My stepfather Clarence Kingery had passed away the night before from cancer.

Two years later, when my mother Harriet Kingery was dying of cancer in August 1950 in a Denver hospital, I lay down for an hour's rest. Immediately I heard the flutter of wings and watched in fascination as a small bird beat its wings against my bedroom window. I knew Mother was gone and a few hours later I was informed of this fact.

Then on May 7, 1983, I was standing looking out of my storm door window at the surrounding country when a small hummingbird darted toward my face and fluttered to the glass again and again, until I felt it was trying to kiss my lips. I felt again that someone I loved had passed on and a few hours later we received a telegram that my sister Mildred, in Elmira, N.Y., had died of cancer.

Only my sister in Utah and I are left of our family. To which one of us and when will the bird come again?—*Wister, Okla.*



DOUBLE ZAPPING

POLICE OFFICER Herbert Taylor of Jacksonville, Fla., is living proof that lightning sometimes strikes twice. His patrol car was zapped twice during two weeks in July 1986 by bolts from the blue. He was not injured when lightning hit his car, charred his radio antenna, scrambled his police radio, blew out his right rear tire and lit up every gauge on his dashboard.

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.

LIFE'S HEART

By Zoe H. Crow

FOR THE second time in as many days I felt a presence in the room. But when I turned my head I was alone.

Sitting in the kitchen trying to juggle my income to cover current expenses and still have the \$900 for my son's college tuition was a real challenge. After going over everything for the fifth time I was still \$400 short.

Since my husband's sudden death the year before, in 1963, I had managed to keep our son in college. He was taking extra courses to finish early and also cooking at a diner on weekends.

This time there seemed no way to manage. Putting my head in my arms on the table I gave in to despair.

Suddenly I felt the warmth and again a presence in the room. I sat

quietly and gave myself up to the wonderful feeling that enclosed me.

Maybe I felt the words. I don't know. "Zoe! Zoe!" said my husband's voice.

This can't be, I thought. He is dead. He is gone.

Again I heard, "Zoe. Zoe." I knew it was his voice; I heard it—maybe in my head.



Zoe H. Crow

"Neil, is it really you?" I asked.

"Yes. I'll be with you as long as you need me. Look in [Kahlil Gibran's] *The Prophet*, page 12 and then page 80. I love you. I'll always love you. So long," and all was still.

I sat for some time in the warm glow repeating, "I love you. I love you. So long!" Our special words for good-bye. Then I was on my feet looking around frantically. The experience was so vivid I searched the house, calling Neil's name.

Finally I sank in a chair, my head whirling with questions and disbelief. I doubted my senses. Had I dozed? Had the stress of the last year been too much for me?

I forced myself to relax and think, hoping for his return. Gradually, as I relaxed I let my thoughts drift to the love we had experienced. Talking all night. Sharing our most intimate thoughts. Laughing sometimes at the many struggles over the years. Just being together! The physical ache; the feeling that a part of my body was gone.

Now, more relaxed, I walked slowly into the living room and took from the bookcase our worn copy of *The Prophet*. My thoughts were on the many times we had read certain parts to each other, along with the Bible, when we faced a crisis in our marriage or needed comfort when we had problems that seemed too big for us to solve.

I stood holding *The Prophet* in my hands for a moment, then

opened it to page 12. The underlined words were the ones we had read many times after a close family member had died:

"All these things shall love do unto you that you may know the secrets of your heart, and in that knowledge become a fragment of Life's Heart."

Life's heart! Neil's heart!

I stood for a long time amazed at how simple and wonderful the words were: Life's heart. Neil's heart.

Then scarcely aware of what I was doing, I turned to page 80. Four crisp \$100 bills marked the place and, underlined many years before, were these words:

"For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one."—
Marion, N.C.

SHE AWAITS ME

By Barbara Hewson

I'D DECIDED long ago that when she died her body would be buried on the common land. Here we'd spent our happy years together, she chasing skylarks hidden in the heather, I content to watch, admiring her total love of life and the glorious burnished coat which shimmered and glowed with vibrant health.

But slowly her sun was eclipsed by cataracts which formed over her eyes. Soon her heart and kidneys began to fail and she sought quiet, dark places as animals do in the

wild when instinctively they know it's time to die.

Gentle, loving arms held her and her body turned cold. I buried her deep on the common land among the cool ferns.

Three weeks elapsed. Then one night in August 1983 I awoke in the early hours, tears streaming down my cheeks at the remembrance of my nightmare.

My husband Roy, although alarmed at my obvious distress, dismissed my "dream" of seeing her on top of her grave, empty sockets where once brown eyes had shone. "Impossible," he said. "She was buried far too deep."

Within 48 hours this terrible nightmare was repeated. I awoke hearing her keening and I wept also, unable to dispel the strong feeling that her spirit was not at peace and this was her way of letting me know.

That day I visited her grave for the first time and my nightmare became grim reality. Fighting nausea, I looked with horror at her once beautiful coat, now mere handfuls of dull-red scattered across briars and wild grasses surrounding the grave which had been so carefully camouflaged. Large stones had been dragged away and there, just as I'd dreamed, was the once proud head of my elegant Irish setter, cruelly displayed to an uncaring world. Her eyes, sightless sockets, stared into the blue sky, taunting me.

The shock was total, more devas-



Barbara Hewson

tating than her expected demise. I think on reflection this was because my precognition was with regard to an animal.

It was true I'd often foreseen events concerning people. But did I or did she make some spiritual contact? Domestic animals are known to be intuitive and where there is a strong bond forged between human and animal, each species has been documented as having a sixth sense or inner awareness of danger, one for the other.

We reburied her and covered the grave with quicklime. I'm sure her spirit is at peace for I've not dreamed of her since in any other than happy memories. And I'm certain she awaits me, her gentle eyes adoring, her coat restored to its glowing health.

Yet I often ponder the question: How could I "dream" such an accurate account of this bizarre event?

Did my beloved Irish setter make contact with me? Or was it all merely coincidence?

I think it was some deep inexplicable intuition sparked by spiritual contact.—*Upper Killay, Swansea, West Glamorgan, South Wales.*

MATTER AND SPIRIT

By Merry Harris

MY FRIEND Allan Mahana was like a beloved brother to me. When he died early in 1977, I was not told because I was ill. So I didn't get to pay my last respects.

Allan had owned a ranch near Seeley, Calif., where our ESP study group met and where he and I celebrated our mid-March birthdays together.

Two days after my birthday, on March 18, 1977, I drove my little buckskin-colored Datsun station wagon 30 miles across the desert from my home in Ocotillo to Allan's

ranch to say good-bye to my dead friend.

During our ESP meetings Allan and I had often discussed spirit survival. I believed in survival, as he did, but did not believe that spirits can move heavy objects. Allan contended that they can.

As I sat at the gate of his ranch, watching a glorious sunset in the western sky, a series of loud raps sounded on the roof, sides, hood and back of my little station wagon. Then the vehicle began to rock from side to side, as gently as if someone were rocking a cradle.

I could almost see Allan, a playful expression on his face, and I could almost hear him saying, "I *told* you so!"

I believe that he was so determined to have the last word in our friendly argument that he came back to give me proof I could not refute. — *Ocotillo, Calif.*



FOUND; PIROGUE FROM 1806 EXPEDITION

THE WEATHERED remains of a pirogue, or dugout canoe, thought to have been used in the 1806 exploration of the Red River ordered by President Thomas Jefferson, have been uncovered upstream from Shreveport, La. The pirogue was found August 26, 1986, under 28 feet of sand on the east bank of the river near the town of Benton.

Amateur archaeologist Claude

McCrocklin told Associated Press the pirogue was probably one of seven vessels used in the first exploration of the Red River north of Natchitoches. He said it is the first conclusive physical evidence ever uncovered. Among artifacts found nearby was a military button from the 1797-1810 period which bore the insignia of the regiment from which a military escort was supplied for the expedition.

Robin Isn't Coming Back

The vision of corn swaying in the wind communicated to me a horrifying message that I did not want to know

By Starr Ann Perko

ON A SUNDAY morning in late August 1982 I awoke to the sound of my mother Mary Lou Perko's voice speaking in alarm, "Don't say that!"

As I listened I soon realized that she was talking to my aunt, her sister Shirley Szafasz. My mother was saying, "Just calm down. Nothing has happened to Robin."

When I got out of bed, my mother explained to me that my cousin Robin, Shirley's daughter, had gone to a party in nearby Crown Point, Ind., with some friends Friday night and still hadn't come home.

I thought that was odd, not like Robin at all.

That weekend hadn't left me in the best of spirits. The day before, my boyfriend had jilted me and now my cousin was missing.

So this Sunday I spent the morning moping around the house, feeling sorry for myself. Then I went back into my room and lay down.

I stared at the ceiling, my mind wandering. I wanted to close my eyes and fall asleep so that I could forget everything that was happening around me. But I was wide-awake and my brain was running

like a high-powered engine.

I closed my eyes and took a few deep breaths. I could feel some of the tension drifting away.

Suddenly I "saw" a cornfield. The sun was shining. Some of the stalks were brown, others a healthy green. I could see the field gently swaying in a soft breeze which felt as if it were going right through me.

Terror gripped me and I bolted up in bed, gasping for air. I knew then that my cousin Robin was never coming home. I understood all too well what I had seen. I wanted to scream but I didn't. I just sat there in silence.

I do not know what made me understand but I knew at that moment that Robin was dead and this was where her body would be found. I also knew that this cornfield was not far from where the party had been. I don't know how I knew; I simply knew.

All the rest of the afternoon I could think of nothing else. I wanted to tell someone what I knew and what I had seen but I was sure no one would believe me.

That evening, as my father Nick Perko and I watched television in

the family room, I stared at the screen but did not hear the sound. Inside me a battle was raging.

I kept glancing at my father, contemplating just how to go about telling him, meanwhile wondering if I should bother. But as the minutes dragged by and my frustration mounted, I decided I would muster up the courage.

"Dad," I said.

"Hmm?" he mumbled, looking at the television.

"Dad, Robin isn't coming back."

My father looked at me sternly. "You shouldn't say that," he said. "It's still too early. Besides, she's probably out somewhere still partying."

"No," I said, shaking my head. "I saw cornfields. That's where they can find her."

My father grew silent and eyed me oddly. "What do you mean, you saw?" he asked.

I described my vision to him. I told him exactly what I felt and how I knew it was true. As he listened, his expression changed. I could sense that he believed what I said.

"Robin is dead," I told him. "I don't know how or why but I know she's never coming back. Tell them to start looking around where the party was. Where the cornfields are."

I could feel a deep sadness and fear in my father. It wasn't in his face but in his eyes.

"Please," I pleaded. "Tell them. I

think they'll listen to you more than they would me."

He told me not to say anything to my aunt or uncle. They were going through enough grief just wondering when (or if) Robin would contact them.

I did as my father asked and I held my tongue. But late that same night I began writing the eulogy I knew I would be giving at Robin's funeral.

Two weeks later Robin's body was found in a cornfield near Hermit Lake, close to where the party had been. She had been raped and strangled by a man she met at the party. The murderer was later sentenced to 35 years in prison.

I do not know how my father felt, for he has never mentioned it. Nor have I. But what went through my heart is something I pray I never have to go through again. The anger, the rage, the disappointment in myself for not doing what my heart told me to do. Although I realize I could not have prevented what happened to Robin, I could have prevented the nightmare from dragging on for two weeks.

A couple of weeks after the funeral my sense of guilt had taken control of my life. Then one night I had a dream which helped me to overcome my depression.

In this dream I was in the basement watching television. Suddenly I heard someone walking down the stairs. I got up and turned a corner

which brought me to the foot of the stairs. And there was Robin.

I was so surprised and happy to see her that I thought my heart would burst. "Robin, where have you been?" I asked. "Everyone is so worried!"

She walked down the last few steps and stood right in front of me. She nodded and said, "I know everyone is worried." Then she smiled. "But I'm in Phoenix now. There's nothing to worry about."

My mind was racing and the words were spilling from my mouth. I asked her, "Have you seen your mom and dad? Do they know? They've missed you so much! We all have missed you!"

Robin's brown eyes were full of sympathy and understanding. She took my hand in hers and said, "There's no reason to worry anymore about me."

I could feel our hands touching. I could feel her skin, the warmth of

the blood running under it. And as I looked down at our hands, she said, "I'm happy, Starr Ann. Worry no more."

That is when I woke from the dream. I sat in bed laughing and crying, tears rolling down my face. I could still feel Robin's hand in mine. Everything had lifted off my shoulders and for the first time in over a month I felt at peace.

I closed my eyes and whispered, "Thank you, cousin."

As I thought about the words Robin said to me, I understood that she was not speaking of Phoenix, Ariz., but of the phoenix, the legendary bird which burned to ashes, then rose to live again.

My cousin had always reminded me of another bird, the robin, whose song is full of love and kindness. And perhaps this is where her spirit flew — back home to happiness — back home to be one with the phoenix.



THE STAR OF SIERRA LEONE

By Paul Steiner

TO MOST people, Valentine's Day means chocolates but to a diamond-cutter, February 14 marks the day the world's third largest diamond was cut.

According to the American Diamond Industry Association, a non-profit information center representing more than 3000 diamond-cutters and dealers, the stone was found in 1972 in the West African province of Sierra Leone.

At 968.9 carats, the "Star of Sierra Leone" took third place after the "Cullinan," 3106 carats found in 1905, and the "Excelsior," 995.2 carats found in 1893.

The unusually large stone was cut and polished by the firm of Harry Winston, Inc., in 1974, into a 143.2-carat emerald shape, a 53.96-carat pear shape, a 30.15-carat emerald shape and eight other stones.

In the People's Republic of China . . .

CHILDREN WITH EXTRAORDINARY TALENTS

Incredible stories of teleportation, clairvoyance and psychokinesis stir controversy in land dedicated to Marxist materialism.



Wang Bin is one of the most famous practitioners of what the Chinese call "exceptional human functions" (EHF). Researchers say she has telepathic abilities and can read characters using ears and armpits.

By James McClenon

IN RECENT YEARS a number of unusual claims regarding paranormal feats have emerged from the People's Republic of China. During the spring of 1986 I had the opportunity to visit Chinese psi researchers in Lanzhou and Beijing and to discuss their work.

Modern Chinese psi research began with the discovery of a single special subject, Tang Yu. On March 11, 1979, the *Sichuan Daily News* described this 11-year-old's ability to determine the contents of a person's pocket merely by placing his ear against it. He even had proven his ability before the Sichuan Provincial Communist Party Committee. Various biologists and physicists in the People's Republic were startled by this news but considered it possible since they had previously heard stories of a Russian woman who did "sightless reading" using her forehead.

Dr. Chen Shou Liang, director of the Natural Science Division at Beijing University, organized the first research program during the winter of 1979. Thus began the strange saga of "children with extraordinary functions of the human body." Dr. Chen found that many children seemed to be able to read without using their eyes. They described the contents of sealed envelopes using their fingers, palms, ears, foreheads, scalps, feet, abdo-

mens and even buttocks. The rate of success claimed by Dr. Chen's research group was astonishing. In some studies over half the children he tested achieved high scores even though none had previously been considered to have paranormal ability.

The words "extrasensory perception" and "psi" have no direct translation into the Chinese language. We should remember that extrasensory perception (ESP) is a term first used by Dr. J. B. Rhine in the 1930's and that the concept of psi is merely a broadly-defined term which includes both ESP and psychokinesis. Since Chinese researchers have been somewhat isolated from Western influences, they lack



Dr. Zheng Rongliang tested nearly 3000 children for psi. Although results were negative, he remains convinced ESP and psychokinesis exist.



Author (third from left), a University of Maryland Asian scholar, stands with leading figures in Chinese parapsychological research: Lin Shu-Luang (Beijing Normal Institute), Chen Shou-Liang (Beijing University) and Hsu Hung Chang (Institute of High Energy Physics).

our Western orientation toward the paranormal. Marxist ideology stresses that all aspects of life have materialistic explanations.

In 1966 Chairman Mao launched the Cultural Revolution. During this era most scientific research was terminated. Scientists, college professors and other intellectuals were assigned menial tasks in the countryside so that they might gain insights from the peasants. During the Cultural Revolution all religions were condemned and anyone who openly advocated such faiths risked punishment. Belief in what Westerners call psi was considered superstitious.

Although in retrospect most Chinese consider the Cultural Revolution, which ended in 1976, to have been a great blunder, the era has

affected everyone's way of thinking. Most urban Chinese have little understanding of religion and are puzzled as to why Westerners take it seriously. While Western parapsychology has a heritage associated with Spiritualism and "extrasensory" effects, Chinese psi researchers focus on "extraordinary functions of the human body," a term generally shortened in English to "exceptional human functions" (EHF). Chinese scientists assume that EHF has a mechanistic explanation. Many Western skeptics would approve of the typical Chinese psi researcher's attitude. They believe that any "real" phenomenon has a "materialistic" explanation.

Dr. Chen Shou Liang, at Beijing University, devised a standard format for research regarding EHF. A

Chinese character is written on a small sheet of paper. Sometimes the target consists of random scribbling or foreign letters, since then the child would not be misled by previous emotional connection to the writing. The target is wrapped in a larger opaque paper and sealed securely in an envelope. The subject is allowed to hold the envelope to the sensitive part of his body. The character or marking must be transcribed *exactly* by the child for the guess to be considered a success.

Even though this is an incredibly difficult task (Chinese characters and the random markings are both complex), success rates for many children were found to be above 80 percent.

Dr. Zheng Rongliang, chairman of the Department of Biology at Lanzhou University, attempted to replicate Chen's research. In the spring of 1980 he began testing 200 children, aged seven to 13, but found only three who *possibly* had EHF. This surprised him since previous researchers found that a high percentage of the children they tested could demonstrate the effect. In a carefully controlled follow-up series, he supervised 32,840 tests on 2,832 students from all over Lanzhou. None demonstrated EHF.

Chinese newspapers reported the discovery of other children with EHF. Professor Zheng tested one and found that the subject could not demonstrate the effect under

controlled conditions. Since further testing by others in Beijing revealed that some of the children cheated, many scientists began to doubt the reality of the phenomenon.

Various high officials in the Chinese Communist Party criticized the research. Yu Guang Yuan, the Vice-Director of the Chinese Technology and Science Association, became a central figure in this movement toward skepticism. Scientific materialism is a guiding theory within Marxist ideology and belief in "extraordinary functions" constitutes a form of superstition which must be discouraged, these critics argued. Public denunciation of psi research sent shock waves through the Chinese scientific community.

Yet Chinese psi researchers had friends in high places. Qian Xue Sen, a famous Chinese rocket scientist, publicly advocated continued research and, it is said, he gained the support of Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang and Chairman Hu Yao Bang. Various high-level officials have even been given firsthand demonstrations of the children's abilities and have come away convinced that they are real. Although the skeptic Yu Guang Yuan has been personally invited to attend such demonstrations, he has refused.

At present a compromise between those supporting and those opposed to psi research seems to have been reached. The experiments are

allowed to continue as long as psi scientists keep a low profile, drawing less attention to the controversial nature of their endeavor.

* * *

CHINESE society is far freer today than it was during the Cultural Revolution. Some Chinese professors with whom I spoke thought it funny that Communist officials would base scientific funding policies on Marxist ideological grounds rather than research results. Yet the ideological directives have had an effect. "We used to believe in the authenticity of the children with extraordinary functions," one woman told me, "but I don't think people believe in it much anymore."

Lin Shu Huang of the Beijing Normal Institute, Hsu Hung Chang of the Institute of High Energy Physics and Chen Shou Liang of Beijing University are among Beijing scientists actively conducting psi research. Important research is also conducted at the Yunnan University Department of Physics. The Society of Human Body Science, concerned with what Westerners term psi, has sections in more than 10 provinces.

Psi researchers are permitted to conduct experiments but they often find it difficult to get research money. Chinese society consists of many overlapping bureaucracies, many of which have little control over each other. It may be that psi

research is occurring outside the academic framework. I was told that the Chinese army is conducting important experiments but I could learn little else about possible military applications of psi. Such experiments would almost certainly be classified as secret.

Some subjects tested within academia revealed extremely reliable ability. Two sisters in Beijing, Wang Qiang and Wang Bin, for example, demonstrated a success rate of about 90 percent for many years. Beijing scientists continually tightened their security precautions, attempting to preclude the possibility of fraud. At one symposium, sponsored by the Chinese *Journal of Nature* in Shanghai in 1980, a target character was written on a paper which was placed inside a lead container. Then the cap was sealed closed by using high temperature to melt it shut. The child with EMF still was able to duplicate the target character inside.

This experiment has been replicated on various occasions. Yu Rui Hua, Hu Lian, Mou Feng Qin and Xiang Jie have all demonstrated EHF by distinguishing a target object inside a lead tank.

Chinese psychical research also has evolved beyond investigating ESP. Some subjects demonstrate psychokinetic ability. The Chinese scientists' descriptions of these experiments seem too extraordinary to believe; yet, apparently, many

have been conducted carefully. Dr. Lin Shu Huang, of the Beijing Normal Institute, has paid particular attention to devising and controlling experiments that preclude fraud. Some of these experiments have been published in English in the journal *Psi Research*.

One subject, a young worker who is now in the army, can cause objects to teleport from one place to another. The subject focuses his attention on the object (an egg, watch or even a person's identification card, for example). Suddenly the object disappears. Then it is found at another location (inside a drawer, in the hallway or even outside the building). In one experiment the worker caused a small radio transmitter to teleport from one place to another while it broadcast a signal.

Dr. Lin and his colleagues were unable to detect any signals sent between the original point and the transmitter's final location. The transmitter seemingly teleported instantaneously. Even though films have been made of the teleportation process, the mechanics by which objects move remain unknown. In the better-controlled experiments the subject is not allowed to touch the object.

Chinese researchers have a variety of psychokinetic effects to investigate. Some subjects can cause a twig on a tree to break, using their psychokinetic ability. Another boy

psychokinetically broke a needle. When the metal was examined with an electron microscope, the break revealed an anomalous pattern. Later the boy caused the broken pieces to join. No sign of a break could be detected, even when examined with a microscope.

Some subjects apparently have the ability to cause matter to pass through matter. In 1985 a young worker demonstrated this ability to a group of army officers. He shook a sealed bottle containing pills, prepared by Chinese scientists. The pills were seen to fall through the bottom of the container even though there were no holes. This extraordinary function is apparently contagious. After observing the young worker perform this feat, other children with EHF were able to shake bottles sealed by researchers and also cause pills to come out. The seals on the bottles remained intact.

Can we believe these astonishing stories? Magicians point out that these descriptions sound similar to sleight-of-hand tricks. The reader should be warned that my only method of gathering this information was through interviewing Chinese scientists. During my visit to the People's Republic I saw none of these phenomena myself.

One criterion for acceptance of an experimental claim is its degree of replicability. Apparently these experiments are not replicable. A

group of American investigators, including the parapsychologist Dr. Stanley Krippner and the skeptical sociologist Dr. Marcello Truzzi, visited various Chinese research centers in October 1981. In the course of their two weeks' travel they saw no demonstration of EHF under well-controlled conditions. On the other hand, Dr. David Eisenberg, currently at the Harvard Medical School, saw a seemingly convincing demonstration of the Wang sisters' ESP abilities in May 1980. China's psi researchers have not overcome the replicability problems that are inherent within Western parapsychology.

* * *

VARIOUS social similarities are apparent between Chinese scientists' investigation of EHF and Western parapsychological research. During the 1930's Dr. Rhine conducted ESP experiments which achieved results of high statistical significance. This laid the basis for the Western parapsychological paradigm by establishing systematized methods for ESP research. Because he found such a large number of successful subjects, Rhine suggested that everyone might have ESP ability to some degree. His research was rejected by most established scientists when other experimenters were unable to replicate his results. Rhine continued his investigations, extending parapsychology's realm of interest to include the

question of psychokinesis.

Chinese researchers have followed a similar pattern. Their EHF research is equivalent to Rhine's establishment of the ESP paradigm. Like Rhine's psychokinesis studies, their experiments regarding teleportation and matter-passing-through-matter have not contributed to their acceptance by the scientific community. Although like parapsychologists in the West they continue to find that psi occurs, they have not gained full scientific acceptance since they have no "replicable experiment."

Modern Western parapsychologists speak of an "experimenter effect," suggesting that qualities or actions of the researchers influence experimental outcomes. Only experimenters who believe in psi and have proper personality traits, perhaps, can find psi effects within their research data. Some Chinese researchers have developed a similar opinion. In Beijing, Drs. Chen Sou Liang, Lin Shi Huang and Hsu Hung Chang agree that rapport between researcher and subject is particularly important. They feel that this factor explains Dr. Chen's continuing successes with his subjects and Dr. Zheng's failure in Lanzhou.

The Beijing scientists pay particular attention to the psychological state of the children before they begin experiments. Sometimes two or three weeks of interaction with

future subjects is required as a "warm-up" period. Subjects are also not tested immediately upon their arrival at the laboratory. The researchers wait between several minutes to several hours until the child is ready. "This method is suitable in China," Hsu told me. "We hope it will work in America also. The wait is needed to make ordinary children into psychic ones."

Some American researchers have suggested that a few children with EHF should be sent to the United States for testing. When I was in Beijing, I had the chance to talk briefly with the famous subjects Wang Qiang and Wang Bin. No longer children, they are young adults who would gladly come to America if it became possible. Yet, intuitively, I doubt that testing them in the United States would settle much. What we need are American researchers who have the proper personality characteristics to fit the needs of the individuals they test. It is not possible to predict whether American scientists could fully understand the requirements of Chinese subjects as well as Chinese scientists can.

It seems possible that any large nation such as the United States or China contains many persons with "extraordinary functions." Until researchers figure out a way of eliciting psychic effects from these persons in a regular fashion, skeptical scientists will not be convinced.

Perhaps American researchers might learn from the methods used by the Chinese in bringing out these abilities in the laboratory.

The Beijing researchers described a pattern that they believe surrounds the learning of EHF:

(1) The subject must believe that the desired phenomenon is possible.

(2) The subject must believe that his power can do the task and that he will succeed. "We hold meetings to discuss this," Hsu stated. They do not begin the experiment until everyone agrees that this belief has been achieved.

(3) The subject must pay close attention to the target object.

(4) Then he must relax and enter into a special mental state.

(5) Everything happens!

This "system" is equivalent to methods described by Western psychics. It is apparent that training children to have EHF is more of an art than a science. The problem with "replicability" remains.

To say that a phenomenon is not replicable is not to say that it does not occur. Dr. Zheng Rongliang, who tested 2,832 children and obtained no results supporting belief in EHF, should be considered an authority on the conduct of valid experiments. Does he believe that these phenomena occur?

"I stopped doing this kind of research because the ability is not stable and because of the ideological opposition," he told me. "Yet I

still believe that extraordinary functions are real."

I asked him why he held this attitude when his own research failed to demonstrate it as true. He described various incidents he had witnessed.

"Once when I went to the house of Chan Shou Liang, the two sisters Wang Qiang and Wang Bin were there," he said. "I gave them each three tests." Professor Zheng described his method of sealing papers, with random scribbles on them, inside six black plastic boxes. He carefully sealed the boxes with tape and stamped each with his own personal seal while in a separate room from the sisters. During all phases of the experiment the sisters were under close observation. Later, while Zheng watched, the sisters duplicated the random marking inside each of the boxes. All the seals remained intact.

Dr. Zheng also believes that psychokinetic effects can occur. "I was at a meeting in Shanghai," he said. "Five or six girls who had extraordinary functions were holding flowers but there were no blossoms, just buds. They focused their attention on the flowers and the buds opened up and became blossoms.

Then they focused their attention again and the blossoms closed and became buds again. There were about 50 people in the room watching."

Although Dr. Zheng no longer conducts psychical research, other Chinese researchers meet regularly to discuss their experimental results. Like Dr. Zheng, they feel certain that paranormal effects occur but they have not devised a suitable theory to explain their observations. Some suggest that EHF are related to concentrations of *Qi*, the "vital energy" thought necessary for life. *Qi*, a term used frequently in traditional Chinese medicine and martial arts, has yet to be "proven" scientifically, although Chinese scientists have begun experimenting with it. Perhaps because they live in a culture that accepts the notion of *Qi*, some Chinese scientists seem eager to explore new theoretical avenues.

At the same time many psi scientists in China advocate a cautious attitude. "If we have not conducted an experiment ourselves, we cannot be certain about it," Dr. Chen Shou Liang told me. "It is very easy to be fooled or to make mistakes in this field, so we must be careful."



By Lorna Gulston

IT WAS the uniform I noticed first. Perhaps because I served as an officer in the Women's Royal Army Corps in the 1950's and '60's, uniforms always catch my eye. The girl on the platform at London's Charing Cross Underground Station that October evening in 1979 wore the smart khaki service dress and forage cap of the wartime Auxiliary Territorial Service, complete with gas respirator slung from her shoulder.

had done a fine job, I thought.

I didn't like to stare but I couldn't help stealing sideways glances at her. She looked to be in her early 20's, slim, a little above medium height, pale-faced and pretty. She stood motionless, her right hand gripping her respirator strap, gazing straight ahead as if lost in thought. There were few people about — it was after all only half an hour before midnight — and none of them seemed to share my curiosity or acknowledge the presence of someone out of the ordinary. That

The Restless Dead of London

Two incidents — in mundane Charing Cross station and the awesome Tower of London — prove English ghosts have not been laid.

The WRAC discarded khaki decades ago in favor of a chic lovat-green jacket and skirt, so this girl's appearance was unusual, to say the least. She was a well-turned-out soldier, brasses gleaming, brown brogues polished to glassy brilliance, dark hair trimmed to the regulation inch above her collar. An actress, I assumed, homeward bound from filming some TV drama set in the 1940's. Her wardrobe department

didn't surprise me. Londoners are more blasé about the sight of oddly-clad theatrical folk than a fascinated visitor from Belfast like me.

In a few minutes I heard the rumble of the tube train and the hiss of its air brakes as it slowed for the station. As it glided alongside the platform, the ATS girl moved forward and, to my shocked disbelief, walked through its still-closed doors. The train traveled 15 or 20 feet

before stopping and the compartment the figure had entered came directly opposite me. When the doors slid open I dashed inside, scanning every seat. A snoring drunk and a giggling teenaged couple were the only occupants. Bewildered, I asked the couple if they had seen a young woman in khaki enter the car. They blinked at me, shook their heads and giggled harder than ever. My journey took me to the end of the line. I watched at every stop. No ATS girl left the train.

I shied away from accepting that I had seen a ghost; yet it was the only logical explanation. Many servicemen and women were killed in the London blitz. There were casualties too among anti-aircraft and searchlight batteries where all but the gunners were ATS personnel. Could this have been one of them reenacting her last journey through the blacked-out city?

I suppose I could have asked among the station staff whether anyone else had ever seen her, but I was reluctant to lay myself open to the funny looks and behind-hand sniggers of young counter clerks or hard-bitten porters. Although the incident disturbed me deeply, I preferred to write it off as simply a mystery, thankful that the business which had brought me to London would leave no time for brooding.

However tight my schedule, I had promised myself the time for a very special visit I had meant to make for

years. On my final day I headed for the capital's most awesome bastion, the Tower of London. It's easy to imagine the terror and despair of prisoners snatching a last hungry glance at the sun and the sky in the fearful certainty that a wickedly flashing blade would be their only release from those grim and somber walls. I tagged onto a conducted tour, eager to journey physically through the pages of history. As I drank in the guide's graphic descriptions, my mood was serious but far from morbid. I was enjoying the sensation of schoolroom lessons coming vividly to life among stones that had witnessed so much of London's ancient turbulence and suffering.

Lingering over messages scratched into cell walls by hands that might have clasped those of Henry VIII or Elizabeth I, I lost the rest of the group. In pursuit of their distant echoing voices, I found myself in the barren little chamber where Lady Jane Grey spent her final hours. I recalled that she had been born at Bradgate, Leicestershire, in 1537, daughter of Henry Grey, the Marquess of Dorset, and granddaughter of Henry VII. Her parents had taken the then-unprecedented course of educating her like a son so that at an early age she was fluent in Greek and Latin and had a smattering of Hebrew, Chaldean and Arabic. It is not surprising that she was considered an academic wonder.

Despite her parents' obsession with their daughter's mental development, she was harshly disciplined and ultimately love-starved. Teenage marriage to Lord Guildford Dudley on May 21, 1553, and a consequent move to her uncongenial in-laws' home made matters worse. The adolescent bride soon fell ill from stress and unhappiness. It must have seemed to the poor girl that life had little left to throw at her; yet her misfortunes were just beginning.

Sickly King Edward VI, ailing since birth, died on July 6, 1553. Four days later, when Jane was told she was the Queen of England, she fainted. When she revived she begged to be spared the burden of monarchy but there was no escape for her. With a heavy heart she donned the Crown of England, unaware that she would carry its weight for a mere nine days. On July 19, complex and bloody intrigues led to the proclamation of Mary as Queen. Jane was branded a usurper, deposed and committed to the Tower on a trumped-up charge of high treason. On February 12, 1554, she was beheaded within its precincts, an hour after her young husband had met a similar fate on Tower Hill.

Suddenly I felt deathly cold. Goose pimples rose on my skin. Coupled with this eerie chill came a surge of desolation. No spectral form of the tragic girl-Queen appeared to me; yet I sensed her presence in the tiny comfortless room.

The pity and grief I felt grew overwhelming. I thought I heard sobbing and the murmur of a light female voice, but it was so faint that I should be less than objective if I were to swear to it. By now I was shaking, gasping for breath, soaked in sweat. It seemed that a force from beyond the grave was imploring me, four centuries on, to roll back the scroll of history and rewrite the fate of that gentle, innocent 16-year-old pawn of Tudor power politics.

It took an enormous effort of will to wrench myself free and leave the room, but once over the threshold, my grief and hypothermia vanished instantly, as if I had stepped from an arctic blizzard into warm sanctuary. No other area of the profoundly-haunted Tower — indeed, no other haunted spot anywhere — has had such a shattering and dramatic effect on me. Of the many people I've asked, no one who visited Lady Jane Grey's room found it any more traumatic than the rest of the building. Why did that little stone chamber hold a special psychic horror for me?

The paranormal still preyed on my mind the next morning when I boarded the coach to Heathrow Airport. When the white-haired woman sitting beside me began to chat, I couldn't resist a cautious mention of the ATS girl at Charing Cross.

"Of course you saw a ghost, my dear," said my traveling companion

matter-of-factly. "I do frequently. My family and friends humor me but I know they think I'm a bit of a crackpot." She smiled without malice and went on, "Scoff they may,

but all the skeptics in the land won't make the restless dead of London go away."

From my own strange experiences, I could only agree.

COMPUTER ERROR

By George W. Earley

LIKE MANY other states, Connecticut has a variety of legal numbers games with profits going into its tax coffers.

One popular game is "Double Celebration" which commemorates the 350th anniversary of the founding of the colony which, some decades later, became one of America's 13 original states. Double Celebration is an "instant winner" game. You scratch a protective coating from your ticket to learn instantly if you're a winner. Among the attractions of the game is the chance to win \$350 a week for the rest of your life.

A friend of mine — normally not a gambler — decided in a burst of state patriotism to buy a pair of Double Celebration tickets. By mistake, the lottery agent punched two "quick picks" into his computer terminal for the state lottery; the top prize that week was \$7 million. My friend, not the argumentative type, quietly took the two lottery tickets instead of the two Double Celebration tickets he had requested.

No, he didn't win the \$7 million — but he collected \$1,082, thanks to the lottery agent's computer error.



A MIRACULOUS FIND

By Zethu A. Mkhize

ABOUT SIX years ago, my nurse's insignia fell to the floor and the lamp part was broken off. I repaired it with glue and felt that it was secure.

One day when I was at work at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco the lamp piece fell off. I noticed it about an hour before going off duty. I searched the ward and all the places I had been but the piece was nowhere to be found. I asked the cleaning woman to watch for it while sweeping the ward. She

promised that the following morning she would make sure to move all the beds and keep her eyes open for it. She did not find it and I gave up hope of ever finding it.

On Saturday, May 11, 1986, I got up and drove to the supermarket. On returning I took my groceries up to my apartment, then went back to put the car in the garage. When I opened the car door I saw something on the seat. It was the long-lost piece of my badge. I could not believe my eyes.

by Betty Lou White

FATE'S LIGHT SIDE

A Swedish company, BIAB Electronic, has developed a snoring alarm. The size of a soap dish, the device contains a microphone, amplifier and vibrator. It is placed under the mattress and if it registers more than five snores it begins to vibrate. The vibration rouses the snorer for whom a change of position is likely to stop the noise. It is more persistent and much gentler than a swift kick from one's bed-mate.



More than half the college students polled in three states said they are creationists who believe God created Adam and Eve while about one-third believe in extraterrestrials, Bigfoot and Atlantis, according to a report released in November 1986 by University of Texas researchers. The poll results also indicate that students who believe in creationism are less likely to read books, tend to be more politically conservative and have a lower grade point average than students who dispute that God created earth in six days.



Spring, the poets say, is the time for romance. But winter, the scientists say, is when things get really

serious. A study by the National Center for Disease Control shows that more babies are conceived in November and December than any other months. During those months, American couples conceive 630,000 babies — an average of 10,327.87 babies per night.



A teenager who deposited a candy wrapper in an automatic teller machine found his account credited with \$500,000, according to an August 1986 report from Auckland, New Zealand. The press said the 14-year-old boy withdrew only \$750 before telling a teacher what he had done.



In Pontiac, Mich., a woman who found three burglars in her home chastised them so strenuously that they returned her belongings, reinstalled her video-cassette recorder and sat quietly on the couch waiting for police. When Marcia Sparling found a strange car in her driveway in late August 1986, she parked behind it, suspecting her home was being robbed. After the burglars had restored all the loot, they asked Sparling to move her car so that they could drive away. She refused.

CHILDREN EXPERIENCE THE MYSTICAL

Visions of Jesus, psychic trips to heaven and glimpses of other realities occur in states of mind open only to children.

By Samuel Silverstein

TUCKED AWAY in my attic are some notebooks I have kept for over 25 years. These notebooks contain accounts I recorded while I taught public elementary school in Torrington, Conn. The accounts are so amazing that for a long time I was reluctant to tell very many people about them. These religious and psychic experiences described by my students probably far surpass anything that has happened to their parents.

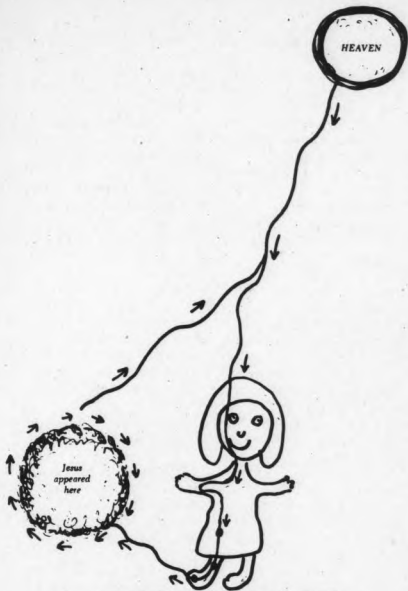
I collected this material in the 1950's. In our school then you could still have the children bow their heads in the morning during the opening exercises and repeat the Lord's Prayer aloud. But the teacher could not discuss anything about the prayer with the children. That was the school system's policy and I respected it.

But there was one time during each week that could be used to question children about prayer and it was already part of the school curriculum. This opening came during the last half hour of school on

Friday, when an art period was scheduled. An old plan book called it a "creative-expression period."

This particular year I was teaching third grade as usual. No art teacher had been hired, so the school principal gave the regular classroom teachers permission to use this Friday period to work with the class in any form of "creative expression" they wished. I thought we would use this time to explore the inner world of the childhood experience. My procedure was adopted from the great mystics of the past.

For solitude the kids would put their heads down on their desks and close their eyes, shutting out their surroundings. There was to be no talking at any time. The kids would do deep breathing exercises to help relax and attune their bodies. For the actual meditation I asked them to concentrate on ideas and concepts they themselves chose. When they began to see pictures in their minds, they were to lift their heads and start to draw.



Shortly after eight-year-old Gail prayed, she had a visionary experience in which a force that felt like electricity descended from heaven and entered her body, then left through her toes. Her drawing illustrates how the "electricity" whirled into a ball in which the figure of Jesus appeared and talked to her. Religious experiences such as these have been told by mystics throughout history and children in our own day.

The children, quiet at all times, showed their drawings to no one else. If there was time, they would write about their experiences as best they could. At the same time I would be moving around in the classroom, glancing quickly here and there at their drawings.

After most of the drawings were completed, I would ask for volunteers to come up to the front of the room and with their drawings in hand they would tell the others what had taken place.

I didn't realize that these brief encounters with the inner world would prompt mystical and psychic experiences in the children. One of the first children to alert me to this possibility was Gail. The incident occurred while I was having the young ones imagine how they would solve some of the problems of our troubled world. I liked asking the children their ideas on life to see what they would say.

Not that I took them seriously at first. After all, they were only young children. Later I changed my mind.

On this particular day the kids were talking and I was listening when, all of a sudden, I heard someone yell, "Ouch!"

I looked over to the side of the room where the shout came from and saw Gail holding her hand on the top of her head. It was she who had called out.

"What's the matter?"

Gail rose to speak, still holding

her hand on her head, a pained look on her face. She managed a little grin along with her pain as she announced, "I hit my head on the ceiling!"

When the other students laughed, Gail stamped her foot on the floor and exclaimed, "I did so!"

I quieted the class and Gail, a little red in the face, sat down in her seat and everybody started another assignment.

A little later I approached Gail and asked her quietly what had happened.

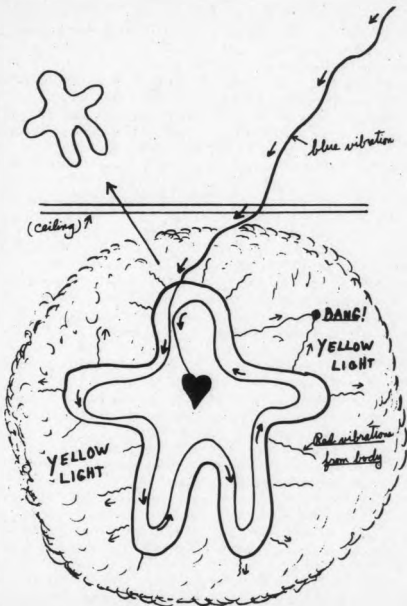
"Well," she whispered, "while everyone else was talking, I put my head down on the desk and rested a little. But pretty soon I started to feel myself getting lighter and lighter and then I saw myself floating up from my seat and floating up toward the ceiling. Then my head hit the ceiling and it hurt. So I hollered, 'Ouch!'"

* * *

CHILDREN are supposed to have good imaginations. But after carefully listening to many children and then digging into numerous books, I realized after a time that many of the things they were talking about were real.

I discovered that what happened to Gail had also happened to others. It is called a variety of names: "out-of-body experience," "astral projection" and others. It is a way of finding the spiritual realm.

In most cases the spiritual body



Jeanne, another of Samuel Silverstein's third-grade students, reported an out-of-body experience which took place in her bedroom after she had said her evening prayers. She felt her spirit body leave her physical body and ascend to the ceiling, from there to wander elsewhere until at last it entered a heavenly realm where Jeanne talked with God.

goes right through any obstacle, such as a ceiling, and then out into the atmosphere. But in Gail's case she couldn't get past the ceiling, where she bumped her head and felt it in her physical body below.

Gail's experience contained few religious overtones. But I gradually learned that the inner world of children is especially tuned to the Divine.

During the last period of the day on Friday, the creative-expression period, Jeanne wanted to report an experience she had the night before while in bed and just after praying. But the period was just about over and there was little time to talk. So Jeanne stayed after all the other children had gone home. She came up to my desk with a paper in her hand.

"I have a drawing I want to show you," Jeanne said, placing it in the middle of my desk for me to see.

I looked at Jeanne's drawing on my desk the way I've looked at hundreds of children's drawings, always trying to figure out what they mean, most of the time with little success. Usually what the children draw is far beyond my understanding. They can see so many things inside their invisible world that, if it were not captured on paper, an episode could be soon forgotten because something else usually moves in to take its place.

But the drawing on the table looked simple enough even for me

to understand. And I asked, as I usually did, "So what happened here?"

"It was last night in bed that it happened," Jeanne said. "I was sort of half awake and half asleep when suddenly up in the sky I was able to see a blue, wavy line come down and it came right toward me and went into my body."

"How did it get into your body?" I asked.

"It came into my head first. Then it went down one side, going into my right arm, then down to my right leg, then over to the other side, to my left foot, up to my left arm and then back up to my head."

"How could you tell what was happening?" I asked.

"I felt the line doing that and I could see it."

"Do you mean you could see the line moving like that inside your body?"

"That's right," Jeanne said.

"How can you see inside your body?"

"I don't know but I did. Then the line went down into my heart. When this happened, red, wavy lines started to come out of my body, all around me. I could see them. Then one red, wavy line banged into another red, wavy line and this made sparks fly and then there was a 'bang,' like an explosion, making a flash of light. This seemed to explode all the other red lines around me and the next thing I

knew, there was a bright yellow light around my whole body!

"There were some red, wavy lines inside my head that were still trying to get out, but the yellow light that was still all around me was pushing in and the red lights couldn't get out. The red lines kept trying and trying to get out but couldn't. The next thing I knew, I was floating toward the ceiling and I looked down and there was my other body — still lying on the bed.

"I seemed to go right through the ceiling, through the roof of the house and out into the night. And I went to different places. The first person I thought of was my friend Carol and suddenly I was there. I saw Carol inside her house but she didn't seem to be able to see me. I tried to get her attention but couldn't. I even went inside her body but she didn't seem to know what was going on. Pretty soon I left and that's all that happened there."

After she moved away from Carol's house, her thoughts returned to her prayer to God and to her wish to visit with Him.

"Just as I had those thoughts," Jeanne said, "my body started moving upward — higher and higher into the sky — and finally I came to a cloud, a shining, yellow cloud. I couldn't see anything because I was right in the middle of the cloud. Then a hand reached down and took my hand. At that instant I felt

a great joy fill my body. I didn't know why until later. The hand led me up two flights of stairs. Then the yellow cloud cleared and I could see a golden castle and it was God who was holding my hand!

"I was able to look around. There were angels all over. Jesus was there and I talked to God just as I'm talking to you. And I talked to Jesus too.

"I could see them both, dressed in beautifully-colored gowns," Jeanne said. "The yellow light that filled heaven, which was below, came from God, whose gown was also gold in color. Jesus and God both had long hair. Jesus had rounded cheeks and looked younger, while God had thin cheeks and looked much older."

That said, Jeanne left to go home.

I sat there alone, not wanting to move, as my mind raced over the things this little girl had just told me. Tears streamed down my face as my thoughts turned to the Bible. I reflected on how it was true that the pure of heart shall be able to see God. A child of only eight surely, I thought, must have a heart that is still pure.

As the Bible says, unless you become converted and be as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

* * *

BOTH OF these stories illustrate the propensity children have for experiencing out-of-body states.

Religious overtones may or may not be a part of these encounters. Other children have told me about visionary experiences similar to those reported by the great mystics of the church. The children often experienced these visionary episodes as direct visitations by angels or other divine ambassadors.

It was Gail who told me how a spiritual force once came down from above, entered her body and changed into a spiritual person from heaven.

During one of these creative-expression periods I asked those children who wanted to do so to bow their heads and recite the Lord's Prayer as they usually did every morning before classtime. They were to watch what, if anything, happened and to write it down or draw a picture of what they saw.

A few children had things to say about the prayer. But I was also watching Gail to see if she would do any talking. Things usually happened to her when she bowed her head to pray.

But Gail did not like to talk in front of the other children because she was quite shy and sometimes the others would laugh a little at the things she said.

Later on, when the rest of the class were working on their drawings, I caught Gail's eye and gave her a signal to come on up to my desk where we could talk somewhat

privately. Gail came up, a drawing in her hand.

She spoke in a low voice, "When I had my hands together and was saying the Lord's Prayer, I suddenly was able to see a line come down from the sky and it came right toward me."

"What kind of line?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said, "but the line came right at me."

Gail did not know it then but the line, when examined closely by the other children, was really a slender tube through which the spiritual fluids flowed.

Gail said the line entered her head and moved along inside her body, first going down one side, then up the other. It circled her body a second time, then went out and up into the air.

"When this happened," she said, "I started to see a white light shining inside my body and it was brightest inside my chest. A wonderful feeling came all over and inside me."

"But something else happened later on. It was after seeing the shining white light inside me that I looked up and could see heaven, high up in the sky. Then heaven seemed to open up and another line started coming down, like before."

"I can't say much about the line except that it had big wiggles in it as it came down and it came right at me again. It came into my head first and then went down my body and it felt like bolts of lightning, like elec-

tricity going through me.

"It stopped inside my body at three different places. It went down as far as my stomach and stopped. Then it went down to my knee and stopped. And then it went into my toes and stopped again.

"And then the line came out of my toes. And as it did, it turned upward and stopped there in front of me!

"The line didn't really stop but went into a spin. It whirled around and around and around, like a big ball of light. And then where the spinning was going on, the figure of a person started to form, the figure of a man. And then I recognized Jesus! I had seen him before and so I knew him.

"We talked awhile. And every word Jesus spoke seemed to go right through me and it made a very happy feeling all over and inside me."

Gail said Jesus left after talking with her, moving back up into the sky along the same vibration that he had come down on and which Gail said she could still see in the sky. The line disappeared behind him as he moved back toward heaven.

How could one know that Gail's experience truly happened?

Many things checked out. The fact that Gail's body turned white, especially in the chest area, is something recorded in books on the Tibetan mystics. The vibration coming down from the sky and then

circling around inside her was frequently mentioned by other children. The whirling action of the spiritual force was another key factor which the other children also mentioned.

When Gail had the conversation with the visionary figure, no one else was able to see her lips move because, as Swedenborg long ago observed, such a conversation takes place with thoughts only.

What Gail told me, along with her drawing to show what took place, amounted to one of the best accounts I heard from children on this point: that a spiritual being is able to flow along a vibration in the form of a spiritual substance and, later on, change back into a spiritual personality, in this case seen as Jesus.

Only a few great men of the past are supposed to have experienced "cosmic consciousness," an experience through which God and man are united, causing the human body to be surrounded by a golden glow and at the same time to become filled with a great joy or ecstasy.

Richard M. Bucke's classic *Cosmic Consciousness* (1901) deals with the lives of St. Augustine, Spinoza, Buddha, Dante, William Blake, Walt Whitman and others who encountered the same thing. Of his own experiences Dr. Bucke wrote, "All at once, without warning, I found myself wrapped in a flame-colored cloud. For an instant I

thought of fire, then next, I knew that the fire was within myself."

Children may experience this bright light around the body oftener than we realize. Jeanne, describing what happened to her as she lay in bed, told of seeing a bright yellow light surrounding her body and she gave a good explanation of how it happened. She saw sparks flying as one vibration touched another vibration. This set off a chain reaction which ignited all the other vibrations and caused the bright yellow glow to form around her whole body.

Another girl, Diane, reported a white light around her body and she experienced the great joy (or ecstasy) that is supposed to accompany it. It happened to her in church, she told me.

After saying a prayer, she felt "light" and suddenly saw herself floating toward the ceiling. Then, from high up in the sky, a red line spiraled down and headed toward her as she floated there.

"The line came in near my shoulder," Diane said, "and it went down to my heart. I could see my heart inside and it was giving off a red light. But when the line touched my heart, my heart turned to a yellow glow and red, wiggly lines started to spread out inside my body, filling it almost full."

The golden glow filled the rest of her body and it also moved out a short distance. Then she realized

that her body was surrounded by the yellow light. A feeling of great happiness swept through her.

As this eight-year-old was telling me of her feelings, her voice lowered to a whisper and stopped. I glanced up from the drawing on my desk to the girl who was staring off into space with a look of angelic joy on her face. After a while she resumed speaking, but I interrupted her to ask why she had lapsed into silence.

"As I was telling you what happened in church," Diane said, "some of that nice feeling came back to me all over again!"

"Was there anything else that you can remember?" I asked, looking back at the drawing. "What are these lines here coming out from your body?"

"Oh, that," she said. "That was a wind of some sort, like air rushing out. But that came afterwards."

"Where did the wind come from?"

"I don't know. But when I felt the happiness go through me, I started to feel a pressure of some kind inside and it was trying to push out of me, if you know what I mean. But it couldn't get out."

"So what happened next?"

"Well, I had that happy feeling inside me for a long time — maybe two hours. Then the wind started to come out, first from my legs. Then it came out of both hands and then my head. After that there wasn't any more wind rushing out. And

the feeling of something inside me trying to push out was gone and the happiness was gone too!"

This brought to an end the cosmic consciousness Diane had experienced in her union with God, with

the golden glow around her body and with the ecstasy she felt.

To a child such things may happen often — but to an adult, perhaps once in a lifetime, perhaps never.



HOW OLD IS THE FISH?

THE BEST WAY to learn the age of a fish is to look in its ear, scientists have learned. A calcium stone called an otolith found inside the ear of a fish yields information about its age and history — like rings in a tree trunk.

Examining an otolith under an electron microscope, researchers not only learn the age of a fish but may also determine the age at which the fish began to reproduce, said John Dean, a marine biology professor at the University of South Carolina.

The new understanding may change wildlife management techniques, Dean said. For example, it's a traditional practice to throw back smaller fish and keep large ones on the theory that the small ones are young and have not begun to reproduce. In the case of marlins, this could be a mistake, otolith studies have shown, because males stop growing when they reach puberty while females do not. Throwing back smaller marlins could result in a preponderance of males.



PECULIAR WEATHER ON THE WAY

ACCORDING to the *Chicago Tribune* reporting in late 1986, the world may be in for another bout of peculiar weather if the behavior of assorted animals on the Galapagos Islands is any sign. On these Pacific islands off the coast of Ecuador, the animals have begun mating months ahead of their usual schedule. This leads naturalists to speculate that another El Nino warming of the equatorial Pacific may be coming.

Land iguanas that usually breed in January got started in Septem-

ber and green sea turtles began breeding early last summer, months ahead of schedule. Scientists speculate that the creatures may be sensitive to minute changes in ocean temperature. El Nino is a Spanish reference to the Christ child because the weather pattern usually asserts itself about Christmastime.

The last time this poorly understood weather pattern appeared, in the 1982-83 season, it caused storms, flooding, drought and mudslides from Australia and Asia to North and South America.

CHANNELING

Voices from Other Worlds

Beings from worlds and dimensions beyond our own speak through an assortment of ordinary folk — but are they to be believed?

By Craig Lee
Reprinted from L.A. Weekly

Part II

CHANNELING — in which disembodied entities claiming to be from the ancient past, other planets or other dimensions speak through entranced persons — is the metaphysical craze of the 1980's. Channeled entities say that each of us creates his own reality, that there is no good or bad and that love is the answer. They also state that both the earth and the people who inhabit it are soon going to experience radical changes.

Channeling enthusiasts include large numbers of educated, professional people who follow the teachings of such beings as Lazaris, who speaks through Jack Pursel, a retired insurance supervisor, and Ramtha, a 35,000-year-old Hindu god-man whose channel is a woman named J. Z. Knight. The Ramtha channeling has sparked controversy because of Ramtha/Knight's pronouncements on sex, AIDS and imminent geological upheaval. Some followers have left the movement disillusioned.

DR. PEEBLES does not inspire fear. If anything, I have to suppress a giggle when the Peebles voice comes bolting out of the body of William Rainan, the psychic who's been channeling the good doctor for years. This is taking place in a setting dramatically different from Lazaris' ballroom full of upwardly mobiles.

We are in a church basement. There are 10 of us sitting in candlelit darkness: a few gays, a few senior citizens and several women. Rainan, besides channeling Peebles, also teaches mediumship; one of his students, Thomas Jacobsen, also channels Peebles. The same spirit energy going through several different channels is not a rare occurrence. You can find at least a dozen Seths out there. Which is probably why popular entities such as Lazaris take great pains to point out they employ only one channel.

William Rainan doesn't seem concerned with copyrighting his entity.

A small, wiry older man, he's bursting with energy as he goes rapidly around the room before the channeling begins, telling people some of his own psychic perceptions about them. He zeroes in on me and describes a certain work condition he sees around me. He is acutely accurate. I decide he's a gifted psychic.

But the channeling lacks the flair or depth of Lazaris'. The presentation is also hard on the senses: Dr. Peebles speaks in a high-pitched, strained squeal, and quite loudly too. Peebles' opening speech is standard New Age metaphysics about self-created realities, pretty surprising for a 17th-Century Scottish doctor. He then takes questions from the audience. As can be expected, many relate to physical infirmities.

I decide to test Dr. Peebles. I tell him that after I eat I feel drowsy and tend to develop an acute dull pain in my left side. It's not exactly true, but it's not a lie, as I've just eaten a big meal and am feeling its effects.

Peebles says, "God bless you," then promptly tells me that I experienced a life change two years ago, a major cyclical change. And he's correct — two years ago I stopped taking drugs, became a vegetarian, was involved in a tumultuous new love affair and received a job promotion. (I don't take my cycle changes lightly!) Peebles advises me about a dietary system I should implement and warns that my intellect is over-

riding what my body is telling me to eat. Then — catching me in my truth-stretching — he says I *don't* have any symptoms of a physical illness, but the potential is there unless I shape up. Dr. Peebles, as they say, read my beads.

* * *

JAMIE SAMS is a different story. There's not much discernment evident at her Burbank channeling session. As I walk into a large, spacious meeting hall, I hear sweeping synthesizers and sweetly keening organ sounds. A young man with a pockmarked face, a semipunk hairdo and a pretty little crystal earring takes my \$15.

I have come to hear Leah from Venus.

Several tables have been set up around the room, offering various accoutrements for the New Age — vitamins, crystals (of course), a selection of used books about "Star People." You can buy some paper 3-D glasses for \$2.00 ("Meditation Glasses — See the Pretty Colors!"). Another table has a display of several pictures of the "energy spot" in New Mexico at which Sams will channel her entities. (Several channels have different entities coming through: Kevin Ryerson has a whole crew of them — from Haitian witch doctors to the biblical John to Nubian slaves — while Sams, not missing a trick, has a Tibetan in addition to her Venusian.) If you want to see Sams channel in New Mexico, it's only

\$600. Later I learn that Sams and her people are eventually planning to move there.

I pick up a copy of Sams' newsletter *Starseed Connection* and read about how we're going to meet our star brothers in 1988, how we are HUM-ans — that's Heavenly Undivided Man, who should be creating "Magic, not tragic!" There's also an advertisement for the Crystal Body Balancing Chair, a rather stiff-looking piece of furniture that contains a huge power crystal under its "star seat." Be careful how long you sit on it, we are warned — the energy is overwhelming! Cost? A mere \$150.

The people assembled here are much more boisterous and excitable than the well-heeled professionals at the Lazaris seminar or the predominantly older, female truth seekers in Dr. Peebles' candle-lit church basement. There are faded flowers from the Hippie and Me generations, commingling with a few younger rock and roll shagheads. There are also a few spry senior citizens and a scuzzy dog named "Starina" pouncing about.

Sams, a rather heavysset woman with catlike eyes and a slight Western drawl, bellows in a husky tone, "Okay, let's start," and takes her place on stage, sitting under a tepee/pyramid shape made of three poles. Two Indian-type masks rest on top.

No matter how silly this is all starting to seem, I suddenly feel a very real presence in the room as

Sams prepares to go into her channeling. It's a sense of an energy, or a spirit, an undefinable something that is passing through everyone, from this somewhat disbelieving reporter to the person aiming the video camera at Sams' face. Whatever it is, though, is dissipated as soon as Leah does her spiel.

According to Leah, the reason that our space probes to Venus revealed no life was that our intentions weren't peaceful — we wanted to set up nuclear warheads on Venus. Consequently, when the spacecraft entered the Venusian atmosphere, the Venusians "loved the thought out of it, causing malfunction." Even had photographs been taken, nothing would have been revealed because Venusian light frequencies travel so fast our "dense" eyes can't see them. I mention density because, according to Leah, the density of Venusians is different from that of earthlings. There are sixth-density, fifth-density and fourth-density beings, while we poor earth slobs are only third-density. But wait, there's hope — we can possibly attain fourth density, in which still-corporeal beings still make use of their mouths to communicate. (They also eat fruits, nuts and vegetables exclusively.)

A tight smile fixed on her face, Sams is motionless during the channeling except for her index fingers, which keep scratching at the palms of her hands in a circular motion.

The Leah voice sounds like a prim little old lady.

Tonight's topic is Egypt. Leah from Venus informs us that Egypt was colonized by people from Sirius, who came to earth by way of Venus. She then informs us that Egyptian life contained what we call Adonai-Elohim energy, the "I AM." This is something you can find in any beginner's occult manuscript. However, it's apparent Leah's audience knows nothing of Theosophy, or the work of England's Golden Dawn Society, or the conjurings of Aleister Crowley. Leah goes on to describe how she was Isis and another (male) Venusian force was Ra; and, moreover, if you take the Is from Isis and the El from Elohim and put Ra in the middle, you get "Is-ra-el!" A couple of people go "Ahhh!" as they are hit with this profound information.

But wait! Another revelatory gem is coming forth. Did you know that Genesis stands for "gene of Isis"? More oohs and aahs from the congregation. Sams/Leah babbles on and on with this revisionist nonsense: how there are cities in Egypt where the priestesses turned into cat people, how the pyramids were created by lasers, how the first letter in America is the same as Atlantis, etc., etc.

Now, I don't care if someone wants to channel metaphysical *Storybook Theater* for people who are tired of watching *The Cosby Show*.

And who knows, maybe Napoleon did see a vision that made him want to shoot the nose off the Sphinx (my favorite bit of the evening). But this night I find it disturbing that when people rise to ask serious questions, Leah toys with them.

One woman, for example, was curious about crystals. Leah related that there are now rare crystals from outer space that can be found in only one mountain range in the Ukraine. The crystals are blue. "Oh, like this blue one I'm wearing?" the woman asks excitedly. "But yours is fastened to a clasp," Leah responds with a tight smile. The woman is confused. What does *that* mean? Is the crystal less functional? "You'll have to go within yourself to find the answer," Leah coyly responds. "What's true for you is true for *you!*"

What is true for me is that I leave during the break, just after Leah tells people they need an extra seed chromosome to be a star-seed person.

* * *

I HAVE now seen several channelers, from the extraordinarily impressive to the sublimely dippy. At this point I have many serious questions, among them whether a channeler controls the energy coming through or alienates it (Did J. Z. Knight lose Ramtha?) or colors its perceptions. What kind of relationship exists between the body and the "spirit"?

"There's a beautiful relationship between the entity and the channel." Margo Chandley is explaining the process to me. She's a bit defensive, a bit wary of this reporter who's come into her house on a Monday night. In one hour Daryl Anka, a 34-year-old special-effects designer, will create his own effective channeling when he allows Beshar, "an entity from the planet Essassani, which forms a triangle with earth and the star Sirius," to come through him.

Chandley has been working for the past four years on a doctoral thesis in "transformational psychology" at the International College in Westwood, Calif. She's studied 50 channelers and worked closely with 15, one of whom, Shawn Randall, now teaches classes in channeling in conjunction with the spirit she (Randall) channels, called Torah. How does Chandley distinguish between someone channeling his/her own subconscious and a person channeling an out-of-the-body energy?

Chandley smiles tightly. "I allow them to tell me. I've set up a seven-step process of how people develop as channels," Chandley continues. "They start at a very young age with an experience — a major metaphysical experience they all seem to have in common. I call that the 'conceptualization phase.'"

Not coincidentally, Chandley says, many channelers have parents who were disbelieving of their initial

spiritual experiences. Many have abusive parents and the experience becomes repressed. As the years go by, the channels are further suppressively conditioned by peers, by the church (many channels come from Catholic backgrounds), by social pressure.

"Most of the time, what happens is our imagination, the magical part of us, gets left out, becomes more deluded, more intellectual," Chandley notes. "And those initial experiences the channels had as children become fuzzy — until they reexperience them. With the channelers I've studied, this usually happens around age 37. Something triggers it back — sometimes a shock, an epileptic fit, a dream — and they go through a separation stage where they realize they want to be channels. They're drawn to the idea. It's a preparation stage.

"They then go back into a gestation stage where they decide they want to continue this relationship between the physical and nonphysical worlds. And when they've finished with the gestation stage, they come into the recognition stage, where they decide to risk it, to go out where there are not a lot of people doing what they do and go into whatever physical manifestation they've chosen to go into, and say what they're bringing through." What follows is the stage of active channeling.

Most of Chandley's original study

cases are vocal channels who cannot remember what they've said or done while in the channeling state. In the last four years, however, she's studied what she describes as a surge of *conscious* voice channels, people aware and learning from the energy they're vocalizing.

Chandley believes that in time there will be a method of proof-testing this energy. She suspects a way will be found to measure it in the part of the brain where the pituitary and pineal glands connect with the brain stem.

"We call it 'kundalini,'" Chandley notes, "but that's yogic and I feel that there's another way that we might approach it. The pineal gland is a much smaller organ than the pituitary at the moment — though in our forebears' times, for example, what we know of the Mayans, the pineal was huge and the pituitary was more of a reproductive organ. If we found a way to reverse and measure them, I'm sure we could find proof of the channeling energy."

Gland talk is popular with channelers. Many of them, for example, talk about the thymus gland, located near the heart. Supposedly the center of youth and love energy, it atrophies in adults.

"We're bringing that back," Chandley calmly asserts. "Because we're going glandular. From what I understand, instead of the organs we've been using, we're going to be making this evolutionary change in our

genetic makeup. The glands are going to become more important and the organs are going to atrophy."

In Chandley's view such common psychological disorders as schizophrenia are really something else. "I no longer believe schizophrenia is a disease at all," Chandley tells me. "We believe that through some kind of shock a person was shocked into another dimension. And because they experience that dimension on such a totally different level, one they aren't familiar with, that to come back through [to the level] is very difficult, so they get stuck."

Chandley looks forward to a time when people can integrate the channeled energy with their own personalities. "As development happens more and more with personalities," she notes, "so does the energy that they're bringing through. So that finally, with the conscious channels, we're going to just be an integrated being. And we're not going to have to go into trance anymore, and we're not going to have to localize that station anymore. . . we're just going to be *us*."

So far only one channel Chandley has studied may have achieved such integration. (She prefers not to say whom.) I'm curious about the channels who might be faking it or experiencing a shift of energy, as some speculate is the case with Ramtha. How do you know what's channeling and what's a performance?

"You go by intuition," Chandley replies, clearly perturbed by the nature of my question. "To start to judge channeling would be doing all this work a disservice. That's what they've done to mediumship in the past. One of the reasons I wanted to do this dissertation was because all I found in the history of mediumship were people trying to prove that mediums were real or prove they were frauds. And I think neither one is important. I think it's a process that we're developing and that we're understanding and experiencing."

* * *

I BEGIN to experience a mind shutoff when Anka begins his channeling in Chandley's living room. Of the channelers I've seen, Anka's method of going into trance is the most dramatic — lots of huffing and puffing, with huge gasps of air and quick neck turns as his head whips back and forth. With his hands forming a triangle or pyramid, Beshar's voice suddenly issues forth, very loud and clear. Compared to the gentle, warm Lazaris or the high-pitched, frenetic-sounding Dr. Peebles, Beshar seems almost stern, pompous. He also uses language that circles around itself:

"Begin to recognize that the idea of integration will, in and of itself, imply less need for the format in which you have chosen to experience limitation, which is the idea of physiological reality. You'll have to find

your physiological reality through a few set parameters, one being the idea of polarity experience, one being the idea of the experience you call linear space time, and in this way you will find you have utilized these tools, utilized these projections, utilized these illusions to give you a sense of the separation you have chosen to experience, to give you a sense of the ability to limit yourselves, to give yourself a sense of the ability to forget that you are the creators of your reality."

In case Beshar's message seems a bit, shall we say, overintellectualized or obscure, you can always buy his *Channeled Dictionary of Metaphysical Terms*. I don't have the inclination. I much prefer the gruff nature of Seth, channeled by Anka's former mediumship teacher, Tom Massarri.

Lazaris followers might find Seth's concepts a bit limited but then all I've attended are Seth's Monday-night discussions in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, instead of his advanced workshop. In a strange way Seth reminds me of leaders of group encounter sessions — he often asks people to stand up and declare their feelings before the crowd. Seth also has stock phrases. "Quit the game" is a popular one. So is "Come alive within your magnificence." Another is "Shift your focus of attention — allow things to be what they want to be."

All Seth evenings with Massarri

as the channeler start the same. After Massarri has gone into trance and has leaned over to turn on his tape recorder, his face contorts into a few grimaces (though nothing like Beshar's huffing and puffing). As with many of the channelers, one gets the sense of the energy traveling up his spine.

"Now I'll say hello!" Seth barks.

"Hello, Seth!" the room shouts back.

"Now how do you feel?"

"Great!"

"Oh, really?" Seth asks skeptically. "Then show some of your aliveness!"

Of course, there's always somebody who doesn't feel all *that* great. Which is why they've come to hear Seth tell them they have total command, or how, when you "play the victim game," you shut down emotionally.

A lady in the front row is definitely playing the victim game tonight. She's feeling rejected. Her husband has left her. Seth asks her how she feels. "I feel like I'm in suspended animation!" Seth tells her that's because she has rejected herself, is punishing herself.

"I want my husband back," the woman cries.

Gently Seth tells the woman to accept herself. She replies that she is racked with pain.

"So what!" shouts Seth. "Put the pain aside. Now, what would you like to place in that emptiness?"

The woman, sounding dead, says she wants to love unconditionally.

"Say it again!" commands Seth forcefully.

"I want to love unconditionally!" Say it again, he tells her. "Stand up and say it! The key to manifesting is allowing and acceptance."

Seth explains that had the woman allowed her husband to have his own feelings . . . but he's interrupted by the woman's crying. Seth asks how she'd like her life to be. Sharing? Trusting? Allowing? Accepting? Then she needs to change her attitude about herself. She needs to give up her self-judgments. The pain is her own creation, he says, her unconsciousness about how to function in life. Seth suggests that perhaps her abandonment might not cause fear — it might bring excitement with the recognition that she's her own God and therefore has *created* this.

Whatever Seth is saying, he's hitting home. The woman stops crying and proclaims that she's starting to see things from different angles. She's opening up. However clinical and pop-psychological this scene reads, an emotional energy and intensity are building in the room between Seth, this woman and the crowd.

"You do not have to be stuck within your emotions. You *are* emotional energy." As he says this, another woman starts to cry, releasing more emotional energy.

Massarri's Seth sessions make for

great therapy, if one chooses to participate. Does it matter whether Massarri channels the "real" Seth, the one that came through Jane Roberts and was recorded in those famous 1970's communications books? Some critics insist it is a different entity through Massarri and it is using the Seth name to gain attention. Others say it's an aspect of a greater consciousness.

I'm content that Massarri/Seth

helped a woman get a handle, however tenuous, on her personal problem tonight and I don't care how he did it. Maybe she couldn't afford to get the same from therapy. And the message is simple: all you need do is give yourself positive attention. The most empowering mantra there is, the Massarri/Seth tells us, is your own name.

This is Part II of a three-part article.



HOW GENES WORK

IN A REPORT in the November 14, 1986, issue of *Science*, researchers outlined how they transferred the light of fireflies into tobacco plants, producing generations of leafy lanterns that glow in the dark. They used gene-splicing technology to insert the gene that produces a glowing enzyme called luciferase into the plant's deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). The scientists said the firefly glow promises to be a valuable research tool for learning how and when different genetic instructions switch on and off in higher organisms and for

tracing the development of plants and animals.

"This is the first time anyone has taken a gene that codes for light production and transferred it into the genetic material of a complex multicellular organism," said Dr. Donald Helinski, a researcher on the project at the University of California-San Diego.

"The use of tobacco plants has no special significance," another researcher, Dr. Stephen Howell, said. "It is a well-understood model for plant scientists, sort of the lab rat of the plant world."



SORE THROAT STOPS SWORD SWALLOWER

JAMES COOK, a 24-year-old sword swallower billed as the "Baron of Blades," cut a two-inch gash in his esophagus in early September 1986 performing his state fair act. The Arlington, Tex., resident was taken to St. Francis Regional Medical Center in Wichita,

Kans., experiencing throat and stomach pains.

The blade that did the damage was a 24-inch samurai sword which Cook was using for the first time. He told Associated Press that he will perform again but not with that decorative sword.

BOOKS

NEWS & REVIEWS

by Jerome Clark



UNWELCOME VISITORS

UF^O ABDUCTEES are doubly victimized: by the phenomenon (extra-terrestrial or otherwise) that assaults them in the first place, then by a society that insures the silence of abductees by ridiculing those few foolhardy enough to admit to such experiences. Sociologist of science Ron Westrum calls UFO abductions "hidden events" — occurrences that, although they are in fact widespread, remain unrecognized because they are unacceptable. A comparable hidden event, Dr. Westrum observes, was child abuse, a social problem whose existence even medical professionals, social workers and law-enforcement officers failed to recognize until finally it was unavoidable.

UFO abductions, it appears, are about to become unavoidable. Until recent years even ufologists thought they were uncommon experiences. Some even thought they were peripheral to the real UFO phenomenon, which in their judgment consisted of nocturnal lights, daylight discs and briefly-glimpsed humanoids. Some — none of them, it must be noted, trained psychologists — speculated that these were extraordinary psychological phenomena, of a kind undocumented in the literature of hallucina-

tions and altered states of consciousness. To debunkers, of course, the fantastic nature of the claims was in itself proof that they were nonsense, although debunkers refrained from investigating these reports themselves and, on the evidence of their writings on the subject, made no serious effort to understand the phenomenon.

Beginning in the late 1970's, several prominent New York psychologists and psychiatrists, who had no previous interest in the UFO phenomenon, became intrigued by these reports and began assisting ufologists Budd Hopkins and Ted Bloecher in their investigations. Some of these professionals conducted the hypnotic probing sometimes necessary to pierce the amnesia covering the period of missing time during which abductions occur; others interviewed abductees and gave them psychological tests. So far they have concluded (their investigation continues) that abductions have no known psychological explanation and that, in the words of Dr. Elizabeth Slater, the typical abductee has the psychological profile of "the rape victim, who has been violated most brutally but somehow becomes tainted by virtue of the crime against her."

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abductees know exactly what Dr. Slater means. I have met individuals whose lives have been shattered by these experiences and who were relieved, often to the point of tears, finally to have someone simply to talk to. In such cases, the Canadian astronomer and UFO researcher John Brent Musgrave has written, the ufologist must be not only an investigator but a "counselor and healer."

Besides being as important a book as has ever been written on the UFO phenomenon, Budd Hopkins' *Intruders* (Random House, New York, N.Y., 1987, 288 pages, \$17.95) is a moving and disturbing account of ordinary human beings fighting to maintain sanity and dignity under almost unimaginable circumstances. Among other things *Intruders* is a book that makes one very much not want to believe in UFOs — because all of us, abductees or not, are involved in this, if it is what it seems to be.

What it seems to be is this: An extraterrestrial civilization very different from ours (and, as Hopkins points out, very different from the ETs imagined in popular culture) is conducting genetic experiments on unwilling human subjects. The purpose is to create a hybrid race with the emotional structure of human beings. The extraterrestrial race, consisting of short, gray-skinned humanoids with large, slanting eyes, is, in the words of one abductee, a psychotherapist, "a culture without touching, feeling, nurturing . . . basically intellectual" — and, oddly, desperately lonely.

Hopkins' book examines a number of abduction accounts, most of them from his and his colleagues' investigations, which substantiate these observations.

The reports are astonishingly consistent, in their descriptions not only of the beings themselves but of their personalities (if that word can be applied to beings who apparently lack a strong sense of individual identity), their behavior and their surgical instruments and procedures (which Hopkins' medical consultants say are exactly appropriate to the tasks being performed).

Hopkins meticulously documents these reports, interviewing all participants and securing confirmatory testimony from outside witnesses. He de-

scribes the attendant physical evidence, which ranges from landing traces to nearly-identical scars on the bodies of abductees. All the while, even as he performs as the objective seeker after truth, he provides support and sympathy to persons badly in need of both.

Of the UFO beings Hopkins writes, "Their psychology, if one can use the term, does not make any more sense to us than human psychology apparently makes to them. The image that remains is one of two different intelligences that lack a common plane of understanding."

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The terror and resentment these beings evoke in abductees seem only to puzzle them, if they respond at all. One abductee wonders, "Why don't you aliens or UFO occupants or whoever you are simply *ask* me to do what you want? Ask my permission. Respect me as a person. Come in through the front door instead of stalking and kidnapping. If you did, I might go with you willingly, especially if you explained to me what it is you wanted." Hopkins remarks that this request, reasonable though it is, "has never been honored . . . perhaps because it has never been understood."

The aliens in *Intruders* have absolutely nothing in common with the kindly ETs of contactee lore and Steven Spielberg films. Particularly upsetting are the abductions of children, sometimes in front of parents who are prevented from doing anything about it. Yet these aliens are not evil; they're just . . . alien. If they really are here, one wishes they would go away. These normal, likable human beings Hopkins describes — like those I and other ufologists have met — do not deserve this. Perhaps, if the abductees are right, they may need us but we certainly do not need them.

Whitley Strieber's *Communion* (Beach Tree Books/William Morrow, New York, N.Y., 1987, 300 pages, \$17.95) is an autobiographical account of the author's abduction experiences. Strieber, a well-known novelist (*Warday*, *Wolfen* and other books), had given the UFO phenomenon little thought until late 1985, when on two occasions he came face to face with "intelligent non-human beings." Soon he came to realize that his wife and young son (especially the latter) were also involved and that,

moreover, his interaction with these entities had really begun much earlier in his life.

This is consistent with the abduction pattern. Usually these events occur not once but at intervals over the course of a life. Strieber's story falls into the abduction pattern in other ways as well.

Strieber has been criticized (by other abductees among others) for rushing into print before he had time to reflect on and absorb the experiences. For most abductees this process takes months, even years.

Still, no writer on the abduction experience — at least any who was writing from firsthand experience — has ever communicated so eloquently the trauma such events cause in the lives of those unfortunate enough to experience them. And to his credit Strieber sought outside assistance in his efforts to make sense of what seemed to be happening to him.

He contacted Budd Hopkins and subsequently underwent psychological and psychiatric examination by mental-health professionals working with Hopkins, including Columbia University's Dr. Donald Klein, director of research at the New York Psychiatric Institute. He also underwent neurological testing and a polygraph examination. All these measurements indicated Strieber is sincere and sane.

What does all this mean? I hope that it does not mean, as a literal interpretation of abductee testimony clearly suggests, that we are at the mercy of a vastly superior race which regards us much as we regard laboratory animals. There is no comfort to be had from the bafflement of psychologists, who presumably recognize delusions when they

see them and who don't think they're seeing them here. If we're lucky, they're wrong.

OTHER REVIEWS

THE PILTDOWN INQUEST by Charles Blinderman, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, N.Y., 1986, 261 pages, \$22.95

Growing up in the 1930's, I heard a lot about "Piltdown man," a fossil fellow with a human skull and the lower jaw of an ape. His remains were found in a gravel pit in rural England just before World War I. Some said Piltdown man was the long-sought "missing link" between ape and man. The place of Piltdown man among our ancestors was debated by sages and layfolk alike for 40 years.

As we all know now, there was no Piltdown man. "He" was a fake. By 1953, as Charles Blinderman recounts in *The Piltdown Inquest*, the skull had been determined to be that of a female not too long dead (a "mere" 1000 years or so) while the jaw was even younger, perhaps from a 19th-Century orangutan.

Once the scientific community agreed that Piltdown man (the male name persists, despite the skull's actual sex) was bogus, the debate turned toward the hoaxer or hoaxers. The subsequent controversy has become a scientific whodunit. Who stashed the skull where Charles Dawson, lawyer by profession and skilled amateur geologist who already had a plant, a mammal and a reptile named after him, had found it?

Dawson did it, some charged, while others pointed accusing fingers at Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, at Pierre Teilhard

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de Chardin (a French Jesuit who later become an internationally-known philosopher), at several of Dawson's friends and acquaintances and at sundry members of the British Museum staff.

Blinderman, adjunct professor of biology at Clark University, opens his "inquest" by establishing that Europe — and especially England — were ripe for a fossil hoax. The Neanderthal man and other fossils had recently been discovered on the continent and the English keenly felt the lack of fossil remains of humans or protohumans on their island. As ludicrous as it may seem to us seven decades later, the discovery of Piltdown man restored England's archaeological standing in the world.

Blinderman moves from the "crime" to the "criminal," meticulously examining the several prime suspects and their alleged motives. Along the way he examines the conclusions of earlier writers and while he is, I think, a bit too cutesy in clearing Conan Doyle by way of a Holmesian pastiche, he does argue effectively for his own choice of hoaxer as well as against the choices of others.

Maps, photographs and sketches serve to illuminate a text sometimes slowed by lapses into dry pedantry. A glossary of scientific terms would have been helpful.

On balance *The Piltdown Inquest* is enjoyable and, given current creationist blatherings, even timely. — *George W. Earley.*

PSIONICS 101 by Charles Cosimano, Llewellyn Publishers, St. Paul, Minn., 1987, 172 pages, \$7.95, paperback.

I admit that I'm biased. When some-

one makes a claim for a method of psychic development, I prefer to see scientific data to back it up — something besides the author's personal experiences, entertaining though they may be. For instance, there have been statistically significant, repeatable experiments linking telepathy to altered states of consciousness such as sensory deprivation.

Psionics 101 claims that a "radionic box," which can be made from a cardboard box, a can, three potentiometers (volume knobs), three calibrated knobs, copper wiring and a plastic plate, will enhance psychic ability. According to the brief history of radionics given in the book, the box has been around, at least in theory, since the turn of the century, with fancy claims made for it in the 1930's.

Since the 1930's, when the Rhines

started using statistics to track down psi, thousands of parapsychological experiments have been conducted. But Charles Cosimano doesn't mention any controlled, quantifiable experiments done with the box or any other gadgets described in the book. And, although modern parapsychology laboratories are happy to employ biofeedback equipment, random-number generators, EEG and polygraph machines, to my knowledge none are currently using the radionic box. I suspect that's because the box doesn't work any better than other focusing devices or other confidence-builders.

Still, my biases notwithstanding, I would hate to stand in the way of science by discouraging potential experimentation, especially since we live in a culture enthusiastic about gadgets. The book is inexpensive and readable and

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contains step-by-step instructions. Its first chapter, on using meditation and visualization techniques to enhance psychic ability, has some good points.

Of course some of Cosimano's suggestions may be questionable — such as going to a lecture and imagining a drill boring into the neck of the person in front of you. If, as he states, "everything which exists in the entire universe is related to everything else," using his "psychic guerilla raids" and "psychic land mines" unethically could, at some point and in some way, backfire on the user. But then again, I might be biased.

— Sally Ann Drucker.

DEATH AND DYING: THE TIBETAN TRADITION edited by Glenn H. Mullin, Arkana, Boston, Mass., 1986, 251 pages, \$7.95, paperback.

How prepared are we for death? Not very well, according to *Death and Dying: The Tibetan Tradition*. Instead of consciously withdrawing our consciousness from the body *before* death to control the inner recesses of the mind, we unwittingly wait until it is too late. When death does come, our attention is overpowered by the hidden karmic forces raging in the unconscious. Consequently we must reincarnate again into a body and reap the fruits of our good and bad actions.

Glenn H. Mullin's new collection of treatises on death from Tibetan Buddhism represents a gallant effort to enlighten Western man on "how to die well." Drawn largely from the writings of the Dalai Lamas, Mullin's work is a worthy successor and companion volume to Evans-Wentz's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

Here in gripping prose and poetry the reader learns what happens to consciousness after death. Entering the "bardo" state (intermediate realm between death and rebirth), the deceased encounters numerous manifestations, all projections of his own mind. Yet, instead of recognizing the illusory nature of these visions as embodiments of one's unfulfilled desires, the neophyte reacts as if they were real. Thus an individual gets lost in a myriad of forms, colors and sounds.

The secret to transcending the bardo realm is to merge with the Clear Void Light, which Buddhists believe to be the true and essential reality. To realize and surrender to this light at death is nearly an impossible task unless one has experienced it *while* living. Thus Tibetan Buddhists firmly believe that it is necessary to "rehearse" for death. Perhaps this is what St. Paul had in mind when he wrote, "I die daily." Mullin's collection provides an ample selection on such practices, including "Longevity Yogas," "The Yoga of Consciousness Transference" and "A Ritual Caring for the Dead." — David Christopher Lane.

ALSO NOTABLE

COSMIC DEBRIS by John G. Burke, University of California Press, Berkeley, Calif., 1987, 445 pages, \$45.00.

This excellent book, subtitled "Meteorites in History," is concerned with the varied ways in which scientists and ordinary folk have responded to the idea of stones falling from the sky. Until the early 19th Century scientists rejected meteorites as an impossibility, even in the face of massive human testimony. Burke describes the exotic folklore of meteorites and examines their relationship to recent scientific controversies about extraterrestrial life. Highly recommended.

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.

CHECK THOSE STATISTICS!

Carol Dow's excellent article "The Supernatural in Brazil" (March 1987 FATE) gives a fascinating glimpse into Latin America, but she errs greatly when she says Brazil has 300 million people. I doubt whether the entire South American continent has that many. The latest world almanac shows Brazil's population as 135 million. — *James R. Deth, Speedway, Ind.*

AUTHOR TALKS BACK

I thank reviewer Daniel Cohen for the first half of his review of my book *The Ghostly Register* which he terms "delightful" and "a lot of fun" ("New Books, News & Reviews," March 1987 FATE).

Possibly I'm being picky about the latter half of the review wherein Cohen takes me to task for what he assumes is my unawareness that some poltergeist activity is caused by living people. Believe me, I know that, as does any person with even passing knowledge of parapsychology.

What really mystifies me is the way Cohen extrapolates this into being "troubled" that I list 16 reputable psy-

chics and parapsychologists — people such as William Roll and organizations such as the American Society for Psychological Research — as aids to people who could use help with paranormal events. He seems to be accusing "the folks on [my] list" of wandering around "muttering about energy," which is not what they do.

Cohen ends his review with the admonition: "Writers of books of this type should realize it's not all fun and games." Had he read the book carefully he might have noted that some of the entities described are rather malevolent, anything but "fun and games." — *Arthur Myers, Weston, Mass.*

LET THE FACTS LEAD

It is a minor tragedy that letter-writer Harold B. Nelson (March 1987 FATE) has engaged in "three years of dedicated study of the Shroud of Turin" with so little to show for it. Perhaps he has been reading the wrong books.

Had he read mine (*Inquest on the Shroud of Turin*, Prometheus, 1983), he would have learned of the wealth of evidence supporting the 14th-Century bishop's report that the forger had con-

fessed. The evidence includes the following: some 50 documents amassed by the Catholic historian Cyr Ulysse Chevalier; the bishop's stated willingness "to supply all information" to support his claims, contrasted with the refusal of the shroud's owners to say how they obtained it (a silence that even Ian Wilson concedes implies guilt); the Pope's decision, after hearing the evidence, that the shroud was an artist's representation; and much additional evidence including the fact that for some 1350 years prior to the reported confession the supposed "relic" was unknown. When confronted with a remarkable item with a suspicious provenance, only the gullible will ignore the lessons of the "Vinland Map" and the "Hitler Diaries."

What Nelson heralds as a "scientific achievement" is Joseph Kohlbeck and Sister Damian's hot-corpse theory: the notion that "a great deal of body heat" supposedly "produced by crucifixion" and combined "with the mildly alkaline content of the Jerusalem limestone environment of the shroud might well have resulted in a mercerization process" that yellowed the fibers to produce the image. They use such words as "might" and "strongly suggests" because — as they concede — "we cannot exclude all other possibilities." In fact, their experiment with a three-foot-tall, hot-water-filled mannequin was admittedly "suggestive only." Indeed, the resulting image showed just chest and back; it went unpublished with the lame comment: "Whether or not we can prove that the heat of the body and mercerization will cause an image like that on the shroud, this is surely a naturally produced possibility that must be considered by all

who are studying this puzzling relic."

Beyond such farfetched hypotheses and desperate rationalizations — like Nelson's — to account for the pigments, there is a technique that is demonstrably capable of producing shroudlike images. It is an artistic one (see *Inquest*, Chapter 9) consistent with the additional evidence of artistry: the forger's confession, the still-red "blood," the presence of pigments, the resemblance of the figure to medieval depictions of Jesus and so on.

Whatever is meant by "dedicated study," the appreciation of such coherent evidence is facilitated by an investigative attitude rather than a dogmatic one. The difference — as I explained in my review of Wilson's book — is between letting facts lead to a solution and starting with the desired answer. —Joe Nickell, Lexington, Ky.

Harold B. Nelson's letter concerning the Shroud of Turin shows that he is a "true believer" in its authenticity. His belief may be only natural if one notices that his home is in Corpus Christi, Tex.

Did you hear the one about the newspaper reporter in that city who was called "The Shroud" because he covered the body of Christ? — Charles G. Ferguson, Colonial Heights, Va.

LOVE BY EXAMPLE

As a former fundamentalist Christian of the evangelical variety, I was interested in W. Ritchie Benedict's "A Nice Place to Visit" (November 1986 FATE) about *U. S. Catholic* magazine's survey of 283 people on the subject of heaven and hell.

Apparently many persons still confuse hell with the afterlife. These are two

quite different matters. Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is within, that it's a state of consciousness rather than a place of eternal chocolate-eating, golf-playing or whatever. Jesus, who has been made a cult figure by Christendom, never asked anyone to worship Him. He didn't claim to be *the* son but *a* son of God the Father (as the life force that pervades all is symbolically termed).

We are all sons (or manifestations) of God and are inherently equal to Jesus and to one another. Jesus was trying to direct people toward getting in touch with the divine essence, the Christ-self which every person's spirit is. He never tried to manipulate the emotions with any lurid hell mythology. He sought simply to teach love by example. — *Robert S. Smith, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.*

TALE FROM THE PHILIPPINES

"Tales of Men With Tails" (February 1987 FATE) prompts me to write. Many Filipinos of the Igarot tribe live here in the Hawaiian Islands. All of the females but not the males of this tribe are born with tails.

I have seen them. The tail, if straightened out, looks to be six to eight inches long. As it is curled up in a flat coil, it doesn't seem to bother the person when seated.

These days if the child is born in a maternity unit, the tail in most cases is surgically removed soon after birth. In home deliveries the tail is left alone and there are many of these tailed persons here in the islands.

This information can be confirmed by nearly any doctor of anthropology, especially one acquainted with this area. — *S. W., Honolulu, Hawaii.*

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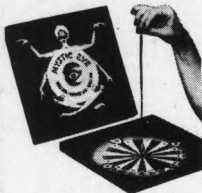


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PSYCHIC ENIGMA

I appreciate Curtis Fuller's fair-minded update of Uri Geller's recent activities documented in Guy Playfair's book *The Geller Effect* ("I See by the Papers," March 1987 FATE). Because of this book Uri has reappeared in the public consciousness, and all the old debates and half-baked theories about him have surfaced anew.

Uri enjoys the mystery around him, even encourages it. When I last visited him in England, he took me around his enormous manor home on the Thames and showed me the special kitchens, the pool and tennis courts and other living accommodations. He didn't act like a man who has hoodwinked the world but one who is truly surprised at what has happened to him. He has become a millionaire and it's puzzling and wonderful. He's like a little boy who expected a toy horse and on Christmas morning finds a real live pony. He still doesn't know where his talents come from.

While the Amazing Randi denounces Uri and CSICOP members trash him every chance they get, the fact remains that Uri *does* produce. Large corporations come to him to locate gold mines, find oil deposits and search for iron ore. Not only do they pay him lavishly when he succeeds, they recommend him to other corporations, even other nations.

Whatever Uri is doing he must be doing it right. I don't see anyone on the CSICOP staff getting rich from doing positive psychic work. Negativity catches flies, not success.

Guy Playfair's book is the best and most seriously researched book on Uri yet published. It will remain the standard reference work for many years to come and Uri Geller will remain the most

fascinating psychic enigma of the 20th Century. — *David St. Clair, Warren, Ohio.*

Curtis Fuller is too generous in ascribing the authorship of *The Geller Effect* to me. Geller and I were coauthors, the greater part of the book written by him.

On the question of Uri and the magicians, I want to pass on to FATE readers a recent statement by David Berglas who is president of the Occult Committee of the Magic Circle, a former president of the British Ring of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and acting chairman of the British branch of the Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. In an article in *Psychic News*, he had this to say:

"If [Geller] is a genuine psychic and genuinely does what he claims to do by the methods he claims to use, then he is the only person in the world who can do it. He is the only one to have demonstrated consistently. He is a phenomenon and we must respect that.

"If on the other hand he is a magician or a trickster or a con man, he is also phenomenal — the best there has ever been. So, whichever way you want to look at him, we must respect him as one or the other."

We must also respect David Berglas for his common sense and good manners. — *Guy Lyon Playfair, London, England.*

WAR OF THE WORDS

I think a misprint got past the editors in "The Astronomer and the Flying Saucer From Mars" (March 1987 FATE).

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REPORT FROM THE READERS

(Continued from page 116)

brain activity. And this state must be permanent to be defined as true death. Are we to suppose that if medical technicians substitute mechanical functions for the natural ones that the person is less dead? Or if an extended time elapsed with this mechanical support, does a later reactivation of the natural functions prove that the person did not die after all? The key here is whether or not the state must be permanent to be defined as death. — *Robert Griffis, Billerica, Mass.*

STONE-AGE THINKING

I don't know what papers Curtis Fuller is reading (September 1986 FATE) but here in the heart of the Space Coast there has been no "barrage of propaganda diverting our attention to the planets" and away from the Challenger disaster and the loss of two Titans and a Delta rocket. Nor is manned spaceflight, as opposed to unmanned expendable rockets, a "science-fiction" outlook, according to Fuller's interpretation of physicist-astronomer James Van Allen's opinions.

It is true that many simple communications and weather satellites can be launched on unmanned rockets, as President Reagan has now directed NASA to do, but we couldn't have done it earlier because this same President Reagan had previously crippled NASA's budget to the point where no expendable rockets could be built. But to say that manned flights cannot accomplish more than unmanned probes is pure idiocy. All the experiments that we are counting on to produce advances in medicine, manufactur-

ing and scientific technology are absolutely dependent on the presence of trained experimenters.

Sure, we need more unmanned rockets — but to back out of manned space exploration now is the first step back to the Stone Age. — *Dian L. Hardison, Titusville, Fla.*

WHAT THE ASTRONAUT SAW

In the July 1986 issue of *FATE*, a letter written by Alta Thorpe of Culver City, Calif., comments on the astronauts' conversation that was heard on ham radio but was not released to the public at large. It brings to mind the day we sat in our living room and watched the television coverage of the astronauts on the moon.

One of them hopped over to a ledge (possibly the lip of a crater) and looked to the other side. He exclaimed, "My Lord, look over yonder" or "down there" — something like that. I waited breathlessly for the camera to zoom in to show what he was seeing but it did not. The camera quickly turned to someone else and that was it.

I have never heard another word about this and have wondered to this day what the astronaut saw when he looked over that ledge. I'll bet he remembers. — *Shirley Crouch, Winters, Tex.*

* * *

What are the "authentic sources" Alta Thorpe would like to have us think support the views of Jack Swaney and Felix Bach as to objects on the moon? She cites a report in a book by one "Malcolm X" of a transmission by the Apollo 11 astronauts, a report that is at best secondhand and apparently undocumented.

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Why haven't Collins, Armstrong and Aldrin — all long since in the private sector and often outspoken about NASA — confirmed this alleged transmission about other spacecraft on the moon? If NASA has never published it, isn't it likely that it may never have taken place outside the imaginations of those who have their own peculiar ideas to support?

Like so many similar notions, this one ultimately depends on the existence of a vast conspiracy. And like most such conspiracy theories, it rapidly becomes insupportably absurd if given even a little thought. — *Ron Miller, Fredericksburg, Va.*

CONFISCATED FILM

The controversy over and different interpretations of UFO phenomena continue. May I add one of my own experiences?

While I was stationed at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Alaska, in the mid-1960's, I happened to meet a fellow airman at the base photo shop. He had an enlarged photo of a UFO. It was the typical saucer shape like those seen in the Adamski books — except for one thing: While the print was grainy, the underside of the UFO was incredibly detailed. It showed thin fins in apparently two levels fanning out from the center. I have a fair collection of UFO literature but I have never seen any photo with such detail.

The picture was supposedly made in the month of January in Alaska during the winter military exercises. During

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these maneuvers we always heard of many sightings by commercial and military pilots and radar operators. Yet I never saw a UFO.

I arranged with the airman to get a print of the photo the next time we met in the photo shop. I was not surprised when I heard that officials had come and confiscated the negative and all the prints. The airman was promised the material would be returned within three weeks but he never saw any of the photographs again. — *K. Smarsch, Bethlehem, Pa.*

APPEALS

I would like to hear from people who have had personal experiences with psychic surgeons of the Philippines. — *Rose Kay, P.O. Box 516, Minneapolis, Minn. 55440.*

Does Anton LaVey's "American Church of Satan" still exist? Perhaps a FATE reader knows of this or a similar group. — *Pete Fox, P. O. Box 387, Kincaid, Ill. 62540.*

I am a new automatic-writer/trance-medium with spirit guidance looking for others who can help me understand and share my metaphysical experiences. I seek to communicate with anyone who has similar interests. — *Dorian, c/o Mon Family, HCR 01, Box 64, Malone, N.Y. 12953.*

I am a serious and sincere student of metaphysics and the occult trying to locate the current address of Raymond Buckland's "Seminary," formerly in Charlottesville, Va. — *Fred Longhenry, Jr., P. O. Box 2184, Westminster, Md. 21157.*

This space contributed
as a public service.

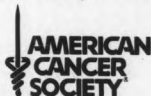
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∞ Dying children learn that they will survive after death, according to research conducted by Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. Such children develop unusual psychic abilities in the last days, she says.

∞ Who were the ancient people who lived in the barren, hilly land of Chile's great sunbaked Atacama Desert? Archaeologists are learning about them from mummies churned up by a ditch-digging machine in 1983 — mummies that are older than Egypt's.



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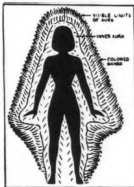


Diagram of normal aura based on sketch by Walter J. Kilner, M.D.

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