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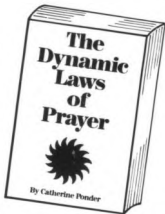
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## FROM THE EDITOR

In the late 1960's the U.S. Air Force entered into a contract with the University of Colorado to conduct a definitive study of the UFO phenomenon. The project, headed by physicist Edward Condon, proved a fiasco. From the beginning it was stacked with scoffers (Condon barely hid his contempt even as he straightfacedly assured reporters and ufologists that the investigation would be conducted objectively) and in the end it produced a report whose introduction rejected UFOs as unworthy of further study—even though the rest of the book was full of evidential, puzzling UFO cases. In short, Condon had succeeded in persuading inattentive media of the worthlessness of UFO evidence, without dealing with the persistently inexplicable nature of that evidence. As Dean I. Radin shows in "Parapsychology Bush-whacked," the story was repeated recently when psi debunkers under government contract came to predictably negative conclusions which begged practically every question they asked. And your tax dollars paid for it.

Stephanie Fox and Michael Goss consider two examples of modern hysteria, one ("The Great Oregon Witch Hunt") destructive, the other ("The Serpent in the Department Store") merely silly — at least on the surface. Debbi Dickinson recounts a frightening encounter with what parapsychologist John Beloff has called "extreme phenomena" — things that "seem to go far beyond anything in our own experience . . . and yet we see no easy way of dismissing them as sheer fantasy." In Dickinson's case the "extreme phenomenon" was a voice on a tape with a decidedly disturbing message . . . Enjoy the issue!

*Jerome Clark*

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# I SEE BY THE PAPERS

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by Curtis Fuller



## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*Even the idea of miracle is anathema to most scientists...any event that cannot be explained by currently understood natural law is assumed to be unreal by the scientific establishment . . . . There is a tendency among psychotherapists to believe that any passionate belief in God is pathological.*

—M. Scott Peck, M.D.  
*The Road Less Traveled*

**I** COME NOW to a paramount problem of parapsychology I have never heard addressed in exactly this way. What is "normal?" What is not? Who is "abnormal?" Who is not? Who determines normality and abnormality in the realm of psychic phenomena and psychic behavior? In the vernacular, who are the kooks? Who are not and who says so?

In a way this discussion is a continuation of last month's remarks on the number of persons who experience psychic phenomena. But today I want to relate normality and abnormality to what the psychiatric

community believes about the psychic. The controversy raises serious doubts as to whether the psychiatrists or the average person who has a psychic experience ought to end up in the booby hatch. It appears to me that the psychiatrists are the likely candidates.

In January 1988 we published the observations of R.D. Laing, himself a famous and controversial psychiatrist, criticizing the American Psychiatric Association and its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual which views psychic experiences as symptomatic of mental disorder. The manual is familiarly known as DSM-3 (3 for third edition) which is a sort of law book for sanity—according to the APA.

Laing says DSM-3 outlaws any unusual experience—clairvoyance, telepathy, the sixth sense, reading another's feelings. Laing agrees that the psychiatric establishment is calling such experiences as clairvoyance signs of mental disorder.

In Laing's view such definitions are purely political decisions having to do with the prejudices and ignor-



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ance of the decision makers. "One reason . . . why a lot of people think [these prejudices] have evaporated is that the system eliminates dissidents from its professional ranks. By the time medical students have reached their early 30's, if they're dissident, they've probably been eliminated by a self-reflecting system as part of the whole mind-police business," Laing states.

He feels people are entitled to have transpersonal experiences without fear of censorship: "People are frightened of the possibilities of their own minds. I call this *psychophobia*. There's a psychophobic trend in our culture that is particularly common among people who are motivated by fear of experiential anarchy and confusion. And these people are the ones who dedicate themselves to policing other people's experiences and minds."



**PSYCHIATRIC POLITICS**

**WE** MUST understand that the definitions in DSM-3 are the result of political decisions. They are made by the "in" people looking at the "outs" and saying, "Your experiences are abnormal. The story you tell is clearly the result of a mental disorder. You are not in touch with reality."

The problem is there are more of us than there are of them. A narrow spectrum of professionals is concluding that they alone are "nor-

mal" and the rest of us—a majority of American citizens—are "abnormal."

I would like to repeat some of the information published last month to support these statements. The National Opinion Research Council of the University of Chicago, in studies carried out in 1973 and 1984, discovered that two-thirds of Americans have experienced ESP and that nearly half believe they have been in contact with someone who had died—usually a spouse or a sibling.

The facts in this study are worth repeating. The 1973 survey showed that one-third of Americans have had transcendental experiences—experiences that "lifted them out of

themselves"—and that one-seventh of them had been literally "bathed in light." An account of a similar experience is related by the Apostle Paul in the New Testament.

So we are entitled to ask who and what is normal and what is abnormal.

Can the authors of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual claim to be "normal" when two-thirds of the American public is prepared to vote against them?

This is a loaded question because in a sense they already have made this ludicrous claim. Father Andrew Greeley, Ph.D., a University of Arizona sociologist who conducted the 1984 survey with colleagues from the University of Chicago, describes

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the people who have experienced ESP:

They are ordinary Americans somewhat above average in education and intelligence and somewhat less than average when it comes to formal religious involvement. Using a standard measure of the healthy personality, the Affect Balance Scale, Greeley states that "the mystics scored at the top. Normal Bradburn, the University of Chicago psychologist who developed the scale, said no other factor had ever correlated so highly."

This statement ought to settle the question of who is normal and who is not. Obviously DSM-3 needs revision. And so do APA attitudes.



### DATING THE SHROUD

**N**O SOONER had the Vatican-approved commission of scientists from Britain, Switzerland and the United States decided that the Shroud of Turin is not the burial cloth of Jesus than dissident voices were heard. The Rev. Adam Otterbein, founder of the National Holy Shroud Guild, is one of those who still believe.

"Carbon 14 testing isn't everything," said Father Otterbein, a Catholic priest. "And it isn't easily reconciled with considerable other information about the shroud. We want further study."

The announcement that the 14-foot-strip of linen was created some-

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time between 1260 and 1390 was made by Anastasio Cardinal Ballestrero, Archbishop of Turin, who said the scientists were 95 percent sure of the accuracy of the tests. Because of Church sanction, Father Otterbein hastened to state that the Church did not view the findings as in any way heretical. "There's nothing involved here that you have to believe in to be a good Christian," he said.

"We want everything about the techniques to be published and evaluated. We want further study. We want to weigh all the evidence."



**STILL A MYSTERY**

**T**HERE IS no doubt, however, that the shroud represents a mystery that even the scientists who issued the report cannot explain. They agree that the faint yellowish image on the ancient cloth is that of a scourged and crucified man and that it must have been created between 1260 and 1390. Beyond that, according to Kenneth R. Clark of the *Chicago Tribune*, it poses puzzling questions. Records show the shroud first appeared in France in the 1350's and has been in Turin since 1578. "If the shroud actually is the work of some unknown Renaissance artist, he has had no peer before or since," wrote Clark. In 1978 the team of American scientists who examined the shroud came up with a "staggering profile" of what the artist would have had to

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accomplish, Clark wrote.

"One thing was certain. The image could not have been that of a 14th Century corpse somehow transferred to the linen cloth. There was no trace of the chemicals that would have been associated with decomposition and the figure was decidedly that of a man who had been crucified—a form of capital punishment unique to the Romans and unused after the fall of their empire. If an artist created the shroud, he did it with traces of blood, but no paint, scorching it in intricate detail on the surface of the cloth.

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Catholic believers, including the Reverend Otterbein and Vatican scientific adviser Luigi Gonella, suggested that it could have been created as an icon. Dr. Harry Gove, a physicist at the University of Rochester, suggested that as an icon—an artistic representation—"that would make it the most important piece of Christian art the world has ever known. That's no mean feat. They should let the art experts look at it now. To pin down who actually did it and how it was done would be a remarkable thing."



### LOST GENIUS

**WE** ARE saddened to report the death of Luis Alvarez, Nobel

prize-winning physicist from the University of California at Berkeley, whose name has often appeared in these pages. Alvarez has a remarkable record. He worked on the atomic bomb at Los Alamos and even accompanied it to Japan in a following plane to measure the yield by observing the blast waves.

FATE readers will remember him best as author, with his son Walter, of the theory that the dinosaurs became extinct as a result of a giant meteorite's or comet's striking the earth. His curiosity was insatiable. At one time he searched for hidden chambers in Chefred's pyramid at Giza, measuring the absorption of cosmic ray muons at ground level. He failed to detect anything.

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I knew Alvarez during and following World War II when he developed a blind landing system called Ground Control Approach (GCA), and I later made such a blind flight and blind landing in an AAF plane out of Wright Field to Andrews Air Force Base. After the war, with other staff members of *Flying Magazine* I worked with Alvarez on a publicity campaign to discredit the installation of the civilian omni directional plane guidance system on the grounds that it was neither advanced enough nor flexible enough to manage the anticipated air traffic of the future.

Because of his work on GCA Luis was awarded the prestigious Collier Trophy. We had photographs of the trophy resting, as I recall, on a dining room table. It was so huge that it practically filled the room in the Alvarezes' modest home.



R.I.P.

ORDINARILY when poltergeists appear in a house there is widespread publicity and a multiplicity of oddballs show up with spells, prayer vigils, witchbanes and other antiparanormal gadgetry and ideas.

This did not happen at the attractive bilevel home in the Orland Hills area southwest of Chicago. Bob and Karen Gallo bought the house in 1981 and moved out, with their 14-year-old daughter and seven-year-

old son, on April 12, 1988. They vacated the house on the advice of local police and fire officials after the third fire broke out there within a single month. On October 13, with the agreement of the Travelers Insurance Co., the house was bulldozed into rubble and the hole where it had stood was filled in.

This case represents one of the best documented and most fascinating apparent poltergeist episodes we have ever encountered. And yet it has gone almost unreported because of the extreme reticence of the Gallo family. The *Chicago Tribune* has documented the matter somewhat sketchily, always apparently handicapped by Karen Gallo's horror of anything psychic.

David Elsner wrote in the *Tribune*. "All of this talk about a haunted house is ridiculous," a distraught Karen Gallo said Friday, [October 14] as she watched workers fill the hole in Orland Hills where an attractive bilevel had stood only 24 hours before.

"This has taken a tremendous emotional toll on my family. And all I know is that I've lost my home for a reason no one can explain. I don't know if we'll ever find the answer."



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**T**HE GALLOS, nevertheless, abandoned the home on April 12, 1988, on the advice of local

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police and fire officials a few days after the third fire in a month. Arson investigators Terry Hyland and Steve Smith, of the Orland Fire Protection District, studied the problems in the house for 7½ months. They said they had ruled out “everything” that would explain the home’s problems, including arson, pranks, natural gas, methane gas, sewer gas and a faulty electrical system. Two soil borings made from 20 feet below the foundation showed only that the house rested on heavy clay.

Once a blue flame an inch in diameter shot out of a wall socket for more than 30 seconds and the outlet still worked, Elsner discovered. Two police officers witnessed that incident. Another time a similar flame set fire to a mattress while investigators were outside.

Steve Smith, one of the arson investigators, reported, “I was there one night when the room filled with a white haze. I couldn’t see my hand in front of my face. There was a strong sulphur smell and my eyes were burning. I took a sample of the vapor in a vacuum canister. We came up with nothing.”

*Nothing* was the main result of the 7½-month investigation. Packer Engineering, Inc., of Naperville, Ill., was hired by the Travelers Insurance Company to investigate. It took infrared heat photographs to test for heat differentials in the house and found none.

Smith and Hyland used a fog

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Maria Duval is the one who forecast the exact exchange rate of the US dollar long in advance of the financial experts.

Maria Duval is the only one of all the famous seers who told Brigitte Bardot exactly where to find Neri, the famous actress' lost dog.

Maria Duval is the only medium to be received at the Vatican by Pope John Paul II. The entire press and TV covered this unique event.

**Here is what Jean-Jacques, the great occult specialist has written about Maria Duval.**

Mary "Lise" having psychic powers and the ability to predict the future... but very few see clearly. Maria Duval is one of those extremely rare individuals. In a recent tele-

vised interview before thousands of viewers, in less than 5 minutes, Maria Duval was able to locate two missing persons.

Her powers exceed the imagination. She can tell you of your wishes regarding a love relationship, your financial situation, future events, or any matter of supreme importance to you. She can even see which numbers will win the lottery. She has this power from her uncle, Father Carmine Vassari. He was considered a saint and worked wonders as a curate at Pietrasanta, a little Italian village.

**The police regularly ask Maria Duval for help.**

On September 18, 1986, a 79-year old man vanished. The police and fire department searched everywhere for 72 hours. Not a trace.

Then a phone call was made to Maria Duval. Without even being present in the area, after concentrating just a few minutes, she declared "He is alive. He is cold. He is hurt on his left side. Here is where he is."

Then she pinpointed the exact spot where the missing man could be found. The police went there at once. They found the injured man exhausted. That day Maria Duval saved another life.

This is not an isolated case. Maria Duval has found 19 missing persons. Her record is 90%.

**How can all this be explained?**

Yes, how can anyone explain exactly how Maria Duval helps men and women win at games of chance, recover lost loves, find happiness, destroy enemies, find pills, and so much more?

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If you have not had a happy life up to now, answer the questions below so that I can help you fulfill your dreams and wishes as I have done for hundreds of others like you. Do you have the feeling that those around you do not understand you? That you are not appreciated for your true worth?

Yes  No  
 Do you urgently need money? If so, circle the amount you need: \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000 or how much? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that you were born under an unlucky star?  Yes  No

Have you heard of people who have a sixth sense? Do you often feel that you have it?  Yes  No

Do you feel that someone has cast a spell upon you?  Yes  No

Yes, I would like you to grant one of my wishes.

I have written my wish on the enclosed sheet.

I am also attaching my photograph which I ask you to return to me together with your reply about my wish.

I understand that this offer is entirely free. There is nothing to pay, either before or afterwards. I am under no obligation to buy anything. Maria Duval will also send me her famous medium talisman absolutely free.

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machine trying to trace air currents between floors with negative results. They spent considerable time in the house; sometimes they stayed all night. They even had their own blood analyzed to see if it contained anything unusual. Nothing was found.



### NO MYSTERY?

“WE REALLY don't think there was any mystery,” Joe Skubicz, associate manager of Travelers claims office in Naperville, told Elsner. “It was probably a gas leak.”

Nonetheless, Travelers paid for the house which was destroyed. The recommendation to demolish it was made by both police and fire departments after 26 separate incidents, 11 of them witnessed by either police or fire inspectors.

Karen Gallo remained extremely upset and refused even to consider the possibility of a paranormal explanation. “There were never any garbage cans flying around or anything like that,” she told Elsner. “This haunted house stuff is doing a lot of harm to my family.”

Fire investigator Hyland said, “There is no logical explanation. Thank God this is the end of it.”



### GOOD-BYE, ALEXANDRIA

THE MELTING polar ice caps and the earth's general warming

trend already underway is posing more than a theoretical threat to the coastal cities of the world. Venice and the ancient Egyptian city of Alexandria have been named the first casualties of the rising sea levels. In the first decades of the next century, which is nearly upon us, these two cities, plus Split in Yugoslavia, will be the most endangered in the Mediterranean area. Within the next 100 years the waters of the Mediterranean are expected to average at least six feet higher than they are today.

Recently a UN Environment Congress met in Split, where Roman galleys once sailed directly into the sea level slips beneath the palace of Diocletian. The palace still stands but is one of many ancient buildings threatened by the rising waters.

The time frame looks something like this: The rise will take place in all the world's oceans. During the first quarter of the next century the changes will be modest. But beginning in 2025 changes in surface waters, soils, vegetation and coastal physiology will be drastic. Many of the world's wetlands and deltas will disappear. Coastal towns built on lowland will be destroyed. Lagoons will become bays, migratory birds will lose some of their habitats, coastal resorts and farmlands will disappear.

A disaster will strike the Nile delta. A great part of Alexandria, a city of 3½ million people, is three

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feet above sea level. It is the largest city in Egypt and may be doomed. The same fate awaits all other low-lying delta cities in the world.



**ON THE OTHER HAND**

**NICHOLAS RUSSELL**, a lecturer at Bromley College of Technology in England and chairman of the history group of the Institute of Biology, thinks there are too many environmental and technological Jeremiahs going around predicting doom and disaster. Their predictions are based on short-term observations whereas true climatic forecasts must be based on observations extending over decades or centuries.

Russell says there may indeed be a greenhouse effect underway, brought on by decades of using fossil fuels, but it's by no means certain. It's the greenhouse effect, of course, that creates the projected global warming which will cause the seas to rise.

Russell points out that the great drought of the summer of 1988,

with its high temperatures, was a natural periodic event that occurs from time to time on the Great Plains. The first great drought there that drove farmers off their homesteads was in 1894-95. In more recent times there was the drought of the early 1930's with its dramatic Dust Bowl.

"Experts" are quick to decide what causes these purely natural events, he points out. In the 1930's the commentators settled on the disruptive effects of radio waves. A serious drought in the 1950's was attributed to nuclear fallout from bomb testing. And now, of course, we have the greenhouse effects of carbon dioxide, methane and fluorocarbon gases.

Experience indicates the drought may last two more years. If that occurs pessimists will propagandize that it is the harbinger of permanent change. Despite our scientific advancements and analytical sophistication it, nevertheless, seems highly probable that only time will tell.



**A CLASS OF THEIR OWN**  
**P**TEROSAURS were the great flying dinosaurs that were neither reptile nor bird. David Unwin, of the University of Reading in England, says they were so

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different from other creatures that they belong in a class of their own.

Soviet paleontologists have recently discovered some of the best-preserved pterosaur fossils in the world. They show that, unlike reptiles, pterosaurs were hairy. Another strange characteristic was that their wing membranes were attached to their legs.

Researchers in the Karatau Mountains of Kazakhstan in Russia have found fossils of the skeletons and of the animals' soft parts, the wings and the pelt. The flying animals were hairy from head to tail, although the hair thinned out at the base of the wings. The wings themselves apparently were naked and leathery and strengthened with fibers, like the battens of a sail.

Most of the pterosaur fossils found suggest that the animals probably were fish eaters that skimmed close to the surface of the water and snagged fish with their teeth. They had wingspans as wide as 15 feet and Unwin concludes they were a varied and successful group of animals that occupied the same ecological niche that birds occupy today.



### CASTING STONES

**I**T'S TIME to review recent scientific claims and cast a few stones at them. After their initial period of popularity, when at least a portion of the scientific community supported them, the evidence seems to have

petered out and so has the interest in them.

*The snowball theory.* A couple of years ago physicists at the University of Iowa proposed that the earth was being bombarded with celestial snowballs. They suggested that on its peregrinations through space the earth was sweeping up loose clumps of ice and dust weighing up to 100 tons and that over the ages these filled the earth's oceans with water. In 1988 Thomas Donahue, of the University of Michigan, concluded that the Voyager 2 spacecraft had detected a great quantity of hydrogen gas around the sun, at about the position of the earth's orbit, which must have come from such snowballs. Alas, this has since been refuted and repeat experiments by Donahue show no evidence of hydrogen.

*Shadow universe.* Astronomers have concluded that no more than 10 percent of the mass of the universe is in the form of bright stars. One proposal to account for the dark matter that must make up the missing 90 percent was the possibility of a "shadow universe" interpenetrating ours. So far researchers at the University of California and the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory have not been able to find any evidence for such a shadow universe.

*Nemesis, the "Death Star."* The idea of Nemesis was invented in 1984 when a dim or invisible companion star to our own sun was

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

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proposed, to explain the disasters and extinctions that seem to plague the earth about every 26 million years. The theory was that Nemesis, in its travels around our sun, would disrupt the Oort cloud of solar system comets and send showers of these celestial death dealers plunging upon the earth with catastrophic results—even causing the extinction of the dinosaurs at the end of the Cretaceous period 66 million years ago. Nemesis has never been found but it does exist, according to Richard Muller, a physicist at the University of California at Berkeley. Other astronomers have grave doubts.



## WISHBONES

SOMETIMES an inquiring mind starts asking questions about some familiar object and a surprising new world of information opens up. Such is the case of an investigation conducted by Farish Jenkins, Jr., of Harvard and two colleagues, Kenneth Dial of Harvard and George Goslow, Jr., of Northern Arizona University.

The subject of their research is wishbones. Most everyone in the world is familiar with these Y-shaped flat-ended pieces of bird skeleton but no one had thought to ask, apparently, what purposes they serve. Jenkins and his group decided to ask. Previously zoologists had assumed that the wishbone was

simply a strut between the bird's shoulders.

What the researchers found is that the wishbone acts as a spring. They still don't know all its purposes but they are reasonably certain that the wishbone spring, activated by the bird's wing beat, helps air flow first into air sacs scattered throughout the bird's body and then into its lungs. The bird needs this additional air because of the high expenditure of energy it uses in flight.

The researchers learned all this by taking X-ray films of starlings

flying in place within a wind tunnel at speeds of 20 to 45 mph. In the starling the upper ends of the wishbone are 11 to 12 millimeters apart when the bird is at rest but when the wings descend, they are 18 to 20 millimeters apart.

Yet not all birds have wishbones. Humming birds and some parrots are exceptions. But Jenkins believes that the starling's wishbone spring typifies most birds'.

Jenkins believes the wishbones serve other purposes, also, and expects that more discoveries will be made.



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*Restless  
Souls  
of  
Meggernie  
Castle...*



A ghost missing the lower half of its body terrifies castle visitors to remind them of a brutal murder two centuries ago.

By Archie McKerracher

**S**INISTER Meggernie Castle lies in Glenlyon in the wilds of the Scottish Highlands. This is a grim and desolate place, overhung by steep hills and swirling mist. The castle was built in 1585, initially as a simple tower house, by Colin Campbell, the third Campbell laird of Glenlyon. He received the nickname "Mad Colin" after a kick on the head by a horse rendered him highly unpredictable.

Shortly after Meggernie was built, a band of cattle robbers descended on Mad Colin's lands and tried to drive away his cows. He captured 30 of the robbers and dispatched his son to the authorities in Edinburgh to seek justice. Back came the news that the judges seemed inclined only to fine the thieves. Colin promptly dragged them outside and when his son arrived home he was greeted by the sight of all 30 hanging from the trees that lined the avenue.

Mad Colin's great grandson, Robert, inherited Meggernie in 1674. He was a hard drinking wastrel whose final act of folly was to extend the castle into a miniature stately home. Having gone bankrupt, he was forced to sell Meggernie. In 1690 Robert, at 60 years of age, had no alternative but to join the army to support his family. He was ordered to billet his troops among the neighboring MacDonalds of Glencoe.

Two weeks later on February 13, 1692, he was given his final orders. He was to fall on his hosts and destroy every living soul for failing to take the Oath of Allegiance to King William of Orange.

The name of Robert Campbell of Meggernie and Glenlyon is still remembered with loathing today as the executioner of the infamous Massacre of Glencoe, although London politicians had selected him as the scapegoat. Every February American-Scots gather at Glencoe, Oreg., to remember the 30 who perished that day and to give thanks for the sudden blizzard that saved the rest.

Meggernie Castle passed into the ownership of the Menzies of Cudraes. Robert Menzies, laird of Meggernie in the mid-18th Century, falsely accused his wife of adultery. He killed her in a jealous rage, then cut her body in two and hid the parts inside a chest within a cupboard in the wall of the tower block.

Menzies left for a trip to the Continent and when he returned a few months later, he said his wife had died abroad. This explanation was accepted and on his first night home he removed the lower part of her body and buried it in the adjacent castle graveyard. He was returning for the upper part, but got no further than the tower door where he was found dead in the morning with a

ghastly, terrified expression on his face. It soon became known that someone had found out his guilty secret and murdered him.

\* \* \*

**I**N 1862 Meggernie was rented to an English businessman called Herbet Woods who invited two friends, E.J. Simons and Beaumont Fetherstone, to join him for the deer-stalking season. They arrived late at night after a long train journey and were allocated adjoining rooms in the old tower block. Simons was intrigued to find a sealed-off door in his room. He went to confide in Fetherstone and together they examined the door which appeared to adjoin both rooms for there was also one in Fetherstone's room. Eventually the men retired to bed.

At 2:00 A.M. Simons was wakened abruptly by what felt like a burning kiss on his cheek. He leaped from his bed and was horrified to see the upper part of a woman's body drifting across the room and through the sealed-off door. Lighting a candle with trembling hands, he examined his face for burns but could feel none. He sat on his bed in great distress until his candle had burned out and daylight came.

When he heard Fetherstone stirring next door, he called out, "I've had a terrible night!"

"So have I," came the reply.

"Look, don't tell me now. Let's each go separately to Herbet and see if our stories coincide."

Their apologetic host later confirmed both had had the same experi-

ence, although only Simons had received the kiss. The two guests were subsequently allocated different rooms. Simons, however, seems to have been a receptive medium because a few days later he was writing letters in the ground floor drawing room when the door suddenly flew open.

He went into the passageway and was horrified to see the faint outline of a sad, beautiful face staring in the window at him. Not surprisingly, he cut short his stay and refused to visit Meggernie again. Unbeknown to him, many of the English servants had seen the same thing and were threatening to leave.

Beaumont Fetherstone recorded the incident in his diary which survives today. "At Meggernie Castle, Perthshire, I was awakened at 2 A.M. by a purple light and saw a female at the foot of the bed. At first I took her for a housekeeper walking in her sleep. She came along the side of the bed and bent over me. I raised myself up and she retreated and went into a small room made out of the thickness of the wall."

After following her across the room Fetherstone was mystified by her sudden disappearance. "The phantom seemed minus legs, which I am glad to say I didn't realize at the time or I should have been in a greater funk than I was."

\* \* \*

**M**EGGERNIE was purchased in 1885 by an English textile millionaire called John Bullough. He

commissioned several alterations and during the work the upper part of a female skeleton was found beneath the floor inside the recess in the wall. The bones were buried in the castle graveyard, but this did not stop the manifestations.

In the 1920's a party of five young people held a lighthearted seance in the room. One of them volunteered to be the medium. She began to talk in rambling sentences and then the others felt the room becoming colder and a smell like incense filled the air. The voice of the medium began to trail to a halt and then she suddenly collapsed with a cry of, "I can't do it!"

Norman MacKay, the local doctor for over 40 years until he retired in 1948, used to relate an experience he had at Meggermie in 1928. He had been called out late to the castle and because of the patient's condition was obliged to stay the night. He was aware of the ghost legend, having been shown the haunted room on a previous visit, and was slightly surprised to find it was to be his bedroom. He knew the castle had recently changed hands and thought the new owners might not be aware of the story.

He lay on the bed fully dressed in case of a sudden summons. Having dozed off, he was awakened some hours later by a noise at the door. He assumed it was a servant sent to fetch him and he sat up. He found the room filled with a purple light and was astounded to see the upper part of a woman's body floating round the ceiling with

the face gazing down at him with a sad expression.

Possibly country doctors get used to many strange occurrences because Dr. MacKay merely muttered, "Good Lord, the Meggermie ghost," and then lay down to sleep again. In the morning he discovered that his bedroom was not in fact the haunted room but the one directly below. Interestingly, the haunted room had undergone major alterations in the early 1920's. The place where the ghost had been floating about at ceiling level had originally been the floor of the room above.

Dr. MacKay recorded later, "Call it a vision if you like. Call it coincidence. If it was only a dream, then it was by far the most vivid I have ever had."

Many others have seen the dismembered woman right up to the present day and some have also seen the lower part of a woman's body sitting on a tombstone in the castle graveyard. Perhaps there is no peace for her spirit until her body is reunited but that could never happen for the burial places are now unknown.

\* \* \*

**B**UT THE ghost of Meggermie Castle is not the only mystery in this long and twisting glen.

High up in the mountains at the head of Glenlyon is the only surviving shrine in Britain to the pre-Christian Mother Goddess cult. Here is a small stone house about three feet high, the home of five oddly heavy stones shaped like dumbbells. The largest, measuring 18 inches high, is called

The Cailleach or The Old Woman, and the smallest is her daughter. The little family has watched over the cattle herds here since the beginning of recorded time. Today Bob Bissett, the local shepherd, continues the tradition by acting as their custodian. Each spring he brings them reverentially outside their house and in autumn ensures they are snugly tucked away for the winter.

Strangest of all is that this desolate place is the birthplace of Pontius Pilate, said to be the love child of a Roman officer and a local tribeswoman. Certainly Caesar Augustus sent out peace envoys in 10 B.C. to all nations outside the Roman Empire.

Old chronicles relate that one such party made its way north into this wil-

derness to greet the local Caledonian king. They would have been given tribeswomen during their stay over the winter as was normal practice. Did one of them become pregnant and did the Roman officer take her and the child back to Italy as a slave? It is curious that Pontius derives from the name of the noble Pontii family of central Italy while Pilate comes from Pilateus, the felt cap worn by a freed slave. Did the officer make his half-barbarian son a free man?

Some say Pilate returned here to die after being dismissed as Governor of Judea and exiled. Oddly, a stone was dug up here in 1900 which bore the initials P.P. Perhaps his restless soul seeks eternal peace in this wild place.



### THOSE CHARMING BUNS

*By Ida M. Pardue*

**I**F YOU BAKE too many hot cross buns for Easter, you can always wear them or hang them from the ceiling.

Just a few centuries ago buns were worn for a whole year as charms against sickness, shipwreck and bad luck. Buns were hung up in homes for good luck and as protection against lightning. And crumbled into water, they were a magical medicine.

After all, weren't they made from the same dough as the church's communion wafers and wasn't each bun marked with a sacred cross, blessed

and therefore magic? Before Christianity came along, the Anglo-Saxons offered little cross-topped wheaten cakes to their spring goddess. They also gave her colored eggs and baby hares, which is no surprise when you realize her name was Eostre.

Meanwhile, the Greeks in hoping for a little prosperity and protection in return, baked for several deities, but especially for the great moon goddess Diana. Round as Diana's full moon, each cake was decorated with the pagan symbol for the moon's quarters — a cross.

# Parapsychology *Bushwhacked*

When the army asked for an objective study of ESP, debunkers took charge — with results that were anything but objective.

By Dean I. Radin

**I**N 1984 the U.S. Army Research Institute asked the National Academy of Sciences to evaluate a variety of techniques that supposedly enhance human performance. These techniques included sleep-learning, accelerated learning, biofeedback, neurolinguistic programming, methods of integrating brain activity and, although it is not a technique per se, the field of parapsychology. The NAS responded to the army's request by directing its principal operating agency, the National Research Council (NRC), to form a study committee to examine the scientific evidence for these techniques and for parapsychological phenomena.

The Parapsychological Association (PA) is an international organization of scientists and scholars interested in all aspects of the study of the paranormal. The PA has been an affiliate of the premier scientific organization in the United States, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, since 1969. As president of the

PA I looked forward to the NRC's assessment of parapsychology because the NRC maintains an explicit policy of assembling balanced or neutral committees when investigating scientific and technical issues. I expected that a truly unbiased committee would find, as many of my colleagues and I have found, that the results of published parapsychological experiments provide exceptionally strong evidence for anomalous (i.e., scientifically unexplained) phenomena. Parapsychologists often refer to such effects as "psi," a neutral term indicating as yet unknown principles or forces.

Our research findings can be summarized as follows:

Over the last 50 years scientists investigating psi phenomena have developed repeatable laboratory studies that demonstrate the existence of at least three main classes of unexplained effects. These include the anomalous influence of matter by mind (traditionally called psychokinesis); the anoma-

lous transfer of information from one mind to another (telepathy); and the nonsensory transfer of information from the environment to mind (remote viewing or clairvoyance). These laboratory studies strongly suggest that some percentage of anecdotal reports of paranormal experience are probably real and cannot be explained away as delusion, wishful thinking, selective memory or hallucination. For many people, especially scientists, the experimental data have proven more persuasive than any number of anecdotal reports because they provide rigorous scientific evidence that psi anomalies do exist.

\* \* \*

ON DECEMBER 3, 1987, the National Research Council convened a well-attended press conference in Washington, D.C., to announce its report, entitled *Enhancing Human Performance*. At the press conference John A. Swets, chairman of the NRC Committee, said, "Perhaps our strongest conclusions are in the area of parapsychology." The conclusion in the report read, "The Committee finds no scientific justification from research conducted over a period of 130 years for the existence of parapsychological phenomena."

What had happened? How could an impartial scientific panel arrive at a conclusion that was diametrically opposed to the opinions of many well-qualified scientists who are completely familiar with the techniques and results of experimental parapsychology?

To help us understand this disparity, the Board of Directors of the Parapsychological Association commissioned an official response to the NRC report. The board chose three distinguished members of our association to write the report: John Palmer, a psychologist at the Institute for Parapsychology, Durham, N.C.; Charles Honorton, a researcher at the Psychophysical Research Laboratories, Princeton, N.J.; and Jessica Utts, a statistician at the University of California at Davis. (The PA's report, 27 pages in length, is available for \$2.00 from the Parapsychological Association, Box 12236, Research Triangle Park, N.C. 27709.)

Our report reveals some disturbing facts about the NRC Committee and its conclusions. These facts show that key members of the NRC Committee have been blatantly biased against parapsychology for years, raising serious doubts about the NRC Committee's scientific impartiality and competence to assess the evidence for psi phenomena.

There are three main findings:

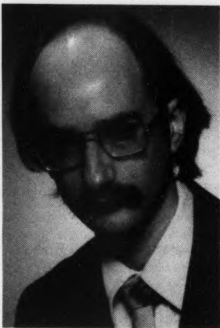
(1) The two principal evaluators of parapsychological research for the NRC Committee have had a long-standing public role in an organization well known for its impassioned campaign against parapsychology. In contrast, there were no parapsychologists on the committee. This is in direct violation of the NRC's stated policy of assigning members to committees "with regard to appropriate balance."

(2) The NRC report systematically omitted research findings favorable to parapsychology but quoted liberally from two background papers that supported the committee's position. Such flagrant bias is deplorable, especially from a scientific committee charged with conducting an equitable investigation. And besides the presence of overwhelming bias, we were shocked to discover that the chairman of the NRC Committee actually called one of the authors of a commissioned background paper and asked him to withdraw his conclusions — conclusions favorable to parapsychology.

(3) Despite the committee's conspicuous prejudice and despite its clumsy attempt to suppress opposing expert opinion, the report is self-contradictory. For example, the committee widely touted its conclusion that there is no evidence for psi phenomena; yet by its own admission it could offer no plausible alternatives to the research it surveyed. One has to wonder, if there was no evidence, why the committee would then go on to recommend that the army continue to "monitor" parapsychological research being conducted at several laboratories in the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as to suggest that the army propose specific parapsychological experiments that should be conducted.

\*\*\*

THE NRC Committee commissioned 10 background papers by experts in a variety of fields. One of



DEAN I. RADIN, Ph.D., is in the department of psychology at Princeton University. The current president of the Parapsychological Association, he has conducted parapsychological research at AT&T Bell Laboratories, at SRI International and at Princeton University.

these papers, by Dale Griffin of Stanford University, discussed the difficulty of objectively evaluating evidence when one is publicly committed to a particular belief. According to Griffin, "Probably the most powerful force motivating our desire to protect our beliefs — from others' attacks, from our own questioning, and from the challenge of new evidence — is com-

mitment. . . . This drive to avoid dissonance is especially strong when the belief has led to public commitment."

The Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) is famous for its debunking activities and its public commitment against parapsychology. CSICOP's true position, far from the "scientific investigation" it claims in its middle name, is revealed in this passage from a March 23, 1985, fund-raising letter: "Belief in paranormal phenomena is still growing, and the dangers to our society are real. . . . In these days of government budget cutting, the Defense Department may be spending millions of tax dollars in developing 'psychic arms'. . . . Your contribution, in any amount, will help us grow and be better able to combat the flood of belief in the paranormal."

This fund-raising letter was signed by members of the CSICOP Executive Council, including Ray Hyman, a psychologist at the University of Oregon. Hyman was one of the original Fellows of CSICOP and remains an active member of the Executive Council. It turns out that he was also in charge of evaluating parapsychology for the NRC.

Another CSICOP Fellow and member of the Executive Council, James Alcock of York University, was the only person commissioned by the NRC Committee to write a background paper specifically on parapsychology. Both Hyman and Alcock have written

extensively on their beliefs about parapsychology and both are publicly committed to the notion that scientists who accept the evidence for psi phenomena are foolish.

Because the NRC Committee had no members who had demonstrated a more open-minded attitude toward parapsychology, it is hardly surprising that the CSICOP prejudice is reflected in the report's conclusions. But it is disturbing that the NRC did not move to prevent this one-sided point of view by appointing a more balanced committee.

\* \* \*

I HAVE already mentioned two of the background papers the committee commissioned, those by Griffin and Alcock, both of whom were critical of parapsychology. A third paper, which reviewed experiments in all of the performance-enhancement areas considered by the NRC, was written by Monica Harris and Robert Rosenthal of Harvard University.

The NRC report does not even mention Harris and Rosenthal's conclusions about a class of telepathy experiments they reviewed: "The situation for the ganzfeld domain seems reasonably clear. We feel it would be implausible to entertain the null [hypothesis] given the combined  $p$  from these 28 studies. . . . When the accuracy rate expected under the null [hypothesis] is  $1/4$ , we estimate the obtained accuracy rate to be about  $1/3$ ." (The term "ganzfeld" refers to a form of sensory stimulation used to

induce a pleasant, mildly altered mental state. Ganzfeld stimulation is used in a class of telepathy experiments.)

In nontechnical language, Harris and Rosenthal are saying that there is persuasive evidence for the existence of telepathy in the ganzfeld experiments. Later in their report they compared the ganzfeld experiments to experiments in four other, nonparapsychological research areas and concluded that "only the ganzfeld ESP studies regularly meet the basic requirements of sound experimental design."

Rosenthal, a distinguished social-science methodologist, holds no commitment to the existence or nonexistence of parapsychological effects. Given the NRC Committee's unbalanced composition, it was predictable, if deplorable, that the committee would ignore any positive findings. What happened next, however, borders on the incredible. John Swets, the chairman of the NRC Committee, called Rosenthal after reading his favorable statements about the ganzfeld experiments and actually asked him to withdraw his conclusions. Not all of his conclusions, mind you, *only those pertaining to parapsychology*.

Fortunately Rosenthal refused. Later, when Swets was asked why he attempted to get Rosenthal to withdraw his favorable conclusions about the ganzfeld experiments, he explained, "We thought the quality of our analysis was better, and we didn't see much point in putting out mixed signals"

(*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 14, 1988, page A10). Incredibly, Swets then added, "I didn't feel we were obliged to represent every point of view."

This remarkable statement reveals the NRC Committee's unique interpretation of the meaning of scientific impartiality. Apparently the only appropriate views concerning parapsychology were negative ones. And it was an interesting "coincidence" that expert opinions favorably inclined toward parapsychology, including those explicitly commissioned by the committee, were all of "low quality" and therefore ignored.

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THE NRC's main conclusion about psi phenomena — no scientific justification after 130 years of research — is not only unsupported but flatly contradicted by the committee's report.

First of all, the committee did not examine research conducted over a period of 130 years. All of the research reviewed had been conducted within the past few decades. Laboratory parapsychology, which dates back to the 1930's, has a long history of significant findings, none of them mentioned in the report. The unsubstantiated "130 years" reference can be traced — not surprisingly — directly to Ray Hyman, chairman of the NRC Subcommittee on Parapsychology.

In an article published more than two years before the NRC report, Hyman wrote, "The total accumula-

tion of 130 years' worth of psychical investigation has not produced any consistent evidence for paranormality that can withstand acceptable scientific scrutiny" (*A Skeptic's Handbook of Parapsychology* [1985], pages 3-96). A year later, Hyman again wrote, "The parapsychological evidence, despite a history of more than 130 years of inquiry, is not ready to be placed before the scientific community for judgment" (*Proceedings of the IEEE*, 74, 1986, page 848).

What did the committee actually examine? The NRC report shows that the committee selected and reviewed several experiments that provide evidence for psi phenomena. The committee then described the so-called smoking-gun argument, which is a technique commonly used by skeptics to attempt to explain away positive experimental results. With this type of argument, a skeptic casts doubt on positive findings by implying that the results were not due to psi but to some other factor, such as a flaw in experimental methodology. To its credit the committee frankly acknowledged that "we do not have a smoking gun, *nor have we demonstrated a plausible alternative*" (italics added).

After admitting that it was completely stumped by the experiments it chose to examine, it went right ahead and explained away the results using the metaphor of a "dirty test tube." It describes this metaphor as follows: "The gist of this type of criticism is that test tubes should be clean when doing

careful and important scientific research. To the extent that the test tubes were dirty, it is suggested that the experiment was not carried out according to acceptable scientific standards. Consequently, the results remain suspect *even though the critic cannot demonstrate that the dirt in the test tubes was sufficient to have produced the outcome...*" (italics added).

In other words, the committee could think of no adequate scientific explanation for the experimental results that it had selected and reviewed, and since the committee members could not bring themselves to admit the existence of a genuine anomaly, they resorted to the use of a weak metaphor to explain away the results. In ordinary words, the dirty test tube metaphor can be rephrased as, "It is impossible; therefore there must be some other explanation." This is, quite literally, prejudice. And it is important to realize that this is the best that the NRC Committee could come up with to explain away the experimental evidence. Considering the committee's strong motivation to debunk parapsychology, its admission of not being able to find plausible alternatives must be taken as a compelling endorsement of the existence of psi anomalies.

\* \* \*

THE NRC's findings about parapsychological phenomena are wrong. Anomalous effects that cannot be explained by the prevailing scientific world view continue to be demonstrated, repeatedly, in laboratory stud-

ies. Scientific assessments of several classes of experiments using a relatively new statistical technique called "meta-analysis" — in which each related experiment is used as a data point in a larger, more comprehensive analysis of a particular line of research — show with a high degree of confidence that independent investigators have successfully replicated psi effects in laboratory studies.

Some of these effects include telepathy under ganzfeld stimulation, telepathy during the dream state, psychokinesis with random-number generators, remote viewing, the efficacy of hypnosis in improving ESP scores, and the predictability of ESP scores with the Defense Mechanism Test (a psychological test for perceptual defensiveness).

The NRC established the policy of forming balanced study committees when evaluating controversial topics because scientists are not immune to personal biases, inconsistent beliefs, political pressure and less-than-exemplary conduct when confronting unorthodox ideas. Because the powerful biasing effects of preconceived notions are well known in social psychology, it is deplorable that some members of the NRC Committee apparently chose to ignore the NRC's sound policy.

When Swets was asked why he had only confirmed skeptics on his committee, he replied that the committee did not have any members who were advocates for any of the performance-

enhancing methods that were evaluated. Taken at face value, this sounds like a reasonable answer. But given that we know something about the beliefs of the persons who evaluated the evidence, we can only infer that it was acceptable to include individuals who were known to *advocate against* fields under evaluation.

Hyman claims he is neutral, reportedly saying, "I don't care about parapsychology. To me it's a very dull topic" (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 14, 1988, page A5). This is a peculiar statement for someone who has been writing about the topic since the 1950's. It seems to me that anyone who has been actively involved in a scientific field for more than 30 years, as a researcher or a critic, hardly finds the topic "very dull." In any case, Hyman's prominent role in CSICOP overrides any possible claim of neutrality.

The PA's response goes into more detail about the prejudicial nature of the NRC report. Besides discussing the issues mentioned above, the report documents several classes of psi experiments that have been shown to be replicable; it shows how many of the NRC Committee's arguments are spurious; it discusses potential applications of psi phenomena; and it reveals numerous instances in which rhetorical tactics — which are highly improper in a scientific report — were liberally used by the NRC to cast doubt on the credibility of parapsychology. Among these tactics were guilt by

association, innuendo and unsubstantiated comments attributed to anonymous "experts."

The parapsychological evidence warrants serious attention by the scientific community. I suspect that even some of the staunchest skeptics believe this but are loath to admit it. For example, we can see Hyman struggling to maintain his equilibrium when confronted with "impossible" evidence for psi when he calls our severe criticisms of the NRC's report "kind of silly" — and yet he cannot dismiss the

evidence altogether because he is, after all, one of a small group of scientists who have seriously looked at the literature. In Hyman's words, "I'm one of the few critics who knows them, who reads their literature, and who goes to their conventions."

Perhaps this is why despite his harsh treatment of parapsychology he professes, "Parapsychologists should be rejoicing. This was the first government committee that said their work should be taken seriously."

At least we can agree on that.



## MAMMOTH VOID FEEDS ON STARS

*By W. Ritchie Benedict*

**A** N ASTRONOMER has evidence of a black hole in space with a mass one million times that of any known before. According to the *Canadian Press*, John Kormendy, who normally works at a National Research Council observatory in Victoria, British Columbia, made the discovery while working in Hawaii.

Experts suggest his discovery, with a mass 10 million times that of the

sun, is acting like a celestial vacuum at the center of Andromeda, a galaxy that is one of the closest neighbors to the earth's Milky Way. Believed to be the remnants of stars that burn out and collapse in on themselves, black holes feed on stars and gases — sucking nearby objects into an incredibly compact mass. Gravity in the collapsed star is so strong that even light can't escape becoming invisible.

## KRISHNA'S CITY UNEARTHED

*By John Ellis Sech*

**I** F INDIAN archaeologists are correct, the ruins of the legendary city of Dwarka have been discovered off India's west coast submerged in the Arabian Sea. Dwarka was the home of India's legendary god-king Krishna.

According to legend, Dwarka was a major metropolitan center in 1500 B.C. Many experts have considered

these tales to be exaggerated stories told to add importance to minor tribal leaders and their nomadic tribes. But the discovery of these ruins, which includes traces of temples, fortifications, streets, palaces and docks along almost 20 miles of coast, indicates that perhaps India's dark age may not have been so dark after all.

# From the Sea of Galilee

Remarkable archaeological discovery sheds new light on some of the New Testament's most famous tales.

By Bill Clark

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**I**SRAELI archaeologists have announced the discovery of a large wooden fishing boat dating from the time of Jesus.

The boat, which is the only one of its kind known to exist, was discovered by two kibbutzniks who were exploring the shallow waters of the Sea of Galilee about a quarter mile from this Galilean village. The discovery immediately evoked international attention.

The seaside village of Ginnosar is usually identified as the place where Jesus preached and cured: "And when they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret [Ginnosar], and moored to the shore. And when they got out of the boat, immediately the people recognized him, and ran about the whole neighborhood and began to bring sick people on their pallets to any place where they heard he was. And wherever he came, in villages, cities, or country, they laid the sick in the market places, and besought him that they might touch even the fringe of his garment; and as many as touched it were made well." (Mark 6:53-56.)

Dr. Sheli Waxman, Inspector of Underwater Archaeology of the Israel

Antiquities Department, said that the boat appears to date from the century before Jesus, but might have been in service at the time Jesus was preaching in this region. "Boat construction didn't change very quickly in antiquity," he said. "I think that any future pictorial representation of Jesus around the lake and its fishermen will be based on this boat."

Prof. J. Richard Steffy, one of the world's leading authorities on ancient boats, dropped his work in the United States immediately and, within hours of hearing the news, was flying to Israel to inspect the new find. "I am really surprised by the boat being in such good condition," Prof. Steffy said after inspecting the craft.

The discovery is now removed from the muddy sea bottom, and protected by a tarpaulin. Volunteers continue bathing the boat day and night with sea water to prevent the wood from drying out and disintegrating. Meanwhile, the archaeologists are cleaning the craft in preparation for impregnating its wood with chemical preservatives.

Although the boat is still very much encrusted with the sediments of 2000 years, some basic descriptions have

already been noted. The craft is about 25-feet long, six-feet wide and only 2½ feet from top to bottom — suggesting that it floated quite low in the water. Some observers suspect this design might have made it easier for fishermen to haul heavy nets into their boats. But this also made the boat particularly vulnerable to storms and to overloading. This adds to our understanding of the fears of the apostles when a sudden storm broke over the Sea of Galilee: "And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, 'Save, Lord; we are perishing.' And he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, O men of little faith?' Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Matthew 8:23-26). (Incident also reported in Mark 4:37 and Luke 8:22.)

The dimensions of the boat permit a mathematical calculation of the amount of fish the apostles caught: "And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.' And

Simon answered, 'Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.' And when they had done this, they enclosed a great shoal of fish; and as their nets were breaking, they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats so that they began to sink" (Luke 5:4-7).

Estimating that such a boat has about one foot of freeboard — the distance between the water line and the top edge of the hull — and applying Archimedes' principle (a body immersed in a fluid is buoyed up by a force equal to the weight of the fluid displaced), it is calculated that the apostles caught nearly six tons of fish, evenly divided between two boats, similar to the one recently discovered in the Sea of Galilee. With such a load, each boat would have had about one inch left before water began spilling over the top of the hull, or, as St. Luke put it, "filled both the boats, so that they began to sink."

There is no apparent seating in the boat, and so sailors must have simply sat on the bottom of the hull. The bow is more rounded than in modern boats, although its precise shape won't be

defined until the boat is cleaned and its waterlogged hull is dried and impregnated with chemical preservative.

The archaeologists think there might be yet another boat in the vicinity, as during the excavation of this discovery they found pieces of wood which they presume might be from a second craft.

Archaeologists think that the boat might be kept for display near the Sea of Galilee as an attraction for pilgrims once it has been restored. This might take some time, however, and some

archaeologists are talking about many years of work, perhaps even a decade, before the craft is completely reconstructed and available for public display. Two authorities will probably share the right to restore and display the boat: Kibbutz Ginnosar, where it was found, and the Migdal Regional Council, which is the regional authority along the western shores of the Sea of Galilee. Migdal, incidentally, is the modern name of Magdala, the hometown of St. Mary Magdalene.



#### SNAILS KEEP BEACHES ROCKY

**M**ARK D. Bertness, a marine ecologist at Brown University, has found that without the dime-sized periwinkles to keep the rocks clean, rocky beaches in New England are rapidly covered with algae, then with mud, eventually creating a marsh. This species has an inordinate effect on the ecology of a community.

#### YETI PHOTOS IN DOUBT

*By John Ellis Sech*

**A** PHYSICIST employed by the Manchester electric power network in England, Anthony B. Wooldridge is also an amateur runner. On March 6, 1986, while running a charity marathon between Gangaria and Hemkund in northern India, Wooldridge took photographs which he maintains are of the yeti.

The photos were taken at an elevation of 11,000 feet on a Himalayan trail near the border of India and Tibet. The first photo shows tracks in the snow. The prints appear to be made by enormously large feet with wide, turned-out toes. The other photo shows what appears to be a vaguely human form silhouetted against craggy

rocks and a snow field.

"I had never thought much of the yetis until that day," Wooldridge said. "But actually seeing one of these creatures changes one's perspective."

There is some doubt, however, that Wooldridge even saw, much less photographed a yeti. Grover S. Krantz, an anthropologist at Washington State University, believes that he is mistaken in what he saw. Krantz relates that Wooldridge never actually saw the thing move. Krantz concludes that, "There are other details that look wrong, too. The head, for instance, doesn't appear to join the spine at an angle one would find in a primate, if that's what it is."

# 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, 3510 Western Ave., 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.

### LEAPING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

By Lois V. Stevenson

ON A TRIP to Europe in October 1972, my husband John and I with a group of other couples took a tourist boat down the Rhine River. It was perhaps the worst time to go, for the water was filthy and low. The boat stayed in deeper waters near the river's center. Fog blanketed the area and castles at the tops of low hills could not be seen by us tourists.

On arriving at Bonn, three couples of our group, including my husband and me, left the boat and rented a Volkswagen bus. We took to the autobahn, stopping at scenic spots along the way, and were glad to get to see a castle.

We stopped in Frankfort to put up for the night, but to our dismay all the rooms were rented, convention groups having taken over the

town. We were tired and the fog, which had lifted earlier, plagued us again as night fell. We traveled on to the next stop, trying to find some rooms, and finally we were directed to a boarding house in a small nearby village named Ifleheim.

A middle-aged couple ran the boarding house and they talked fluent German, but no English. Our



Lois V. Stevenson

efforts at conversation were limited to gestures. All three couples looked at each other, wondering how to negotiate.

I had lived in a small Kansas town settled by German farmer immigrants and had German classmates, with whom I sometimes went to church. The entire service was conducted in German. We also had German next-door neighbors who teased us in German, saying they would call the police if we didn't stay out of their unfenced yard. Their threats were all in fun to them, but we were too little to know it was just a game they played.

Now here we were, in Germany, listening as the boarding house lady spoke to us in what sounded like pure gibberish. We looked at Harlan, the only one of German extraction in our group. He shook his head, and then, finally paying attention, I understood to my amazement what she was saying.

I began to nod my head in understanding. She was as happy as I was. Three sleeping rooms were needed, and I told the couples she had one room at this house, another room in a building at the other end of the block and a third room, to be driven to a half mile away. My sudden comprehension seemed incredible.

Even as I gave the other directions, I could not believe I was able to do so, but I proved to be right. Did my knowledge of German come from memories of the German

speech I had heard as a child? Or was telepathy the answer?—*Ramona, Calif.*

### THREE DREAMS

By Patricia Bailey

**I**N OCTOBER 1970 my only daughter Sue was expecting her first baby. Many miles separated us but our letters flew back and forth. She wrote of the nursery, clothing bought for the expected baby, her folk remedy for morning sickness. Pictures arrived showing her in her first maternity dress. Happily we waited for the child.

One Wednesday night I went to bed early. In the night something more real than a dream woke me. I had heard Sue's voice screaming, "Mommy, Mommy!"

I got up feeling something was wrong, but I convinced myself I was just over-anxious about Sue.

Thursday night again in my sleep I heard her screaming, "Mommy, Mommy!" I got up. "I know something is wrong," I said aloud. "I just know it." She had no telephone. All I had was my son-in-law's number at work. I dared not call except in an emergency. I was up all night telling myself that my dream had been only about what was on my mind when I fell asleep.

Friday night I dreaded going to bed but fell asleep at once. I awoke at 3:00 A.M. In a dream I had seen Sue lying on an operating table with blood all over it. I heard her say,

"The baby is dying." I knew she had lost her baby and was hemorrhaging.

I decided to call Jim at work about mid-morning. I didn't care if he thought I was crazy. I had to know if Sue was all right.

Just after daybreak the phone rang. It was Jim, crying. "We lost the baby!" he said. "Sue hemorrhaged since Wednesday night. They operated about three o'clock this morning. We nearly lost Sue, too."

He explained he had not left her side to call anyone.

Sue's next baby was healthy and the delivery was normal. Sitting at the kitchen table later with Sue, I watched her holding her new daughter. As we sipped coffee I told her of my three dreams. She replied, "Days before the miscarriage started I, too, had a dream. I knew my baby would be dead." She explained that her doctor felt the unborn child had had an abnormality.

The infant she was holding was softly cooing and Sue's face was alight with happiness. All was well.  
—*Rockford, Ill.*

### NERVOUS AT THE PARTY

By Gary L. Wright

**M**Y FATHER died when I was a year old and my stepfather died when I was 11. I was the baby of the family and because I had no father from 11 on, my mother and I developed strong bonds. I had, how-

ever, very little discipline. As a result, I ended up with the wrong crowd and fell to drinking on weekends. At 16 I was a party animal.

On a beautiful autumn night in October 1972, a friend of mine in Tupper Lake, N.Y., threw a party while his parents were away for the weekend. I showed up around 7:00 P.M. and the keg was flowing freely. I began to indulge.

At the party was Janet, a girl that I had been trying to get close to since school began in September. On this particular night, she was responding to my advances. It looked like the best party of the year. I was having a ball.

About 10:30 that night, I started to get nervous. I had already had a few beers and couldn't imagine what was wrong. Janet was showing affection and I should have been having a great time. About half an hour later I left the party, much to the amazement of all my friends and the



Gary L. Wright

girl I was with in particular.

As I neared the apartment I shared with my mother, my nervousness was replaced with a feeling of great urgency. I rushed up the stairs and opened the apartment door to a fog of smoke.

I ran to my mother's room, calling to her as I went. I found her fast asleep with her mattress smoldering. I quickly roused her and got her into fresh air. I then began putting out the fire. Mattress fires are difficult to extinguish. It took several pails of water.

Mother had fallen asleep holding a lighted cigarette and for some reason had slept through the smoke.

I don't know how to explain the incident. Under ordinary circumstances, I would never have left that party so early. For some reason I got home before the mattress could blaze up, or my mother could be overcome by smoke inhalation.

I can only call it my first and strongest psychic experience.  
—*Saranac Lake, N. Y.*

### FORESEEN SIDESWIPE

By Richard Billings

**I**N SEPTEMBER 1987 while watching television in my apartment in Valdese, N.C., I suddenly found myself losing consciousness. I collapsed on the sofa and felt that my soul was leaving my body and entering total blackness.

I next envisioned myself sitting in the passenger seat of a small car and

talking to the driver, whose face I could not see. In this vision another car sped into view and sideswiped the vehicle I was in. I felt my body thrown forward, my head hitting the dashboard.

At that point the vision ended and I found myself in my apartment, lying on the sofa and sweating profusely. Having had such experiences before, I knew I had had a premonition. In the weeks that followed I kept my eyes and ears open, expecting to hear about an accident that happened as in my vision.

Five months later on February 19, 1988, I was on my way home from classes at Western Piedmont Community College in Morgantown, N.C., being driven by my friend, Kathryn Lamborn, in her small car. We were about to turn at an intersection when another car, trying to beat the traffic and the stoplight, sideswiped our car on the driver's side, sending it spinning into the middle of the highway.

My friend was knocked unconscious, suffering a fractured rib, while I was thrown forward, striking the top of my head on the dashboard three times and fracturing my left hand. I did not lose consciousness, and as we were being rushed to the hospital, my thoughts wandered back to the premonition I had experienced that evening in September — and which, on this cold day in February, came to pass.  
—*Valdese, N. C.*



A  
Grateful Life,  
A Joyous Passage

An inner guide named Alex trained me  
for passage from life to "not-life."

By Hal Zina Bennett

**W**HEN I WAS in high school back in Michigan, 35 years ago, I was hunting in the woods near my home. I shot two rabbits and took them home for dinner that night. When I made the

incision to skin the second animal, the room filled with a putrid smell. I literally jumped back from the animal I was skinning, and as I did I nicked myself with my hunting knife.

I didn't eat either of the animals, but the small cut on my hand was enough to infect me with what the doctors later diagnosed as Tularemia. Within days, what at first appeared to be cold symptoms turned into a fever that climbed to 105 degrees. I was raced to the hospital and zipped inside a plastic body bag. They filled the bag with ice to bring my temperature down.

I went into a coma and in the process I had a clear sense of having left my body. I looked upon my physical suffering with benign detachment. Certainly it was not something to be taken very seriously. I was able to move about freely, outside my body, except that part of me was still attached as though by an invisible leash.

I remember being in a startlingly bright tunnel of light, passing through it smoothly. I don't remember feeling frightened. If anything, I experienced a sense of quiet exhilaration. As I approached the end of the tunnel, I saw an opening into endless, dimensionless space. But here I stopped and turned around.

I looked back down the tunnel toward where my body lay, packed in ice on the hospital bed. It was at night. I saw my father sitting in a chair beside the bed, and he was crying. I had never seen my father cry, and it disturbed me. I remember trying to communicate with him, and I could not figure out why he should be so unhappy. Then I realized that I was dying, that my spirit was withdrawing from my body. That was what Dad was so unhappy about. In a

way it didn't make sense. Death was not something to be upset about. It was all natural, simple, even ordinary.

I noticed that the body in the bed was breathing shallowly and looked terribly gaunt. I was able to identify it as my own body but it bore only a bare resemblance to what I'd seen in the mirror a month or so before. Then I began to see that I had a decision to make: to live or to die. It seemed arbitrary at that moment, and I found myself quite attracted to that brilliantly lighted universe at the other end of the tunnel.

My final decision was based, in part, on my sympathy for my father. I couldn't stand his being so unhappy. I also reasoned that being only 16 at the time, I might as well stick around and find out what life was all about.

Having made the decision to continue my life, I set out on a journey that I might not have chosen had I understood what I was getting myself in for. Upon returning to my body, I found that I had to work harder than I'd ever worked, in my life to keep my spirit inside my body. The physical stuff of me was, it appeared, badly damaged by the disease. I had lost 40 pounds and looked like a walking skeleton. All my hair had fallen out. I was blind. And my senses had gotten mixed up—sounds sometimes manifested as images in my brain; light sometimes translated into physical sensations that rippled over my skin, sometimes like a caress, at other times like an itch, and the physical world I'd chosen to return

to made only minimal sense. I felt as though everything had to be learned all over again.

Gradually, over the months, my sight returned, my senses straightened out, and the physical world once again became manageable. But thanks to the "rabbit's revenge," as I now call it, I never again saw life with the same eyes.

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**T**HE EXPERIENCE was repeated 12 years later following a motorcycle accident. Again there was the tunnel of light, the glimpse of the Infinite beyond, the choice to make between living and not living, and then the struggle back to physical health.

Ten years after the motorcycle accident, I began to ask why such experiences had been given me, for I saw both these near-death experiences as gifts, part of the material I was to work with in this life. At the time I came to this realization, I was working for a publisher which asked if I would be interested in editing a manuscript it had received from another author. I said I would take a look. It turned out to be a book on death and dying. I realized it was time to carefully examine my own experiences with death, so I took the opportunity of working on the book to do just that.

While working on the book about dying, I was also finishing up *The Well Body Book*, which I was writing with Mike Samuels. I lived in Berkeley, Calif., and Mike lived in West Marin. I would commute a couple of times a

week as Mike and I did the final editing on our book.

On the drive between West Marin and Berkeley, I began talking with what I took to be an imaginary character who appeared in my mind as a character from a favorite book or movie might appear. However, this was not someone I knew from either of these sources. He introduced himself to me as Alex.

In the months of commuting between Marin and Berkeley, Alex and I had long conversations about death, many of which I recorded on a tape recorder I carried in my car. One evening as I was going through San Anselmo, Alex interrupted our conversation and said, "Stop here and visit Ann X."

I was startled by this demand. Up until then I had thought of Alex as nothing more than an intellectual foil for me. Certainly it had never occurred to me that he might be an entity separate from myself.

I questioned him, "Why should I visit Ann? I haven't seen her in years."

In my mind's eye, Alex shrugged. In a rather amused way he said, "Suit yourself. However, you could be of service to her. She's having a difficult time."

At last, to satisfy my own curiosity, I turned off and drove up to Ann's house. I knocked on the door, and it opened almost immediately. Ann stood in the open door and stared at me in disbelief.

"I've just been thinking about you,"

she said. "I even thought about calling you on the phone."

"What's going on?" I asked.

She invited me in and over coffee told me that a mutual friend of ours had died only a few days before. He was a young man, and his death had been the result of a violent and sudden accident.

"Since he died," Ann told me, "it is like he is always here, nagging at me, pulling at me, sort of the way a child does when it needs your attention. It's driving me crazy, and I don't know what to do."

Alex's purpose in my life became something quite different at that moment. He was no longer a fantasy for playing games with inside my head. I asked him, "Is this why you sent me to visit Ann?"

He answered, rather matter-of-factly, that it was.

"So now what do I do?" I asked.

He gave me detailed instructions for Ann: The next time her dead friend nagged her, she should go to a quiet place, sit down, and just be with him. "Speak to him as though he was really there. Ask him what he wants from you. Be open to him. Give him permission to die, to leave this life and go on. Ask him if there is any unfinished business that he needs you to finish for him."

Ann said she felt it was crazy talking to someone who was dead, but she would do it. At the very least it might make her feel better.

I left, and a week later Ann called to tell me that she had done what I (actu-

ally Alex) had told her to do, and it had worked. She had spoken with her dead friend and they had said good-bye to each other. She felt at peace, and she was satisfied that he was at peace.

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**A**FTER THIS Alex became a valuable inner resource for me. Through him I've learned much that I cannot imagine would have otherwise been accessible to me.

When I got the news that my father was dying, in 1973, Alex told me that I should go back to Michigan to be with him and that I should be his "guide," helping him in his passage from life to not-life. (The term "not-life" was Alex's. "Death," he tells me, "is the process; it is not what you *have* after your life is over.")

I argued with Alex about my taking the role as my father's guide, saying I knew nothing about this; that I had never been around a dying person before and would not know what to do. He said, "On the contrary. You know a great deal about it. You've been there yourself — or at least almost there." This was, of course, in reference to the "rabbit's revenge."

I asked Alex if he would help me, and he said he would, but that I would have many others to assist me along the way. "How will I know who they are?" I asked.

"They will tell you," he said, with a tone that implied that I was a complete idiot.

I wanted more direction than this from him, so I asked for more details,

for some kind of clue about the kind of help I would get and how I would recognize it.

In a mysterious Count Dracula sort of voice, with which he seemed to be mocking me, he said, "You will meet an older woman soon, who will tell you all you need to know to take the next step."

"Sure," I thought. "Very funny!" The joke — and he did treat it as a joke — didn't seem appropriate, given the circumstances.

Later that day I went to the travel agency to pick up an airplane ticket I'd ordered. I was in a dark mood as I left the agency, and as I went out the door I literally bumped into an older woman. I stepped away, apologizing, and as I did so I recognized her as the real-estate saleswoman who had sold me a house a few years before.

"Where are you going?" she asked, with a thick Southern Italian accent which instantly reminded me of my dialogue with the "Count Dracula" Alex only hours before. I told her that my father was dying and I was going back to be with him.

She held up her index finger melodramatically: "You must come to my office and speak to me right now," she said. "I have something important to tell you."

I nodded yes. It was as Alex had said it would be.

I went down the street with her to her office. She cancelled her appointments for the next hour and told me what she said I needed to know. Two

years before this, her own father had died. She, too, had gone to be with him. It just so happened that he had died of exactly the same disease as my father's. She told me what to expect in the process, how to stay focused on the spiritual meaning of his death, how to give him comfort, even though some of the things I would see him go through would be shocking to me. The instructions were clear, at times disturbingly graphic, though later I found that they prepared me well for the reality I had to face.

As a result of the assistance I got from this woman, from Alex, and from a second inner-guide who appeared to me, my father's death was an easy passage. In the hours I sat with him, my guides were always present, and the comfort they gave me, and which I was able to offer other members of the family, was profound.

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ALEX AGAIN served me in my role as a guide for dying people when my friend Beverly G. died. I had been visiting her in hospice for several months, and then she appeared to be getting better and was released to go home. She was staying with her brother in Santa Clara, Calif., and seemed to be doing well.

One afternoon I was just returning to my office from lunch when Alex said to me, "Run to your office and call Beverly. She's dying."

I didn't question him this time. I immediately did as I was told. Beverly's brother answered the phone

and told me that Beverly couldn't talk to me.

"She's acting crazy," he said. "I just can't make sense of anything she's saying."

I said to her brother, "Charles, your sister is dying. Please do what I say. Sit down with her; don't try to do anything except *be* with her. Do what I say."

I am not ordinarily aggressive in situations like this, but I was then, and Charles did as I told him.

I asked him to hold the telephone to his sister's ear. He did this, and I said hello to Beverly. "Do you know who this is?" I asked.

"Of course I do," she said. "It's Hal. I'm so glad to hear you."

"How are you doing?" I asked.

"Good-bye," she said. "Good-bye, good-bye, good-bye, good-bye."

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To heaven," she said. "I'm going to heaven."

"That's great," I said. "You have many friends there, don't you?"

"Many friends," she said. She sighed, happily I thought. Then she said, "Oh, look at them. I see. . ."

She stopped in mid-sentence, then said, "Good-bye. Good-bye, Hal."

I heard the phone click. I hung up, then immediately called back. The line was busy. I called again and again. Twenty minutes later, when her brother finally answered the phone, I learned that upon saying good-bye to me, Beverly folded her hands on her chest, smiled and said, "That was Hal. What

a wonderful family I have." She closed her eyes and was gone.

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**I**T HAS taken me many years to discover my "gifts of service" as Alex has described them to me. We all have these gifts: some in the spiritual realm, others in the physical. And according to Alex, it does not matter what these gifts happen to be, whether chopping wood, clerking in a store or acting as a spiritual leader — all are of equal value to the universe, none to be judged greater or more important than another.

"The *gift* each man and woman brings," Alex says, "is the important thing. The quality of the gift, not the activity that is the vehicle for expressing the gift, is the key."

When my mother died, Alex was again present. My family had been through the hospice way of dying with my father, years before, so we were more secure in what we were doing. In the two months it required, Mother shared the experience of her death openly and fearlessly with us. With Alex's help we were all able to support her in a completely conscious dying that she'd chosen. She made arrangements for her funeral, down to every last detail — choosing the coffin, deciding how the flowers would be arranged in the slumber room, telling the minister what she did and didn't want said, calling musician friends to her bedside to discuss the music she would like them to play for her ("Nothing sappy," she told them).

By the end, nearly 200 people, relatives and friends in the small Midwestern town where she had made her home, were touched by her. They came to her, an endless parade of visitors, sometimes cramming into her crowded little apartment in the middle of town, to say their good-byes or talk to her about death. They called her on the phone, and she called them.

Four days before she died, my mother asked me to dial the phone for her, to contact friends and relatives who she knew wouldn't be able to visit her before she died. Each time, she briefly told them that she was dying, that she intended to be gone in a couple of days, but before she left she wanted to thank them for their friendship over the years and to say good-bye. Without intending to, she — and maybe all of us — became spiritual teachers for her community.

After a visit to my mother's bedside, one older woman said to me, "You have no idea how important your mother's work here has been to all of us oldsters. She has taught us that we have a choice about the way we are to die."

On the evening that Mother died, I was holding her hand. Earlier that day she had said to me, "Where I'm going, I have an idea I can look down and kind of keep an eye on you. And if you're not doing what you're supposed to be doing with your life, I'm going to give you a little kick in the butt." She said this with a mischievous look in her eyes, perhaps teasing. "I'm not sure

how I'll arrange that yet, but I'll figure out a way."

"Okay," I said, laughing. "I'll remember that."

In the last moments Alex was again present, giving me courage, giving me the words to say, comforting. I was not alone.

Mother's eyes drooped shut, and I decided that I would close mine as well, and as I did a tremendous feeling of peace spread over me. I became aware of a shift of energy in the room. It was something like the way you feel when you have your eyes closed and someone enters the room — you become aware of his presence before you hear him or see him. I looked up. No one had entered. There were only Mother and I.

I closed my eyes again, enjoying the tremendous peace I'd felt moments before. I was euphoric, almost as though I had taken a tranquilizer. And then there was a profound sense of being enveloped in — I cannot think of any other way to describe it — an energy field. It had no substance that I could detect, and yet it was real, almost palpable. I saw it as a sepia-colored essence, like a fog, that enveloped her and me.

Silently, speaking only in my mind, I said, "I think it's time for you to go," addressing a mental image of my mother.

I opened my eyes. My mother was looking right at me, her eyes alert, happy. She said, "All right." Was she answering what I had only said in my

mind? Was it coincidence?

"Go toward the light," I said, these words coming to me from Alex. "Go lightly. Go lightly."

She turned her head slightly to the right. Her face lit up and she uttered a little sound that was half surprise and half laughter. She spoke, and though I could not understand exactly what she was saying, I got the definite impression that she was greeting someone, someone she was very pleased to see.

There followed a conversation. She spoke in a strange way, her words coming fast like a record speeded up but with tones that sounded like a record played at half speed. Her face and her voice were animated, excited, joyous. From time to time she paused, as though to listen to the person she saw, happy and profoundly interested in whatever it was he or she was telling her. Her eyes were wide, her face taut, the way a person's face is when listening intently, pleasantly surprised or excited by what's being heard.

She and this presence I couldn't see or hear were having a wonderful time. And then it ended. She turned her eyes back to me, smiled.

"T," she said. "H...E...Q...U...I...E...T."

It took me a moment to realize what she was doing. She was spelling something out.

I puzzled over it for a moment, then putting it together said aloud: "The Quiet."

She nodded. For a moment she struggled for breath.

"Go lightly," I said. "Go lightly. Lightly. Lightly."

In a soft, calm voice I repeated it over and over again, holding her hand the whole time, close to her, at peace, feeling awed by the process yet feeling as though it was a common, everyday event. Nothing special. Nothing shocking or sensational. A gentle passage.

I felt her hand in mine, but she was slipping away. I could feel that, the way one stands on the ground and watches an airplane fade away, getting smaller, becoming a dot, then a blur, then only a parting in the clouds.

She was gone. Her face on the pillow, turned slightly to her left, bore an expression of profound peace. Somehow, even though the spirit had left her body, she looked radiant.

I said a little prayer, though I do not recall the words.

Realizing that my brother Paul, and perhaps others, would want to come and pay their last respects, I decided to brush Mother's hair and straighten up the room. I collected the flowers that people had brought and placed them on the tables beside her bed.

In the process of straightening up Mother's room, I accidentally dropped a photo of hers on the floor. As I bent down to pick it up, I felt a sharp pain in my backside. I let out a yelp and instantly dropped my pants, realizing I was being bitten by a wasp!

Even as this was happening, I remembered my mother's warning to me about figuring out a way to kick me in the butt if I wasn't doing what I was

supposed to be doing. I laughed out loud, looked up and, finding the humor in this cosmic joke, said, "Come on, Mother, lighten up!" The smile on her lifeless lips seemed to suggest that she was satisfied with her effort at comic relief.

My mother's gravemarker bears the following epitaph: "A grateful life, a joyous passage." It tells the story well.

The last part, the joyous passage, is something that I would never have been able to help her enjoy except for the assistance I got from Alex.



## ASTROLOGY GUIDES WORLD LEADERS

By Claire Metzger

**R**ONALD Reagan is not the first President to be influenced by the stars. According to the *Chicago Sun Times*, George Washington turned to Benjamin Franklin, an ace astrologer, to decide when Washington should be inaugurated, say the astrologers.

Teddy Roosevelt kept his birthchart mounted on a table in the White House and studied it daily.

Astrologer Laurie Brady said she did Gerald and Betty Ford's charts and told then-President Ford that he would not be reelected.

Other leaders who looked to astrologers included Adolf Hitler, who did so because his henchmen did so. Nazis reportedly commissioned Karl Kraft, a Swiss astrologer, and Wilhelm Wolff. The rise to power of a "Fuhrer-like" man in Germany was predicted by an astrologer named Elsbeth Ebertine.

Winston Churchill, knowing of Hitler's belief, wanted to know what the astrologers were telling the Germans. He consulted Hungarian novelist/astrologer Louis de Wohl, according to Richard Berendzen, president of American University and a professor of astronomy.

An astrologer was present at Louis

IV's birth because his father Louis XIII had a court astrologer named Jean Baptiste Morin.

J.P. Morgan reportedly said, "Millionaires don't use astrologers, billionaires do." Evangeline Adams, a noted astrologer during World War I, was his astrologer, says astrologer Robert Hand.

And so, possibly influenced by astrology, the Ronald Reagans have changed the street number of their future home in Bel Air, Calif., from 666 to 668 St. Cloud Road because the first number has satanic associations in the New Testament. Numerologists say, it's an unlucky number.

But now the Reagans must consider this change, according to *U.S. News & World Report*. Numerologist Alice Q. Reichard of Studio City pointed out that the numbers in the new address add up to 20. Also the sum of two and zero is two. In numerology a "two" house is considered a lucky address only if one of the owners has a name with *b*, *k*, or *t* in it. Nancy Davis Reagan and Ronald Wilson Reagan's names don't have those letters. Reichard suggested the Reagans move into a "six" house — for example 123 down the street.

## DEMONIC VOICE WARNED:

# “Better Stop .

A haunted house ... satanism ... and now eerie, threatening voices on a tape. What was I getting into?

By Debbi Dickinson

**I**N MARCH 1980 the Psychical Research Foundation in Durham, N.C., received a call from a Chicago woman who reported that strange things were happening in her house. Furniture was moving by itself; water was being turned on and off by some unseen force; there were knocks on the door and footsteps were heard upstairs (with no one there in either case). She also noted the presence of a mysterious cold spot in the basement and sounds of a chain jangling or being dragged across the attic floor.

The house belonged to the caller, whom I shall call Mrs. Smith\*, because she insisted that her name, the names of family members and the location of her home be kept strictly confidential. She said she had consulted a psychic who told her that two spirits lived in the house: an older male (about 200 years old) and a young girl who met a tragic death many years ago. According to the psychic, their spirits were suspended in time, trapped in the limbo of the earthly realm.

That March I happened to be in Durham attending the memorial service for Dr. J. B. Rhine, the famed researcher of extrasensory perception, with whom I had been acquainted since 1975. The next day I met with some people at the Psychical Research Foundation. Knowing I was from Chicago and had some background in parapsychology and the paranormal — I had a B.A. degree in psychology and a year toward my doctoral degree in clinical psychology — they asked me if I would be interested in investigating the phenomena reported by the Chicago woman.

Since I was the only person who at the time was free to take on the project, I called Mrs. Smith when I returned to Chicago and told her I would take the case. Background investigation showed that the house was built in 1897, on the site of an old Indian burial ground. Mrs. Smith had lived there with her husband, two daughters (then in their 20's), a son (then 18), whom I shall call John, and a dog.

For many years the daughters had been holding satanic masses upstairs,

---

\*Real name on file at FATE's editorial office.

# • . You're Next"

playing satanic records in Latin and regularly using a Ouija board. The activity now occurring centered on John but it occurred even when he was absent. It is well documented that paranormal happenings with children present at the age of puberty or adolescence may indicate poltergeist activity.

I listened with interest as Mrs. Smith told me her story. I was skeptical but determined to remain open-minded. Whatever the investigation revealed, the family needed help. With my background in clinical psychology I was more inclined to think the family needed counseling and I was sure a logical explanation for the disturbances would be found.

My fiancé Curt was assisting me. He had no background in the paranormal but I knew he could be totally objective. He works with a major company in scientific observation and methods. I knew he would be a valuable help to me in collecting data and would give me an unbiased opinion and critique afterwards. With us working together as a team, I felt confident that we

would solve the case. Not much time would pass before we learned that some things defy all logic and reason.

\* \* \*

CURT AND I met with Mrs. Smith at her house one week after the initial phone call. I had a list of questions to ask her as well as a camera and a tape recorder to record our interview. By taping the interview, I would have the whole story in Mrs. Smith's own words. I would be free to observe her reactions rather than write notes. Through my clinical training I knew a great deal of information can be obtained by observing facial expressions and body movements and listening closely to vocal intonations and speech patterns.

John would be interviewed separately that day. It is standard procedure to interview people separately to see where they agree or differ. All the occupants were under surveillance at the time of the investigation to make sure that no confederate was responsible for the disturbances. We were alert to any optical illusions or sound effects but we found none.

Curt checked the house before and during the investigation and no children or other persons were outside. Except for John and Mrs. Smith, we were alone (or so we thought) in the house. No windows were open and it was quiet outside. No television sets or radios were on in the house.

Our list of things to investigate included checking the possibility that the disturbances were caused by high-frequency radio waves, vibrations, drafts, creaking timbers, subsidence of the land under the house, underground streams, faulty plumbing or wiring, or rodents. Once sure that none of these were involved, we proceeded with the interview downstairs where most of the activity either occurred or could be heard.

Mrs. Smith first showed us the area near the furnace in the basement where the cold spot often had been detected. We noticed nothing unusual; the room was warm and of even temperature. When we checked back an hour later, however, the spot was ice cold. One foot away from the spot, the air was warm. The cold spot had sharply defined edges, creating a steep temperature drop in the space of only one inch. The furnace was on, since April in Chicago can be chilly.

I kept my composure but inside I was a little shaken. We went back to the main part of the room to talk further. The dog was there and suddenly he started running around in circles and barking at the air. The dog had been calm and friendly when we ar-

rived. Just as suddenly, the dog stopped barking and lay down, whining. The tape recorder was running the whole time.

One morning the dog was discovered in a locked room, although no one admitted having locked him in there. My first thought was that maybe the boy had been sleepwalking and locked up the dog. When we checked the lock, we found that this would not have been possible; the lock was hard to manage even by a person fully awake. The lock had a double-bolt action and required a key for opening.

On other occasions the dog barked and acted as if he were following an invisible something or someone around the room.

Mrs. Smith showed us a hidden staircase which led to an attic where she said footsteps were often heard, accompanied by the sound of a chain jangling or being dragged. As I focused my camera to take a picture of the opening, it appeared to be blocked by a white, filmy substance. I was stunned and moved the camera away from my face. When I looked again, whatever had been there was gone.

I told the others what I had seen and Curt examined my camera and pronounced it mechanically sound. Something had been there—but what?

Mrs. Smith let us borrow the Latin satanic records the girls had used in their Black Masses. Out of curiosity I wanted to play them, promising to return them at our next meeting. When we got home, I put the records away

with other albums. A few days later, when I looked for the satanic records, I found they had disappeared.

About a month later the records reappeared where I had first put them. How or why they vanished and then reappeared was never determined.

\*\*\*

WHEN WE got home from the interview, I at once transcribed the tape of the session. The first sounds on the tape were tinkling bells followed by a deep, husky male voice saying, "Better stop. You're next. . . ." There was a pause, then "...and you're next."

I shut off the recorder and screamed for Curt. When I told him what was on the tape, he thought I was joking — until he saw my horror was genuine.

We played the tape again and again and were alarmed to hear that we had picked up voices and sounds that had not been present during the interview. The bizarre messages did not interfere with our conversation; rather, they occurred during pauses. The mysterious voices were clearly audible. The other noises on the tape — the sound of a chain jangling, heavy footsteps and tinkling of bells — could be heard throughout our conversation.

The bell-like sound at the beginning of the tape is known in occult lore as an "astral bell" which is said to signify the entering of a spirit into our earthly dimension. The astral bell is also heard, occultists claim, when the spirit departs this world to return to his own.

Also on the tape was a young girl's voice playfully saying, "Here, doggie, doggie! Here, doggie, doggie!" Other young children could be heard laughing.

We estimate that this coincided with the time that the Smiths' dog started running in circles and barking at something invisible to the rest of us. The dog's bark could be heard on the tape.

As our interview continued, there was the sound of an inhuman voice speaking some unknown language in a pitch that defies description. Phonetically it sounded like "Bot-knee, bot-knee sox." The tape was not malfunctioning and our conversation could be clearly heard at all times.

When Mrs. Smith had told us a psychic claimed that the spirits of a young girl and an old man were living in the house, I thought it sounded insane. I did not tell her I was skeptical about spirits. But when the tape was played, a young girl could be heard saying, in a high-pitched, airy voice, "She doesn't believe in me." I know to whom this statement was directed.

I asked some neighbors if they would listen to the tape. I did not reveal what was on it because I did not want to influence them in any way. I still hoped Curt and I were imagining things.

Taking them individually into another room after they listened to the tape, I asked them what they had heard. They all reported hearing just what we had heard. Even stranger, the more we played the tape, the more noises and messages appeared independently of

the interview we had done. Neither Curt nor I slept well that night.

\*\*\*

ON MONDAY I called the Psychological Research Foundation and reported what had happened. The people there were interested and said they would send us a blank tape. We were instructed to arrange a second interview with Mrs. Smith and John and tape it to see if we could replicate what was on the first tape. A copy of the first tape was mailed to the foundation for its examination.

How had the voices and sounds appeared on the tape? Fraud was ruled out. Some of the voices on the tapes were different from ordinary human voices. The messages were, without doubt, directed at Curt and me. We concluded that the taped voices were produced paranormally.

Before long, strange things began to happen in our apartment. One day we decided to play the tape for some friends. We went to get it from the box in which we kept it — and it was gone. Neither Curt nor I had touched it since locking it away. We joked with our friends that it had disappeared like the satanic records we had borrowed. Curt fetched the tape player to listen to some musical recordings our friends had brought along. He discovered the interview tape inside. Someone or something was anxious to be heard.

One night my fiancé awoke out of a sound sleep to see a ball of blue-white light dancing around the bedroom and on the walls. Our third-floor bedroom

faced the woods — no streetlight, car lights or reflections could account for the source. Curt woke me up but the moment I turned to look, the ball of light vanished. I never saw it. Curt wishes he hadn't.

The next morning I was awakened at three o'clock by the sound of the kitchen cabinets opening and closing four times in succession. My first thought was that Curt was getting a snack. I was startled to find him sleeping soundly beside me. The noise did not wake him. When I checked the kitchen, no one was there. The slamming sounds reoccurred several nights in a row at approximately the same time.

Our dog began acting strangely in our dining area. He was continually looking up at the recessed lighting and suddenly ducking as if something were swooping down at him. He would yelp and retreat to the far end of the apartment with his tail tucked between his legs.

I decided to visit several ministers and relate what was happening. I was hesitant, fearing they would recommend I take a long rest at our local mental-health facility. Instead they listened to the tape and urged that I lock it up and never play it again. Whatever we had captured on the tape was gaining strength and force with each replay. We were told not to discard or destroy the tape, since this might "let loose" whatever was on it. The ministers felt there was something demonic about the whole situation but

they did not want to get involved.

Our lease soon expired and we moved to a new home.

Fortunately, that brought the disturbances to an end. Our dog's behavior immediately returned to normal.

After much contemplation I de-

ecided, for my own sanity and safety, not to pursue the Smith case further. If I had not experienced the phenomena myself, I would not have believed them possible. They are something we lived through — and never will be able to forget.



### POPE GOES TO TRIAL

*By Ruth Burke*

**T**HE MAN who was later known to the world as Pope Formosus became Bishop of Porto in 864 having proven that he was intelligent and devoted to the religious life. Pope John VIII, however, feared competition and excommunicated him in 876. Formosus was readmitted to the church as a layman after promising that he would never try to gain back his seat at Porto. But four years later Pope Marinus I gave him his former job.

Formosus was apparently doing well when he inadvertently put in motion the events which were to lead to his hideous mock trial by consecrating Stephen as Bishop of Anagni in 885.

In 891 Formosus became pope, Guido III of Spoleto became emperor and Lambert, Guido's son, became co-emperor.

The reign of Guido and Lambert wasn't a good one. Pope Formosus asked for help from King Arnulf of Carinthia and crowned him emperor in 896. Arnulf was powerful in the Frankish Empire and was supposed to rescue Italy from pagans and evil Christians. He became paralyzed, however, before he aided Formosus and so Lambert was unaffected.

Unfortunately Formosus died, but his works lived on. Lambert proposed a synod to declare the Formosus pontificate illegal and asked Stephen to assist.

Stephen presided over the "cadaveric council" attempting to invalidate Formosus' appointments. Stephen had been elected pope to succeed Formosus and had, in doing so, broken canon law because it was illegal for a bishop to transfer from one see to another (a pope is also a bishop).

Formosus was disinterred after he had been dead for nine months. He was brought to trial and convicted. The fingers of his right hand were cut off and his body thrown in the Tiber River. A monk fished the body out and buried it.

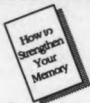
Pope Theodore II, who held office for 20 days in 897, formed a synod to revalidate Formosus' acts so that the clergy who had been demoted were restored to their positions. Working quickly, the pope also instituted an honorable burial for Formosus.

Stephen hadn't gotten off easily. An uprising against him resulted in his imprisonment and strangulation. He was succeeded by Romanus and later Theodore II.

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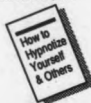
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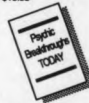
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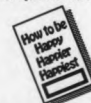
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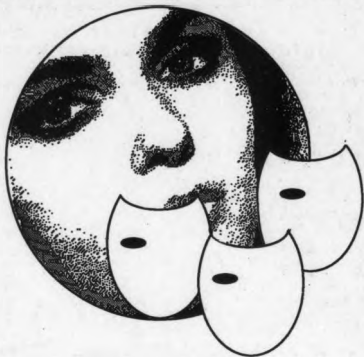
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# Beyond The Three Faces of Eve

The world's most famous victim of multiple  
personality escapes from madness and fear.

By Christopher Phillips  
Reproduced by permission from  
*Parade Magazine*, November 15, 1987.

WHEN THE movie *The Three Faces of Eve* came out in 1957, no one knew who the real Eve was. Even Joanne Woodward — who won an Oscar for her riveting portrayal of a young woman with multiple-personality disorder, a rare and baffling mental illness — did not know Eve's true identity.

This is the story of Christine Costner Sizemore — the real Eve — and her life since the movie. It is a story of how she drove the demons from her life and learned to be a whole person.

"When the movie came out, I didn't see it," recalls Chris, now in her early 60's, demure, petite and softspoken. "My therapist at that time, Dr. Corbett Thigpen, who wrote the book on which the movie was based, told me not to. And he told me never to tell anybody I was Eve. He said if I did, my children wouldn't be able to go to school and my husband would lose his job. I like to believe that he was trying to protect me. There was such a stigma attached to mental illness — a mental patient could be treated like a leper.

"I wasn't even cured when the movie and book came out, though Dr. Thigpen insisted I was. He didn't feel there was a need for further treatment. I didn't know where to turn."

Thigpen today believes he never said Chris had fully recovered. "I hoped to God she was well," he says, "but you never really know in any psychiatric condition. I thought she had some problems of adjustment, but I did not consider them *that* serious. I

had no idea she was still suffering from multiple-personality disorder. I admire her greatly for all she has done. I feel great friendship for her."

Chris tried four therapists over the succeeding years — to no avail. In despair, she attempted suicide. "I felt I was too great a burden on my family and that I would never get well," she says. Then her family moved to Fairfax, Va., where in 1970 she met Dr. Tony Tsitos, a psychiatrist. "The first thing he said was, 'You can get well,'" Chris recalls. "I'd always wanted to believe that, and for the first time I really did."

In 1974, after four years of intensive therapy with Dr. Tsitos, her own unique personality emerged. The 22 personalities — three at a time — that had lived inside Chris for almost her entire life, tearing her apart, finally disappeared. Then she faced an even greater challenge.

"Here I was, in my 40's," she says, "and I didn't even have a high school diploma. I had no skills, no training. I wanted to do something worthwhile with my life. But I didn't know who I was or who I wanted to be."

Then her twin sisters asked if she'd speak to their college classes about her illness. "I told them I didn't know how to speak before an audience, that I'd been isolated all my life," says Chris. "But, to be honest, that wasn't my greatest fear. No one besides my family and my therapist knew I was Eve. I was afraid of the rejection I might face from people.

"I talked with Dr. Tsitos about it,"

she adds, "and he told me, 'Be prepared for rejection, because the world doesn't necessarily love a mental patient. But it's better to do that than to go through the rest of your life scared to death that somebody's going to find out.'"

Chris decided to talk to the class. But instead of the 15 students she had expected, about 600 people were packed into an auditorium, including a large contingent from the media. "I was terrified," she recalls. "I shook so hard my knees were bumping together. I said that I was Eve of *The Three Faces of Eve*, that I had been well for a short while, that I really didn't know how to speak to a group of people, but if they wanted to know something about my life, I'd answer their questions."

Afterward, the audience gave her a standing ovation. "I was crying, they were crying," she says. "I felt so relieved that it wasn't a secret any longer. And I realized then that I had a calling: to continue to speak out and shed light on the plight of the mentally ill."

That evening she told her family it was no longer a secret that she was Eve. "All my son Bobby said was, 'Mom, I want to go tell my two best friends,'" Chris recalls. "My daughter, Taffy, who had a family, asked me not to tell anyone where she lived because she did not want attention drawn to her family. Even now, Taffy prefers not to talk to anyone about it. I can appreciate that."

Note of Chris' fears came true. "Everyone treated us wonderfully," she

says. "And that showed me that people wanted to learn about mental illness. They wanted to understand it."

"Fear keeps the mentally ill from seeking help," Chris adds. "And they're ashamed of their illness. Lots of people, even many in the medical community, still see mental illness as a disgrace. But it can happen to anybody. One in three households this year is going to have a mental patient. We need to accept it as we do any other illness. There is treatment for all, and many can be cured. Almost all mental patients can go on to lead a productive life."

Chris was divorced from her first husband, Ralph White, in 1953. Later that year, she married Don Sizemore. Today they live in Ramseur, N.C. "I think the main reason I was able to be cured," she says, "was because of my family's love and support. They stood by me in the darkest of times. I'm so grateful I had a family that wasn't ashamed I was mentally ill. Don sold practically everything we had so I could be treated. Most people have no idea what the families of mental patients have to go through. I know it had to be devastating for my family, but together we pulled through. We have a closeness, a special bond, that can get us through the worst of times."

"If she had had cancer, I wouldn't have left her," says Don, a slim, quiet man who is a retired electrician. "I looked at this as I would have any other illness."

Still, once Chris was cured, new

conflicts arose in her family. "I think Don was worried when I started traveling, doing my own thing," she explains. "He was so concerned, he took six weeks off from work and went with me. Finally, I had to tell him not to come with me, at least for a while. I told him I had to do this by myself, to find out if I could make it on my own . . . Change can be scary. I wasn't brave about all this. I was determined."

Don also resented her newfound independence. "I told Don I was a part of this marriage and was going to have a say," says Chris, "and he was going to have to hear me out. And we worked it out. I understand the position Don was in. For all those years, he'd had to assume all responsibility for me. But I had made up my mind that my marriage, or anything else, wasn't going to stop me from being a whole person."

In 1977, Chris wrote her own story, *I'm Eve*. Every year, she delivers scores of speeches about the plight of the mentally ill. Recently, she returned to Augusta, Ga., where she dedicated a psychiatric hospital. "Augusta was where I received my first therapy," she says. "It was a triumph to go back there a well person." She also helped found the International Society for the Study

of Multiple Personality and Dissociation and is setting up a support program for families of mental patients. And she serves on the boards of several mental-health associations and lobbies state legislatures and Congress on related issues.

One of her dearest projects is the toll-free hotline she is working on to set up for the mentally ill. "Sometimes all it takes to make a difference for mental patients is for them to have somebody there who they know will listen," she explains. She herself receives numerous calls each week, at all hours, from victims of multiple-personality disorder.

"I didn't realize when I first sought help what a long journey I was embarking on," she says. "It was hard work — but it was worth it, because the last 12 years have been the most exciting of my life. It's wonderful to be a well person — to look forward to getting up in the morning. At 61, I'm exploring a whole new world. Things that most people take for granted — feeling the wind against your face, smelling a flower's fragrance, feeling the texture of a tree — I'm enjoying like a child. Life is just really getting started for me."



#### DATING SERVICE CREATES PERFECT MATCH

**A**FTER DATING for over five months, Reece Sloan and Cindy McClellan discovered a problem in their relationship — they're brother and sister. Adopted by different families as infants, they met through a dating service in Wichita, Kans. McClellan, 38, ended her three-year search to find her natural family when she learned Sloan, 31, is her brother.



# The Great Oregon Witch Hunt

A high school girl commits suicide and a small town falls victim to fears and hysteria right out of the Middle Ages. . . .

By Stephanie Fox

**O**AKRIDGE is a little town nestled in the green mountains of the Pacific Northwest. It's a typical small Oregon lumber town, the sort of place where people still talk about the day the town's brothel burned down back in 1928. In the spring of 1983, a politically ambitious police chief and a fundamentalist minister managed to

stir up enough excitement to last the town another 60 years.

During the winter of 1982 a young girl named Ginny Walker\* killed herself in a fit of adolescent despair, leaving behind two shocked parents. But

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\*All names with asterisks are pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the individuals. Real names are on file at FATE's editorial office.

the Walkers' grief was disturbed only a week after her death, when they were approached by police chief John Schurz who said he had evidence that Ginny had been involved with witches. These witches, Schurz claimed, were responsible for the girl's suicide.

Before her death Ginny had told some friends how she had rescued the head of a childhood doll from a trash fire and how she found a coyote's skull in the forests surrounding Oakridge. In going through Ginny's possessions after her death, her parents found the scorched doll's head, the coyote skull, an incense burner, and buttons of various rock groups. Her friends later recalled Ginny's mundane explanation of these items, but to the police chief they were proof of her involvement with witchcraft.

The police began an investigation of the girl's friends and found that Ginny's best friend's mother, Susan Newell,\* was calling herself a witch. Newell actually knew nothing about modern-day Witchcraft or Pagan beliefs. She was not aware of the basic tenets of modern Witches — that the earth is sacred, that everything is connected to everything else, and that each person is responsible for his own actions.\*\* Newell had no notion of witchcraft's origins in the ancient nature-worshiping religions of pre-Christian Europe. All she knew she had learned on the late-late show and in cheap Gothic novels. But that was

sufficient for the police.

Newell was taken to the police station for interrogation, where for several hours police chief Schurz asked her questions.

*Schurz:* In my line of work, I work with a lot of people. Sometimes I can tell a lot about people. You know what I think? I think you're a high priestess.

*Newell:* What?

*Schurz:* You're a witch, aren't you?

*Newell:* I guess you could call it that.

When further questioned in this manner, Newell claimed that she was the high priestess of the Golden Dawn, the name of her coven, so Schurz related.

That she was an actual member of the Golden Dawn is highly unlikely. This was a notorious group of early-20th-Century British occultists who included Aleister Crowley as well as the Irish poet William Butler Yeats. It disbanded in 1947. It may have been the only real occult group Newell had ever heard of and was probably the first name that came into her mind.

Under the pressure of the interrogation Newell named six other witches residing in Oakridge. Several of these people had been friends of Ginny Walker.

Selected portions of the tapes of Newell's interrogation were played to the city council and local ministers. During these selected playings only two of the accused witches' names were mentioned. The newly accused were two young women, Betty Tay-

\*\*See Bjorn Thorsson's "The Rebirth of Witchcraft," April-May 1988 *FATE*.

lor\* and Jennifer Lindsay.\* Both attributed the public release of their names to Schurz's personal dislike of them.

"I'm an uppity woman," said Taylor. "I live with my boyfriend and I don't wear a bra. I don't have church connections. I'm not one of *them*." She said that since the tapes were released publicly indicating that she was a witch, "grocery store people whisper and scurry away, pointing fingers."

Lindsay left town to avoid the harassment to which she was subjected. Taylor continued to live in her Oakridge home, spied upon by neighbors.

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**M**EANWHILE, Dave Stewart, a minister and part-time police officer, took the doll's head and the other "evidence" of witchcraft to show his and other congregations.

Witchcraft had caused Ginny's death, the people were told. No other reasons were advanced as causes of her suicide. Never mentioned were the rumors of the Walkers' marital problems, Mr. Walker's failing health, or Ginny's possible lack of adult guidance.

Public meetings were scheduled, led by Schurz and a fundamentalist minister, the Rev. C. E. Thomas. The first meeting attracted only a handful of people but the second drew nearly 40, quite a crowd for the small town. And the press was there in force.

Although state law says that public meetings must be open to all, announcements distributed in the churches con-

tained this sentence: "Unwanted people will be excluded from the meeting." The meetings were advertised to "discuss witchcraft, sexual abuse, child abuse and pornography," but witchcraft was the only topic ever spoken of at the meetings.

Despite the "evidence," the Walkers doubted that witchcraft had any part to play in their daughter's suicide. "We're not blaming anybody," they told the press.

The Walkers' doubts notwithstanding, Thomas and Schurz were riding high on the wave of hysteria. They called a third meeting at the high school. Three hundred persons showed up. The press, too, arrived but television and tape recorders were banned from the auditorium in direct violation of state law.

The meeting opened with a plea to bring Christianity and prayer back into the schools. Ministers told the crowd that the only protection they had against the evils of witchcraft was "to come to church." The ministers advised them that there would be counseling and classes in the public schools taught by the ministers themselves.

Another former Oakridge police officer, who claimed to have had ties with the occult but who recently had been "born again," testified. He, too, had a late-late-show view of witchcraft. Not everyone in the audience believed his stories about witchcraft.

But most accepted what the ministers told them. One man asked Reverend Thomas for his credentials to dis-

cuss witchcraft. Thomas raised a Bible over his head. "This is my credentials!" he shouted. And the crowd cheered.

"We used to be able to burn them or cut off their heads," said the reverend of the witches. "We can't do that now, but we can sure stop them."

Newspapers, television and radio all over the state were covering the story. Although Thomas wanted the public to be aware of the existence of witches, he was not happy with the media coverage. It had made the town the laughingstock of the state.

Besides the public meetings, the city council, school board and police advisory board convened in secret.

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**I**T WAS IN the secret meetings that officials may have made the decision to remove all books pertaining to the occult from the school library. Student president Shannon McPherson protested. "It's lousy," he said. "They're trying to keep us in the dark."

The school superintendent, Ken Carver, denied that the books had been removed from the shelves. He claimed he had merely "checked out" all 40 of the books "just like anybody can." He then passed them on to a censorship committee made up of parents and teachers.

With the books gone, the lack of information available on witchcraft only helped spread alarm through the high school student population. Any excuse was enough for one student to accuse another and they enacted me-

dieval tests to determine whether another student was a witch. One student was suspected because she wore a black sweater and skirt. She was approached by another student who pressed a paper cross against her arm.

"You must not be a witch," the accuser said, "because the cross didn't burn you."

Other students used the situation to get attention. They pretended that they were witches; they left death-threat notes on other students' lockers or claimed they'd hexed or been hexed by other students and teachers.

The school superintendent made up a list of all students who had ever checked out any of the occult books and distributed it to the teachers. Those on the list were watched for possible involvement with witchcraft.

Reverend Thomas advised parents to watch their children for signs of occult activity. He told parents and students to look to him and other local ministers to lead the fight against non-Christian religions such as Witchcraft, Hinduism and Buddhism.

"If you aren't a Christian, you can't fight it," he declared. "The devil will deceive you. This is a spiritual battle and the devil is as real as God is. We have witches here in Oakridge from the very pits of hell."

But the reverend and police chief had long since lost control of the situation, and the monster they'd created began to turn on them. Thomas was receiving negative letters from other ministers around the country. "They

tell me I'm off the wrong end. Well, that's what they told Peter and John," he said.

Betty Taylor, one of the original women accused of being a witch, hired a lawyer who started making slander-suit noises. Accusations could no longer be made without proof for fear of litigation. Although it was announced that there would be other meetings, none was ever held.

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SEVERAL WEEKS after the final meeting, the Walkers appeared on a statewide television talk show. They told the audience that after learning about Paganism and Witchcraft from legitimate members of the Old Religion and other occult groups, they concluded that Newell wasn't a witch, although they still disliked her and thought she might have some responsibility for their daughter's suicide. They said they saw nothing wrong with Witchcraft and nature religions and felt everyone should be free to

choose his own style of worship. "We don't believe in banning any religion," they said.

The reverend continued to rail against witchcraft, other non-Christian religions and liberal Christianity, which he called "tommyrot." But he could no longer make direct accusations against individuals for fear of legal action. The police chief was subsequently demoted.

Ironically, during the entire episode no one ever explained how the so-called witchcraft had led to Ginny Walker's suicide.

Since the episode Oakridge has again become the quiet little town it once was. But beneath the surface here, and in places like it, runs a fear of things and people who might be different. Persecution takes many forms and comes in many guises. Witch hunts — real witch hunts — are not dim memories from the Dark Ages. They are real, they still happen and they can happen again.



## TWO HOLES IN ONE NO LIE

*By W. Ritchie Benedict*

A GOLFER in Florida, who shot two holes in one in the same game couldn't have chosen better witnesses to confirm his story — three priests, reports Associated Press. Buddy Herrera, 61, performed the feat on the sixth and ninth holes of the Riviera Country Club.

Three Roman Catholic priests —

Xavier Morras, Cyril Hudak and Gilberto Fernandez — made up the foursome. When Herrera teed off at the sixth hole, they saw the ball head toward the green and then lost sight of it. He said he felt the shot was good, but didn't realize just how good until Morras shouted, "Another one!" Herrera finished with a 74.

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# MY PROOF OF

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# SURVIVAL

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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, 3510 Western Ave., Highland Park, Ill. 60035. Manuscripts must show author's name and address and include a stamped self-addressed return envelope.

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## GRANDMA HELD MY HAND

By Arnold Roland

As told to Frankie Roland

**M**Y grandmother Babe Roland lived to be 94. She kept her own house in Nashville, Ga., as well as a cheery attitude and the affection of her grandchildren.

I loved so much to stay with her that I would hide when Mother came to take me back home, so she started sending Dad instead.

When my parents divorced I went to live with Grandma. I was nine years old, and she spent the next four years molding my life.

Later, when Grandma's birthday came around in March, my wife would say, "Now, honey, I'd much rather you go visit your grandmother now while she can enjoy you. She'll not know about flowers or your presence at her funeral."

So we budgeted our funds and I flew down to Georgia to see Grand-

ma each March for the last few years of her life.

When word came that she had died, we drove the several hundred miles from southeastern Kansas to her funeral in south Georgia. We did not cry, nor did we feel sad. We were just happy that she was out of her suffering.



Babe Roland

Two years went by and in March 1986, I had a sudden and severe heart attack. While I was in the Coffeyville Regional Hospital in Coffeyville, Kans., Grandma came to me. She was the most beautiful creature I have ever seen. Dressed in silk and white lace, she was jumping and bouncing around like a young girl.

She pulled at my hand saying, "We've got to hurry, honey," and urged me to run faster. We were in a big field of beautiful flowers, just the two of us.

I tried to hold on as Grandma hurried me along, tugging on my hand, but I lost contact with her and woke up in the Cardiac Unit of St. John's Hospital in Tulsa, Okla. My wife Frankie was there and told me I had had two cardiac arrests. I had been airlifted to Tulsa from Coffeyville.

I know today that my grandmother is in heaven and I also know I almost went to join her.—*Coffeyville, Kans.*

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### VOICE OF THE DEAD

By Lera Rae

AS I STOOD looking at the gorgeous view from the sun-deck of my home in Fairfield Bay, Ark., one afternoon in August 1986, I was absorbed in thought about my brother, Cecil L. Pipes, who had died on June 10, 1984. We had been close, perhaps because I was five years older and enjoyed "bossing"

him. I remembered his happy, bubbly outlook on life, his rapport with people and his enjoyment in playing jokes. Sadness flooded me as I remembered how he always looked after me despite my dictatorial manner.

I needed to return a borrowed book and thought that perhaps the walk would help me to forget my sad memories. The day was quite warm, so I decided to take a short cut through the woods. As I walked along the narrow path, suddenly I distinctly heard Cecil's voice saying urgently:

"Sis, stop! Don't move. Stand absolutely still."

I stood still and looked all around. I knew it was Cecil's voice, besides which he was the only person who had ever called me "Sis."

I raised a hand to wipe away tears when I heard him again: "Oh, Sis—don't move a finger! Be still."

I glanced down and froze in horror as I saw the beady eyes and the flicking tongue of a big snake on the path—a deadly copperhead. I would not have noticed it for its coloration blended perfectly with the earth and fallen leaves.

Standing absolutely still, I gazed at the snake, remembering the deadliness of its poisonous bite. Mentally I said an urgent prayer to God for help. Slowly, deliberately, the snake started to move. I closed my eyes and held my breath. When I looked again it was slithering away from

me through the leaves.

I continued to wait, motionless, until I could no longer see the snake. Then I turned and ran back to the house where I flung myself across the bed, sobbing in a mixture of relief, amazement and awe. As often in the past, once again my dear brother had looked after me. This time I was sure he had saved my life.—*Fairfield Bay, Ark.*

## GLIMPING THE OTHER SIDE

By James Bell

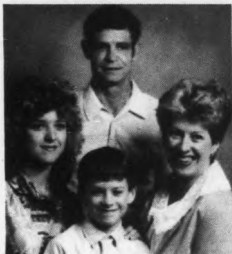
**I**N FEBRUARY 1986 my life was forever changed. I had the flu and was taking massive doses of aspirin, which acts as a blood thinner as well as an antihistamine. Tired, I lay down for a short nap. When I woke up an hour later, my pillow was soaked with blood.

I hurried to the bathroom to wash my face, then held my head back to stop the flow of blood. It ran down my throat. The front of my pajamas was scarlet. My wife Martha walked in and cried, "My God! What happened?"

"Nosebleed," I answered. "I can't stop it. We've got to go to the emergency room."

"You'll be okay, Dad," my small son said as we got in the car. Fear was on his face. By the time we got to St. Mary's Hospital in St. Louis, I could barely walk. This was no ordinary nosebleed.

My nose was packed. Because of my low blood pressure, I was put in



James Bell and family

a room for the night. "The anti-histamine you took dried up your nasal passages and broke a vein in your sinus cavity," the doctor explained to me as I was put in bed. Thank God, it's all over, I thought happily.

Exhausted, I fell into a deep sleep. About midnight I woke up choking on blood. I rang for the nurse. She took one look and felt my pulse. Within minutes two other nurses appeared to help. "Dangerously below normal," one said. "Get the doctor."

I managed to sit up. Blood poured from my mouth. "You'll be okay," the nurse quavered. "Hold on! Please hold on."

I'm dying, I realized. Then the fear left me. I felt so peaceful. I remember others rushing into the room. "Where's the doctor?" one of

them said. It's too late for him, I thought, as a beautiful white light completely enveloped me. I felt a great joy, a great love for everybody. I had never been happier.

To the medical staff, I was unconscious, but I could see and hear everything going on as the nurse and two doctors worked to cauterize the broken vein and get blood back into my system. I had no desire to return.

With a shock, I found myself in the land of the living. The bleeding had stopped. I began the process of healing. And for days, as I lay in the hospital room, I would close my eyes and remember the great joy I had experienced as I watched them work on my prostrate body. I can still remember it, and my fear of death is forever gone. Something better really is waiting for us.—*St. Louis, Mo.*

### KEEPING IN TOUCH

By Mavis C. Austin

ONE EVENING in January 1988 the telephone rang. I had just settled down in my home in Houston to hear the evening news, but I picked up the phone and said, "Hello?" On the line was Carol Moore, my friend of 40 years. She was a recluse, long a widow, and lived alone about 50 miles from me.

I had kept up with Carol over the years only by my persistence and interest in her. She had become obese in the last few years and it was difficult for her to get into my car so that I could take her out. Also my husband John was recovering from heart surgery, which made it more difficult for us to make plans.

Our conversation covered the same topics we always talked about: "How are you? Are you a great grandmother again? Are you glad the holidays are over, and have you gone anywhere recently?"

Several weeks later I remembered that it was time to check on Carol. I dialed her number; no answer. This was unusual because Carol was always at home. I decided she was either asleep or in the yard.

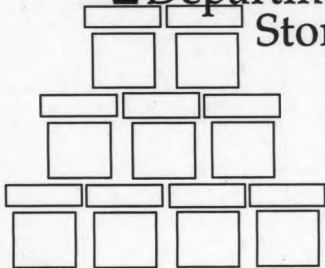
After dinner I called again; still no answer. I knew something was wrong since Carol never goes outside at night. I checked local hospitals without result.

Finally I placed a long distance call to her son Don in Sugar Land, Tex. He told me that Carol had died several months ago in 1987. I just could not believe him. I know Carol's voice and it was Carol with whom I had talked on the phone.

Did Carol call to "keep in touch" and to tell me she had passed on?—*Houston, Tex.*



# The Serpent in the Department Store



Watch out — deadly perils await you in the most seemingly safe places, and beware especially the things that lurk in flower pots.

By Michael Goss

**I**T WAS like meeting an old friend again. Tucked away at the foot of a page between the cartoons and an advertisement for something calling itself a tummy-trimmer was *The Star*'s latest snake story. *The Star*, I should explain to those not familiar with it, is a paper with a tolerance for the wilder fringes of news extreme even by Brit-

ish tabloid standards. It used to be fond of little reports about snakes in unusual situations and settings. And now, under the heading "Snake Bites Shopper," *The Star* of February 12, 1987, was reviving its old fascination with scary snake stories.

This one related that 24-year-old Louise Parks, while browsing through

a pile of rugs in the Army & Navy Store at Victoria, London, had been bitten by a cobra — “a baby snake that had escaped detection in the consignment . . . from India and Pakistan” — and was rushed to St. Thomas’ Hospital with her arm swollen to “twice its normal size.” Nonetheless the bite did not prove serious. Louise was allowed home after a couple of days, while the little cobra had long since been captured following evacuation of the entire second-floor furnishing department. Store manager David Ross confirmed (albeit ambiguously) that an “incident” had occurred.

*The Star’s* snake stories rarely fail to amaze and amuse me. What amazed and amused me in this case was not the idea of a venomous snake loose (or berugged) in a London store visited daily by hundreds of unsuspecting shoppers, but *The Star’s* audacity in passing off as a genuine real-life event something that was proved the opposite nearly 20 years earlier.

Perhaps you’ve already had the Snake-in-a-Rug told to you with slight departures from the way *The Star* told it to me and a few million others. The victim is consistently female and most likely she’ll be shopping in some well-known discount store, but the item she examines may not be a rug. It could as easily be a carpet or a blanket — even an *electric* blanket — but it could also be a garment: a blouse, a sweater or a fur coat. Regardless of what it is, and far from accidentally, the item will be an import of Oriental origin.

In the act of running her hand over the texture of the merchandise, the shopper feels a sharp prickling sensation which she assumes came from a pin, a staple or a wire. Alas, no. Within a short period of time her hand or arm swells, her face turns bright red or her head feels dizzy. She may collapse on the spot, or she may put that off until she reaches the hospital. Diverging from *The Star’s* moderately cheerful ending, the story may insist that the unlucky shopper loses a limb through an emergency amputation and not uncommonly she dies. As subsequent investigation back at the store reveals, she has been bitten by a venomous snake — perhaps only one of several — that stowed away in the item before it left the Oriental exporter.

One final feature and possibly the most significant: If you deign to check the purportedly true tale through any of the details — the name of the store, the victim or the hospital may have been provided — the person on the far end of the phone will react to your inquiry either with blank incomprehension or with vast irritation. The latter will come from having to deny yet again a tale with no foundation in fact.

This or something like it was what transpired when I phoned the Army & Navy Store about *The Star’s* article. It was not possible for me to speak with the store manager and incident-confirmer David Ross, chiefly because he didn’t exist. Nor did the baby cobra. Nor did the 24-year-old Louise Parks

— at least not in this context. “We’ve no idea how *The Star* got the story,” confessed the person who fielded my call. No, of course it hadn’t happened. Still, “for a few days we lived in dread.”

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OUT-OF-PLACE exotic animals—snakes, pumas, panthers, bears, crocodiles — are familiar heroes of Fortean incidents: creatures that defy our preconceived ideas of what is possible.\* They are zoologically and socially inconvenient. Some researchers might protest that the Army & Navy’s response was a calculated cover-up, an effort to suppress a terribly compromising story. Like an *Observer* journalist who also checked the story — and then derided it comprehensively — I can’t believe that for a moment. I can sooner accept the Snake-in-a-Rug as a version of a story thoroughly familiar to folklorists, a type known sometimes as the urban belief tale but more frequently as the contemporary or urban legend.

Strictly speaking, not all stories designated in this way are intrinsically urban and some, like the ubiquitous Vanishing Hitchhiker, have too long a historical track record to be “contemporary” except in the sense they are still being circulated today. A large number don’t deserve to be called stories, either; they are brief rumorized statements rather than complete narratives.

Academic niceties aside, the main characteristic of these legends, be they spoken or printed, is that they are almost always told as true-life events with occasional gestures toward corroboration intended to place the claims beyond dispute. “This happened to a friend of my brother’s boss,” we are told, or “it was all in the papers.” Just as important, they tend to be accepted as such while passing from narrator to narrator and place to place and may condition the attitudes and behavior of countless persons — not always for the better.

So far as can be established, and with urban legends you can seldom be certain, the Snake-in-a-Rug first wriggled into view sometime around late 1968, peaked in May 1969 and, having conquered most of the U.S.A., went into hibernation during the early 1970’s. There are indications that some (though perhaps not *the*) earliest versions may have appeared in upstate New York, but the largest single collection — 32 versions collected between 1969 and 1970 by Patrick B. Mullen — shows the story was current not long afterwards in Buffalo, Columbus, Washington and Houston.

The texts, mostly supplied by oral informants, focused on offending items from Hong Kong, Korea, Pakistan, India, Japan and China; the precise location didn’t matter so long as it was somewhere in the Far East. The offender within the offending item was variously identified — a fly, a spider, a “bug,” a “worm” or merely some-

\*See my “Escaped Boas and Other Urban Terrors,” August-September 1986 FATE.

thing venomous — but most versions stipulated that it was a snake. In one variation on the theme, the cobras (yes, plural) were wrapped inside the rug as eggs which incubated thanks to the heat of the store where it and they ended up. In another, the menace became active only when the newly-purchased electric blanket was switched on. A few concluded with a nod toward the narrator's sense of justice; far from dying quietly, the shopper was said to have brought and won a "whopping lawsuit."

Around the same period Indiana residents apparently had little to fear from rugs or blankets but everything to fear from blouses or sweaters — especially the Orientally-imported ones sold at branches of K-Mart. One of the more curious aspects of some urban legends is the way in which they attach themselves, apparently at random, to certain widely-known brand names or businesses, yet ignore others that seem equally apt and accessible. Most folklorists reject the theory that these libelous labels are affixed by operators of rival concerns, but a few K-Mart managers appear to have reached that conclusion and actually issued public statements denying that deadly serpents came with their garments. Unfortunately, any kind of official repudiation of such rumors only injects them with a vague credibility, increasing and prolonging their otherwise-momentary active life.

Indiana State University's Xenia E. Cord, who was one of the first to draw

folklorists' attention to this ostensibly new form of contemporary legend, managed to interview some K-Mart managers on the extent of the rumor — having reassured them she did not intend to help it to spread further. According to them, the thing had been going on for several months. One manager, harassed by multiple inquiries, had been confronted by a man who claimed his daughter had staged an on-the-spot investigation until she shook a snake loose from a K-Mart sweater.

Ken Atwell, who refuted the tales in his "City Beat Notebook" column for the *Kokomo Tribune* of May 25, 1969, speculated that they had originated among dissatisfied K-Mart foodhandlers some days previously. But it is more probable that they were merely repeating a story current long before that in other parts of the state — and elsewhere.

By this time, however, the Snake-in-a-Rug was already past its serpentine prime. The popularity of the tale dwindled (perhaps as much because of overexposure as of constant repudiation in the press) and henceforth its revivals were sporadic. It resurfaced in Texas not long afterwards (adapting itself to local conditions so that the snake occupied the pocket of a *Mexican fur coat* instead of a rug or blouse). But its credentials were no more reliable. *The Dallas Morning News* of June 15, 1970, approached a doctor who supposedly had seen the envenomed victim brought in. He modestly referred the newspaper to another

doctor who said he'd only heard talk of it but hadn't actually seen it. As it turned out, no hospital in the city had any trace of this memorable case. Finally the paper rang up the alleged victim — who was in perfect health.

Among the last recorded examples of the type (February 1972) the snake was now a "black asp" from Taiwan, striking from the lining of a coat at a K-Mart store in Boise, Idaho. This almost certainly was not the legend's farewell performance but hereafter it would enjoy nothing like its currency of mid-1969.

Still, who apart from fashion writers can predict revivals? A conspiracy of circumstances may revive even the most discredited rumor. The only surprising thing is the length of time over which a story can lie dormant before springing up, lively and believable as ever, in some corner far removed from its last quarters. Urban legends are international travelers. Perhaps it was unrealistic of me to be shocked when the berugged snake reared its head in England — in *The Star* — in 1987.

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LEGENDS are protean beings with a cellular capacity to split, amalgamate and evolve into new forms. The Snake-in-a-Rug may have been elderly before anyone took notice of it. Patrick Mullen observed that a rumor-like tale of a child fatally bitten at a fairground by one or more venomous snakes (concealed in the mouth of a wooden horse or in the compartment

of a ride) had gone the rounds in America as early as 1940. This distinct type is still in circulation, as is the one enshrined in an article from *The Times* of London, November 11, 1946:

In Tottenham Court Road on Saturday a pickpocket approached a well-dressed man, furtively placed an experienced hand into a bulging pocket and removed the contents. Suddenly a yell was heard above the noise of the traffic and the pickpocket ran down a side street. He had picked from the pocket of a magician a small non-poisonous snake, which wriggled down a drain and disappeared.

Compared with the Snake-in-a-Rug, the differences in this story may seem greater than the similarities. There is no shopper but a magician — introduced, perhaps, to make credible the idea that a man would walk the streets of London with a snake in his pocket. And the snake is nonvenomous; there's no harm done except to the pickpocket's nervous system, and who cares about him?

These objections aside, however, the theme is a familiar one: a hidden snake, a person who gets something for which he didn't bargain. The Snake and the Pickpocket is a highly moral tale. We applaud the way in which the wrongdoer — himself a wily serpent! — is punished decisively. In that respect it seems the story has a cautionary value, not to mention its successful play on our ideas of justice, crime and punishment.

I'm told that the Snake and the

Pickpocket was related in a Swedish newspaper just a few years ago. I can believe it. Sweden sounds a veritable hotbed of urban legends. But that impression may owe much to the activities of a folklorist who has done more than most to record the urban belief tales of modern Scandinavia: Bengt af Klintberg of Stockholm.

In 1975 and 1976 this folklorist noticed a story which represents another variation on the Snake-Surprise theme. It opens with a woman (either at home or behind the wheel of the family car) who gives her child a banana. "Mom!" the child exclaims soon afterwards. "The banana bit me!" Mother pays no attention until she notices her offspring slumped unconscious. She rushes desperately to the hospital but it is too late; the child dies. A doctor remarks that there have been three or four identical cases before this. He says, "There seemed to be some poisonous snake that laid eggs in bananas, and the eggs hatched inside the peels."

Not so, zoologists, when asked, answered. Snakes are sometimes found in banana bunches but never inside the actual, individual bananas. No matter or, for that matter, no matter that stringent inquiries failed to trace any victims of the horribly-pygmified banana snakes. Having appeared in the western Swedish town of Uddevalla by February 1973, the story was in full spate at Bengt af Klintberg's home base of Stockholm in August 1975 and was still collectible in the suburbs by

March of the following year, when the menace had been rationalized into a "little snake just four or five centimeters long, a miniature cobra." The folklorist's own children had heard it, too, and reported that their friends at school would eat lunchtime bananas only after rendering them safe by slicing into several horizontal segments. Some refused to touch bananas at all.

By February 1976 phones at the Poison Information advisory service of the Karolinska Institute had been ringing incessantly. But the story outline had begun to fluctuate: the tiny snake was now replaced by an equally virulent spider or "worm" which stuck in the larynx, choking the youthful banana-eaters to death.

It was in this latest form that the story invaded Finland sometime close to February 1977, when the *Ilta-Sanomat* remarked that banana-worm hysteria had swept Kajana and "almost put an end to sales of bananas," despite the usual contradictions and assurances of hospitals where the supposed victims were to be found but never were.

In a 1985 paper on this topic for the folklore journal *Fabula*, Klintberg postulated that the story might owe a debt to the occasional discovery of snakes in banana clusters — or even to some fanciful visual correspondence between the shapes of snakes and bananas. And, although he doesn't say so, there is a biblical near-analog: if the Serpent enlisted the help of an apple to delude Adam and Eve, he seems to have progressed nowadays to duping

their descendants with another fruit.

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**I**N MY YOUTH — let's put that at some time in the 1950's — every bunch of bananas that hung from grocers' hooks was a source of curiosity and suspicion. We all knew what lived in those cumbersome, grotesquely-fingered foreign clumps. Not *snakes*; as far as I can gather, stories of snakes in rugs or in bananas have never enjoyed much popularity in Britain (except as transparently-untrue tales told and believed among credulous dupes abroad). No, banana bunches were reserved solely for tarantulas.

In Britain we apply that name to any large, hairy, non-native spider. For some of us, such creatures are still peculiarly prone to hiding inside bunches of bananas. I'll confess that even now, 30 years onward, I still can't look at a bunch of bananas with total quietude. Even so, the notion that tarantulas wait to pounce upon the unwary from that everyday source has lost much of its imaginative force. It's too well known to be surprising and in legends of this kind, surprise is of the essence. This is what is woven into the idea of sudden peril lurking on otherwise innocuous supermarket shelves. Hence, I believe, the runaway popularity of the Tarantula-in-the-Yucca-Plant legend of recent years.

Not so long ago yuccas or lily palms were unusual if not bizarre ornaments in the average British interior. Familiarity, as they say, breeds contempt. For several years these ugly, bare-

stemmed, spiky-leaved plants have been available from any large retailer's; they are not even confined to tropical-plant specialists. The result is that the poor yucca has been nominated as suburban kitsch, a designer label that labels you terminally unchic. Be that as it may, alongside or just after the increasing availability of potted yuccas came a legend tailored to exploit their alien appearance. It goes like this:

A woman buys a yucca — let's say from a florist, although most versions name a particular chain store which sells indoor plants as well as clothes, food and toiletries. She notices that whenever she waters it, the yucca emits a strange squeaking or growling noise. At first she thinks this is merely a sound effect from air trapped in the earth, but when she sees that the soil around the yucca's roots is starting to *move*, she panics and phones the florist.

The florist warns, "Don't touch it. Get out of the house immediately and lock the door!" Soon men in protective gear unearth the ghastly secret of the noisy yucca. It seems that when the plant was potted in its native land, a large tarantula among its roots was potted along with it. The stress, incidentally, customarily falls on the "fact" that the spider has a bite instantly fatal to human beings, although the plot doesn't give the spider a chance to prove it.

As with the Snake-in-a-Rug, the legend may be embellished by the

presence of not *one* tarantula but a colony of them, for instance a mother and her young. It's worth remembering that other generic likenesses exist between the two types. In one Indiana K-Mart story the snake strikes as the woman examines a tray of bedding plants. This may compensate for the essential difference that here the contact between householder and alien invader is essentially nonfatal — at least for the householder; the spider is usually and promptly destroyed.

Once again it was Bengt af Klintberg who took up the Stockholm trail in 1984, when a Swedish pest-control firm reported hundreds of calls from worried yucca owners. But the story was long out of its infancy by then. In July 1982 a Gothenburg paper had warned readers to be on the alert. This version had the spider exploding with a loud crack from the *stem* of the yucca. By March 1984 the rumor had people in Turku, Finland, putting their yuccas outside in the cold and yucca sellers in despair of moving a suddenly-unpopular product, while back in Sweden the same story had reached the northern town of Skelleftea.

Klintberg pondered the possible relevance of an old (1975) newspaper report about a Stockholm couple who had returned from an overseas holiday with a cactus that turned out to contain a dangerous spider. This, he conceded, had an "array of realistic details" and was made dubious only in its assertion that the spider could *spit* (up to 10 feet!) a "venom that is lethal just when

touching human skin." No such spider or venom exists, but Klintberg felt this account "seems to lie considerably closer to a possibly real event than the more recent narratives." The implication was that *if* it truly happened on *any* level, the event might have influenced the development of the Yucca-Tarantula story.

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JOURNALIST-folklorist Paul Screeton called 1985 "Britain's Year of the Spider." The *Sunday Express* of March 24 told how a yucca-residing tarantula had been sent to a Cologne, Germany, woman named Suzanne Zingler who, aided by the zoo, found her squeaking, hissing plant harbored a female spider and her brood of 50. But by April 20, which was when the *Daily Mail* took up the story, the legendary arachnid was a British citizen known throughout the land. To their annoyance operators of the popular, long-established chain store Marks & Spencer found that the rumor had attached itself to their branches — to *their* yuccas — almost exclusively.

An impressive percentage of all yuccas that decorate British homes may have passed through Marks & Spencer's portals. This may explain how the firm came to inherit the legend. In response to complaints and inquiries too numerous to ignore, the company checked the reports and found that, although its yuccas were African, each plant was repotted in Holland before import into the United Kingdom — which ought to have weeded out

y stowaway spiders.

The rumor hung on. Local store managers were put on their guard. From the M & S headquarters in London the *Daily Mail* heard that the story was that popular commodity "complete nonsense." A spokeswoman declared, "We have not found any evidence of it actually happening to anyone or identified where the story comes from. It seems to have traveled the whole country." Although she seemed confident that it had died a natural death, in fact the story was still breathing.

The legend was soon found alive and well and living not far away in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire. That September the *Bucks Free Press* and *Midweek* affirmed it had "actually happened," laying itself open to reproof from local rivals the *Wycombe & South Bucks Star* which quoted the local M & S manager Tony Turner: "Oh, no! Not that one again. . . ."

Other M & S personnel, such as Tony Kelly who managed the large branch in Oxford Street, London, had no lost patience. "It's getting beyond a joke," he complained to a journalist. "Now we've got an official complaint from the Irish Ministry of Agriculture because someone in Dublin claims one of our people offered a woman £100 to keep it quiet." (If that statement is not a joke, the alleged bribe sounds like a few, sinister motifs in this particular legend; it occurs in several others as well.) And still the story ran on and on. "Oh, no, not that story again!" groaned the M & S manager at Yeovil, Som-

erset, echoing his High Wycombe counterpart. "It's starting to get irritating!"

That was in October 1985. Two years later to the month, the Sunday tabloid *News of the World* reported that the owner of a Fareham, Hampshire, garden shop had been advised to leave his premises when squeaks from a yucca heralded a "nest of deadly tarantulas. Experts warned other yucca fans to watch out." A cynic might say this wasn't bad publicity for the garden shop in question. So far as the still-suffering Marks & Spencer was concerned, this was the sort of publicity it could have done without but got anyway. When *The Observer* rang the company's press office in late October 1987, it had the satisfaction of learning it was the 25th newspaper to inquire about yuccas and tarantulas.

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**L**AUGHTER, or at the very least a wry smile, seems a fair response to most urban legends, inasmuch as their main purpose is to entertain. Yet they are not quite jokes.

Folklorists contend that these tales tell us a good deal about ourselves and our suppressed beliefs, fears and prejudices. But they go much deeper than that. Fortean, who are accustomed to dealing with reports of alien animals in unlikely surroundings, can examine such legends without automatically challenging that they are legends. If these tales are not literally true, what makes them so believable? What are they trying to express?

Urban legends balance the known with the believed, the proven with the just-possible. For instance, snakes are talented escape artists which turn up from time to time in the most unexpected places. In this respect a snake in a department store is far from improbable. Both snakes and spiders have been found in goods imported from overseas: rugs, timber and, yes, bananas. Walker Van Riper of the Denver Museum of Natural History regarded banana shipments as an unequaled source of small and not-so-small exotic animals. "Over the years," he wrote in 1957, "I have had about a dozen species of snakes, three lizards including a large iguana, tree frogs, scorpions, a giant millipede, a brush-tailed mouse and a cockroach 'big enough to put a saddle on.'" But even his collection paled beside that of the German Dr. Schmidt who took 120 different spider species alone from bananas arriving in Hamburg.

Modern preservative processes may have spoiled the zoological potential of most bananas, but 50 years ago such newsworthy finds were guaranteed space in British papers. I have records of an imperial boa that got as far as a Camden Town, London, greengrocer's in 1938 and an unidentified dark-brown, two-foot snake coiled in Costa Rican bananas at a Skipton, Yorkshire, warehouse not long after. Fruit suppliers appear to have been among the chief benefactors of London Zoo's Reptile House. The Skipton report mentions donations of lizards, green

tree vipers and a highly toxic fer-de-lance. Does this make the story of cobras in bananas — and in blankets — a trifle less fantastic?

What is true of snakes and imported fruit applies doubly to spiders, even when they don't happen to be genuine tarantulas. "Thomas," the hairy horror whose eight legs explored Sean Connery in the James Bond film *Doctor No*, was said to have originated in a banana shipment. In real life Paula Lewis, a 33-year-old librarian, was bitten by a "black tarantula" which ran up her arm as she examined some bananas in the Finchley, Middlesex, branch of Tesco's in late 1985.

In September 1978 four dead black-widow spiders were found inside a box of spare helicopter rotors at the Ministry of Defense's Boscombe Downs, Wiltshire, air base. They had been flown in with the spares from California. The only previous record of the notorious black widow's reaching Britain also came from an air base, this time the U.S. Air Force station at Lakenheath, Suffolk, where a young man was bitten on the leg and a woman who lived nearby in a more intimate spot. One of the black widow's less pleasant habits, it appears, is to spin her web across or directly beneath lavatory seats.

Then in July 1988 there occurred an episode which nearly brought to life an urban legendist's worst imaginings: black widows found in bunches of grapes (Californian again) in two big-name national food stores. Ironically

and unkindly, one of them happened to be a branch of Marks & Spencer. The initial M & S reaction was to deny the story, perhaps believing it to be another version of the tiresome, untrue rumor about what lived in their potted yuccas; but with the announcement of two black widows discovered in Sainsbury's at Southampton, M & S faced up to what were, for once, the facts.

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CASES OF this kind make legends that parallel their plot so much more believable. There is nothing innately impossible about a cobra in a K-Mart blouse or a tarantula in an M & S yucca, we might think, when there have been authenticated reports of boas in Camden Town greengrocers' and black widows in Sainsbury's grapes. Real life not only excuses imaginative improvisations but lends them a specious credibility.

It would be possible to formalize the relationships between all these stories in a kind of family tree. The Amusement-Park and Pocket-Snake narratives of the 1940's might be seen to branch into the Snake-in-a-Rug (or -Garment) of 1968 through the 1970's and thence, by a neat combination of ideas (Snake-in-Banana suggesting Tarantula-in-Banana-Bunch), blossom as tales in which the spider is relocated in a Yucca for the 1984-87 period.

On the other hand, this sort of genealogy lacks real conviction. Unluckily, urban legends do not evolve with such logical precision out of earlier

forms. Besides, the dating of individual types is always hazardous since there is no knowing how long (if at all) they were current before somebody thought of recording them. For all we know, the Snake-in-a-Rug may have been ready to draw its old-age pension long before folklorists noticed it. A better approach is to look at these legends in terms of their common themes: what messages, insights or anxieties they express in common.

Basically, these are all stories of danger that comes unexpectedly and from a normally-harmless source. Folklorists refer to them as "contamination legends." They warn of something shocking and dangerous just beneath the tranquil surface of our lives. It isn't by chance that the Dangerous Wild Animal stories are so popular. They are studies in uncertainty and anxiety. They remind us that life can be menacing, that we must stay alert even in a supermarket.

Then both snakes and spiders are ancient focuses for anxiety. They lurk; they conceal themselves as if determined to alarm us, rising without warning into our secure midst. The legends dealt with in this article operate on popular assumptions about these creeping things. The idea of a snake's secreting itself away in a blanket may be herpetologically dubious, but it satisfies less analytical responses in which the snake, wily and nefarious, takes delight in frightening its victims. And there is always doubt. Can we *really* be certain what goes on in that

cold serpentine brain?

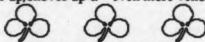
The hidden messages of these tales tell us to beware of goods imported from the Far East — forever mysterious, insidious, dangerous to the West, a realm perfectly symbolized by the hooded, unfathomably-evil visage of the cobra. The legends suggest that these countries — the exporters — are out to hurt us with their cheap goods; the injury to our trade is metaphorized as hurt to our physical selves.

Beware of tropical imports in general. Bananas and yuccas may look attractive but they are unfamiliar, un-European. The paralogic invites you to recall that one gets both carpets *and* cobras from the East; they are two aspects of the same alien culture. And, by the same xenophobic token, these overseas exporters are supposed to lag behind us in matters of hygiene. It would be typical of a Mexican/Pakistani/African to pack up/shovel up a

venomous snake/spider in a fur coat/pile of rugs/banana bunch/yucca plant . . . wouldn't it?

Beware also of discount stores. They are just another facet of big, uncaring business, always cast as a villain in urban legends. They sell cheap but they do us no favors; the foreign stuff they sell is full of hazards to which they irresponsibly expose us. Or, as Mullen puts it, these are an "indication of the consumer's doubts about the bargains which is reflected in the folk saying, 'You get what you pay for.'" The betrayal, the contamination, goes deeper than the item that houses a cobra or a tarantula. It's there in the commercial processes and powers that rule our lives.

These xenophobic, racist, sociological reflections are good reasons for taking urban legends seriously. The thing hiding away in the carpet may be even more venomous than a cobra.



## IRISH SUPERSTITIONS

By Claire Metzger

**F**EAR THAT spirits would do mischief to newborn babies was common to many religions. Among ancient Irish superstitions, according to Mary Murray Delancy in *Of Irish Ways*, fairies were often thought to exchange their offspring for those of mortal women. To counteract this, pregnant women in the early part of the 19th century would consult *pishogue*, a wise woman of the village, for the proper action. This could involve placing a horseshoe on a doorpost or

prayerbook under a pillow, or possibly cutting a notch on a black cat's tail.

When the child first opened its eyes, it had to gaze upon a candlelight of good deeds. The mother had to bite the child's nails, not cut them, and toss the first lock of hair at haymaking time. A mole above the child's mouth meant a child would have a soft tongue and winning ways, while if a mole appeared under the baby's left ear, the child was slated for hanging.

By Margaret Brighton

THERE WAS never any doubt in my mind. It was *my* house from the moment I first saw it. To me, a displaced New Englander, its Gothic styling and white clapboards said "home," a message not conveyed by its neighboring ranch-style homes in that small California farm town in which I lived in the mid-1970's.

At first my husband Carl\* and I lived in an apartment, saving money for our first home. We could have

purchased this four-bedroom beauty for a mere \$15,000 when other homes sold quickly at \$80,000 or more. But I'd heard stories about the previous tenant's being somewhat unbalanced, patrolling his backyard with a rifle. I assumed that he had personal reasons for wanting to be rid of the house. This was truer than I could have guessed.

The first change that we made was to remove floodlights from the perimeter of the property. Then we moved into the first floor, using the second-floor bedrooms for

# THE GHOST WORE BOOTS

In life he had been an evil, violent man.

Now, many years after his death, he was determined to do us harm.

remodeled one of the many old houses on my husband's family's ranch but that was several miles out of town. I wanted our future children to be able to walk to school and easily visit with friends. So, when I saw the "For Sale" sign in front of "my" house, it was like a dream come true. Within hours we had an agreement with the owners.

It should have seemed odd to

storage and for my studio. I loved working up there because I had a magnificent view of the town. In addition, each bedroom had typically Victorian nooks and crannies that brought back pleasant memories of my childhood New England home. But it was in my studio that I first suspected something was very wrong.

It was my habit to roll out yards of cotton fabric on the smooth

\*Pseudonym.

hardwood floor of the studio. On the fabric I'd place my pattern pieces and carefully pin them in place. The patterns were made of light paper, so I thought little of it when the pattern pieces drifted across the floor as I sat studying their placement. They seemed to be propelled by a swift-moving air current, although I could not feel any cross-draft in the room. It became a nuisance to chase the bits of paper across the floor, so I caulked the windows and kept the studio door shut when I worked.

When the problem got worse instead of better, I brought a candle upstairs one day, to determine the source of the draft. Yet, although the papers continued to scatter as I sat among them, the candle flame did not even sway. I would have dismissed this as something to investigate later but other unexplainable things began to happen.

Several times a day, with increasing frequency, I would sense that someone was coming down the stairs that led from the second floor to the living room. I couldn't hear anything but I could feel it. In true Yankee fashion I figured that it was my imagination and mentioned none of this to Carl.

The situation changed soon after I began seeing boots on the first floor.

Often, when scanning the floor to find where I'd tucked my sewing basket, out of the corner of my eye

I'd see boots. They were black and dusty and poised as if their invisible occupant were ready to run as soon as he had the opportunity. When I'd glance back to the area where I thought I'd seen them, they would be gone.

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ONE NIGHT at dinner my husband finally raised the subject. "Do you know anything about how eyes work?" he asked a little too casually.

"A little about color and how it's perceived," I responded, wondering what he was getting at.

"Well, sometimes I see things from the corner of my eye and then when I look back, they aren't there. Ever heard of anything like that? Should I see a doctor?"

So I told him about the papers upstairs, the presence on the stairs and the boots. He was relieved that he wasn't the only one "seeing things." He said he had wondered why he "saw" these things only at home.

Soon it became impossible to go upstairs during daylight hours without feeling as if someone were about to step out of a shadow to commit violence. The intent was unmistakable. At night the second floor seemed perfectly normal when I was up there. My husband finally refused to go upstairs at all and insisted on buying me a handgun.

In time we started hearing footsteps upstairs. They became stead-

ily louder and more angry-sounding. Many times it was clearly the dull thudding of boots. The pacing would stop as soon as I turned on the hall light to go upstairs to work in my studio; it would resume when I returned downstairs and went to bed. The role of the light became obvious one rainy day when I had to turn on the lights to see my work better. As soon as the lights were on, and for as long as I kept them on, the pacing stopped. I decided to explore the second floor to learn more about this curious discovery.

The presence was still there and his hostility could be clearly felt but I "knew" then that our ghost was repelled by artificial light and he was in hiding. With his malevolence diminished, I could now sense a second presence nearby. This one was unmistakably female, more gentle and sorrowful but also exuding a sense of evil. I wondered if he had killed her after she had been a lesser participant in some horrible crime. More importantly, I realized that I could now work in my studio during daylight hours, undisturbed by phantom breezes, if I just kept the upstairs lights on.

So we kept the second-floor lights on, day and night, whenever we were at home. There was no more pacing, although we felt our formerly noisy ghost now raged silently.

I continued to work in my studio each day, more to prove a point

than to get work done, and I now suspected that the previous tenant had installed floodlights in the yard for the same reason we kept our upstairs lights on when at home. At that point it had not occurred to me that, if floodlights were needed in the yard, his "hauntings" were not limited to the upstairs.

Our new "terms" with the ghost seemed to be working until several days went by during which we accidentally left the upstairs lights on, day and night, even when we were not at home. I felt a little remorseful when I made the discovery. I deliberately left the lights off and stayed downstairs for a few days to give our ghost a chance to stretch his legs, so to speak. This proved to be a mistake.

When I returned to my studio several days later, I discovered that everyone of my expensive watercolor brushes had been neatly snapped in half, right across their metal collars. Now I was enraged. I realized my folly in allowing any "rights" to this undeniably evil man. I could almost hear him laughing.

As I addressed him verbally for the first time, I could barely contain my anger. I told him he had shown his true colors and he'd get no special favors in the future. Inwardly I wondered if his victims in life had felt this fury after *their* kindnesses had been similarly abused.

What happened next exceeded my worst expectations.

Each week I taught after-school drama for the town. I had about 20 students, ages five to 16, and on that particular day they were assembled in my living room. Our usual high school classroom was being painted so it had seemed a simple solution to invite the children to my home on that crisp autumn afternoon in 1976. There were not enough chairs for everyone and I didn't think twice about some of the older children sitting on the stairs that led to the second floor.

The afternoon progressed delightfully as the children took turns reading aloud from various plays; trying different ways of saying the lines. We were all having such a marvelous time that even when dusk approached, I didn't remember to turn on the upstairs lights. In those days of energy conservation we didn't turn on any lights unless necessary, even with a ghost upstairs!

Around 4:30 the noise began. Throughout most of the afternoon there was such an uproarious din among the student actors and hecklers that I don't think I *could* have heard the pacing upstairs — but during a brief period of silence I could clearly detect the sound of boots. This was not calm pacing back and forth but the angry striding of a furious man. The clink of spurs grew louder and louder as the boots repeatedly drove into the hardwood floors upstairs.

Quietly panicking, I hoped that he was only "my" ghost and that the students couldn't hear him. I spoke more loudly and animatedly, hoping to cover my growing terror. Explaining that the room was too dark, I turned on every light we had. I forced myself to stroll casually to the stairway light and turn it on, as I mentally promised our ghost almost anything he wanted if he'd just leave these children alone.

The pacing stopped momentarily, then swiftly resumed.

"Mrs. Brighton, is your husband at home?" asked one of the girls on the stairs.

"No, he's at work," I responded, praying that she had some other reason for asking.

"Then is somebody working upstairs? I can hear work boots," she said.

I tried various explanations — "it must be the wind" and "these old houses make funny noises" — but she continued to insist someone was walking around upstairs. In addition, our ghost seemed to be mocking me by making each step sound louder and clearer. At last, reluctantly, I admitted that we had a ghost but I tried to make light of it.

Nevertheless a wave of fear and silence washed over my students and I regretted that I hadn't agreed it was a workman. They gathered their coats and edged toward the door. I was grateful that in just a few minutes their parents would

arrive to take them home.

At that moment, in the hushed and fearful silence of the living room, we heard the steps cease their steady pacing in one of the upstairs bedrooms. After a brief pause the boots crashed through the upstairs corridor, heading toward the stairs. This time the lights did not slow him down. We could clearly hear his angry steps coming down the stairs as I rushed the children out of the house.

As we waited silently for their parents to pick them up, no one spoke of the heavy boots and jangling spurs sounding from the other side of the front door. Once all of the children were safely sent home, I got into my car and drove away quickly. I didn't even look back.

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SEVERAL HOURS later I gathered my courage and returned home. It was night and the house had an eerie silence. I sat in the living room with my handgun on my lap and every light and candle lit until Carl arrived and I told him the story.

Although there was no pacing after that, I knew that our visitor was still upstairs. A few months later we decided to remodel the house and tore off most of the second floor to rebuild more modern upstairs bedrooms. Every day I expected the workmen to uncover a skeleton or other evidence of violence hidden in the walls or floor. It

seemed to me that there must be some physical reason why our ghost remained. But nothing was found in the two bedrooms, nor could we find any structural reason for the irregular floor plans.

When the work was completed, we moved our bedroom furniture upstairs with some hesitation. There was no phantom pacing, however, and the new rooms felt "cleared." Our unearthly companions remained but their concentrated presence could be felt only in one upstairs bedroom which the workmen had not touched.

Now and then, on perfectly still days, the hinged windows in that room would blow open in sequence. It would start on the north side of the room, where the first window would crash open. I would climb the stairs, close and lock the window. I would also check the other windows but they were always securely shut and locked. Nevertheless, as soon as I was downstairs and had resumed what I had been doing, the next window would crash open. I would run upstairs, close and lock that window, check the others and return downstairs.

This routine continued until all four windows in the room had opened. Then I would have peace for a few hours before it would all begin again. Fortunately this happened only on the rare, perfectly still days that occurred in that flat, windy valley.

Several months later we left that house and I moved back east. My husband and I divorced, although that had nothing to do with the house as far as I know.

Today another family lives in "my" house. Although we've been close friends for years, I've never told them about our ghosts. They may have heard rumors, perhaps from families of the children who

were with me on that terrible afternoon, but they've never asked me about that incident or mentioned anything odd about the house. I do know that whatever caused our terror still hides there, waiting.

One of these days the pacing will begin again. Then I will tell them. And it will be time to find out exactly what lies in the walls of the remaining upstairs bedroom.



### HERE'S A FLY IN YOUR EYE

*By George W. Earley*

**"FOR THE WANT** of a nail, the shoe was lost, For the want of a shoe, the horse was lost, For the want of . . ." and so goes the old nursery rhyme, right up to the loss of the kingdom because the messenger never got through on that lame horse.

It's been a long time since a thrown shoe and a lame horse toppled a kingdom, but in England, according to a story in the *Boston Globe*, a 90-year old telescope was put out of action by a mere fly!

The telescope, originally installed at the Royal Greenwich Observatory in 1897 and credited with taking some 60,000 pictures of

the heavens, was damaged when a fly, overtaken by death in mid-flight, tumbled into it destroying the delicate cross hairs used to align the telescope on its heavenly targets.

The cross hairs are made of spider silk and not too many people today know how to install them, let alone repair them. The observatory is hoping that a former member of its staff, now retired, will be able to obtain the necessary spider silk and make those repairs. Until that happens, a highly expensive, precision instrument stands unused, victim of the death dive of a common fly.

### JAILHOUSE A REAL STEAL

**T**HE 16-ACRE SITE which has housed the Virginia State Penitentiary since 1797 is for sale. Located in downtown Richmond, the property is situated high on a hill overlooking the James River and will be sold "as is" with delivery of possession expected by July 1, 1990, after two new prisons are opened elsewhere.

# BOOKS

## NEWS & REVIEWS

by D. Scott Rogo



### SAINTLY HEALING

ACCORDING to traditional Roman Catholic belief, miraculous healings can result when petitionary prayers are offered to the saints. Some holy men and women in the Church reputedly perform such cures through their own prayers. The Church looks for such miracles (and other evidence of sanctity) when considering a holy person for sainthood. Its investigators look especially closely at those healings performed *after* the candidate's death; such healings are seen as "pointers" indicating that the canonization process is divinely-inspired.

Patricia Treece's *Nothing Short of a Miracle* (Image Books/Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1988, 227, \$8.95, paperback) reports on healing miracles purportedly performed by the saints. Treece, a "believer," writes for her fellow Roman Catholics. Consequently her book is often uncritical. Less partisan readers, however, will be able to benefit from the book's case material and overlook the religious messages interspersed through it.

*Nothing Short* focuses on those miraculous cures performed by saints or holy persons who lived in the United States, with the notable exception of

Padre Pio, the famous Italian stigmatist who died in 1968. Treece discusses in detail such homegrown saints as Elizabeth Seton and Bishop John Newmann. Particularly provocative is the material offered on the life and miracles of Father Solanus Casey who has yet to be formally canonized. Father Solanus lived in Detroit where a number of miracle healings were ascribed to his spiritual powers. He died in 1957 but many recipients of his healings are still alive and have been interviewed. Some 25 reports of his miracles were sent to Rome in 1966 as part of his canonization process.

Skeptics claim that miraculous healing is due either to some form of exaggerated placebo effect or to sudden remission. But some of the healings presented in *Nothing Short of a Miracle* resist such facile explanation — as in those healings in which irrevocably damaged tissue is suddenly regenerated. "Suggestion" cannot account for the miraculous healings of young children and even babies.

Take, for example, the case of little Peter Smith of New York. Peter was born on March 14, 1921, and was blinded soon after when a nurse at the hospital treated his eyes with a 50-

percent silver-nitrate solution instead of a one-percent solution. The liquid burned right into the baby's eyes and destroyed them. Two physicians examined the baby and concurred that the infant's eyes could not be saved.

But nurses at the Catholic hospital prayed all that night to Frances Cabrini (the founder of the hospital, beatified later in 1938) for a miracle. Soon the swelling in Peter's eyes was receding and the eyes regenerated the next day. Not only did the surrounding skin show no burning or blistering, it became silky smooth. Today Peter Smith is a priest in Texas. He enjoys perfect vision.

An equally astonishing case is that of Kelly Wilkinson. Born in Belfast in 1976 with a congenital heart defect (having only one instead of two ventricles), she was not expected to live long. Children with this defect eventually suffer severe and fatal coronaries. But her mother, a devout Catholic, prayed to the deceased Padre Pio to whom many cures have been credited. Soon after the prayers were offered, little Kelly (then nearly two years old) saw the figure of an old man in her room; she later recognized him from a photograph as Padre Pio. When her heart was subsequently reexamined by physicians, X rays revealed that the second, missing ventricle had miraculously formed!

These two cases are the best-documented in the book and it is unfortunate that Treece does not use other cases of this quality. Many of the other cases she presents are obviously drawn from credible Catholic sources but she does not produce the needed documentation; she merely recites the stories as told by the participants or briefly summarizes accounts. This problem is compounded by

the number of secondhand stories she includes and by the fact that it is unclear from her references *where* she found some of her cases.

Despite these shortcomings *Nothing Short of a Miracle* is an enjoyable book. It is written in a popular journalistic style but it is evident that Treece carried out much scholarly research before sitting down to write. The book makes a worthwhile contribution to the growing literature on unusual forms of healing.

#### OTHER REVIEWS

SERPENT IN THE SKY by John Anthony West, Julian Press, New York, N.Y., 1987, 256 pages, \$12.95, paperback.

In *Serpent in the Sky* John Anthony West makes a significant attempt to penetrate the mind and philosophy of ancient Egypt, not to prophesy the future or to concoct tales of "ancient astronauts" but to show the principles of an enduring civilization organized differently from our own. The book's subtitle, "The High Wisdom of Ancient Egypt," refers to metaphysical principles developed at the point where geometry becomes gnosis and arithmetic and architecture touch on the arcane.

West bases his writing on the work of R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, an unorthodox Egyptologist who believed that ancient Egypt was not a primitive culture in any sense but possibly the continuation of some older human expression. Ultimately West challenges the popular application of the theory of evolution, which is that humanity is on a linear road of progression from "primitive" to "modern." Schwaller de Lubicz and West hold the view that history is

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cyclical and that our evolutionary ideas of history and social progress blind us to seeing what really happened on the Nile thousands of years ago.

Schwaller de Lubicz, born in French Alsatia, lived in Luxor, Egypt, from 1936 to 1957, although his interest in ancient Egypt had begun earlier. Studying hundreds of intricate measurements of the great temple of Luxor and other structures, he believed they revealed a sacred geometry of harmonic mathematical relationships which reflected the very organization of the universe, in ways similar to those taught by the later Greek philosopher Pythagoras.

*Serpent in the Sky* is more than numbers, however. West explores how spiritual doctrines could be concealed in art and architecture and the double meanings of popular ancient Egyptian stories. He argues powerfully that the fine arts of the ancient kingdoms did not merely glorify political and religious power but served the quest for enlightenment as well.

Last, in an appendix on the Sphinx, West uses textual and geological evidence to support his argument that the massive sculpture is indeed older than the so-called Old Kingdom, to which conventional archaeology assigns its creation at around 2500 B.C. Ironically in view of West's belief that the Sphinx shows evidence of erosion by water, a recent study of its crumbling surface blamed underground sewage flow from the tourist village of Nazlet al-Samman and the posh Mena House Hotel for changing the water table and undermining the Sphinx through capillary action.

Whether ancient Egyptian civilization arose through some "conventional" process of social evolution or — as West

seems forced to conclude — was transplanted from an earlier "Atlantis" (so to speak) remains a mystery. Nevertheless *Serpent in the Sky* is an intriguing argument for the persistence of a body of esoteric thought throughout Egyptian history. It demands that metaphysical principles be considered when we try to interpret the archaeological record. — *Chas S. Clifton.*

**PSYCHIC PHENOMENA: NEW PRINCIPLES, TECHNIQUES AND APPLICATIONS** by Joe H. Slate, McFarland & Company, Jefferson, N.C., 1988, 199 pages, \$19.95.

*Psychic Phenomena: New Principles, Techniques and Applications* is a distinctly odd work in an area replete with distinctly odd works. Joe H. Slate, chairperson of the Division of Behavioral Sciences and professor of psychology at Athens State College in Alabama, has written a popular book on parapsychology not only covering the usual topics but also suggesting methods for developing paranormal faculties and applying them in everyday situations.

So far so good. What is "odd" about the book is that it purports to be on parapsychology but has nothing to say about parapsychology as practiced today or yesterday. Instead the author offers an account of investigations he has conducted over the past 18 or so years, reports of which, all unpublished, are available for inspection by visiting scholars at Athens State College. Summaries of this research, with some conclusions and reflections by the author, make up the bulk of the text.

The book, in short, is on parapsychology as practiced by one man who

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has few if any ties with the parapsychology "establishment." Works like this, produced in isolation without the benefit of peer criticism or review, have the potential for being ground-breaking but are usually just self-indulgent and sloppy.

The eccentricity of Slate's views on everything from psi to other dimensions to occult energy systems does not, of course, mean that these views are wrong, but it does mean that he is under a special obligation to state as clearly and convincingly as he can the reasons for his assessments. And it is precisely here that the book is at its weakest.

Explanatory passages intended to elucidate and amplify are often vague to the point of incomprehension. Notions like "aura vampirism" are introduced without any real attempt at explanation or justification, and Slate recommends research methods that seem almost designed to promote self-deception and hallucination. The author displays no awareness of any of the multiple pitfalls that have to be avoided in doing research of this sort; nor does he — incredibly — seem to have undertaken any experiments that failed.

One suspects, though, that Slate's success consists more in the telling than in the doing, for a number of his "experiments" do not seem to have succeeded in their intended aim. In one instance, for example, a group of the author's students "succeeded" in laying a centuries-old ghost who was finally guided by the group to a higher, happier plane. Nonetheless the haunting continued as before, only now we are assured that the entity who stalks the building does so simply as a "way of keeping in touch with a historic old building and the

friends he found there."

Worst of all is Slate's habit of quoting unpublished reports without giving the reader any information about the way the research was carried out. Arguments in support of his conclusions are rarely offered and never does he attempt to harmonize what he has found with the findings of his fellow psychical researchers.

What is finally most disappointing about this book is that its publisher, McFarland, has put out some of the finest works in parapsychology in recent years. Perhaps the work represents an attempt to cash in on the recent popularity of books that accentuate the positive and talk a lot about the "higher wisdom of the universe." But if so, there are other, better ways to accomplish the task than by printing a book that is primarily noteworthy as an example of how *not* to do psychical research. —  
*Rodger I. Anderson.*

**EARTH ENERGY** by J. Havelock Fidler, Aquarian Press, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, England, 1988, £6.99, 192 pages, paperback.

By page 66 of *Earth Energy* J. Havelock Fidler acknowledges that he has a problem:

"After publishing the original edition of this book, I was disappointed to discover that this was the furthest point reached by a number of readers. They had taken one look at the rest of this chapter and decided that it was obviously the product of the 'Lunatic Fringe' and that the author was now trying to blind them with a mass of incomprehensible mathematics, which they certainly would not be able to understand.

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They would therefore read no more of this nonsense."

For this edition Fidler has moved the heavy math to an appendix, but he hasn't solved his basic problem. The book is still hard to read and still suspiciously like the work of the Lunatic Fringe.

I don't doubt Fidler's intelligence or honesty. His single-minded diligence is admirable. But how can one tell if there is anything at all to this book other than a massive exercise in self-deception?

Fidler is the quintessential amateur investigator, almost the hermit scientist. He even looks the part. A picture shows what I assume to be Fidler, a portly, comfortable-looking old gentleman complete with cap, sweater and corduroys, holding a pendulum, one of his favorite dowsing instruments. He informs us that he is a retired agricultural scientist, living in a 100-year-old Presbyterian manse in a small village on the northwest coast of Scotland. The scenery is barren but beautiful and I envy Fidler his residence.

He is a devoted dowser. There are plenty of dowsers in America but British dowsers seem interested in finding lots more than water, perhaps because there is plenty of water in the British Isles. Fidler is also fascinated by that curious British obsession called ley lines. These are theoretical straight lines which are supposed to connect all sorts of ancient sites scattered throughout Britain and elsewhere. According to some ley hunters, the lines were laid out by the ancients along certain natural energy

lines, the secrets of which are unknown to modern science. Dowsers have often tried to measure the theoretical energy of these lines. Fidler began with an investigation of ley lines around his house, and his work expanded considerably beyond that.

The trouble is that Fidler's investigations are conducted entirely within the closed circle of dowsers and ley hunters. He refers to T. C. Lethbridge, one of the gurus of dowsing, and Alfred Watkins who started the whole notion of ley-hunting, but there is no indication at all that he tried to have his work reviewed by competent outsiders who might not hold the same set of beliefs. Both dowsing and ley-hunting are fertile fields for self-deception. The pendulum can move for many reasons and it isn't hard to find straight lines if you look hard enough for them.

In addition to dowsing and ley-hunting Fidler has also been reading J. W. Dunne's *An Experiment With Time* (1927) and so he began recording his dreams. One he believed was about charging a standing stone with energy; that fit right in with his theories of ley lines and energy. "I would not care to think what the Freudian interpretation of this dream might be," he writes innocently. Well, from the drawing of this dream that he provides, I think there is no doubt of what interpretation old Sigmund would have put on it.

This book is curious and eccentric and perhaps it contains some earthshaking truths, although I doubt it. —*Daniel Cohen.*



# 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, 3510 Western Ave., Highland Park, Ill. 60035

## PSYCHIC SASQUATCH

I was disappointed that David Robbins ("Colorado Bigfoot," November 1988 FATE) did not query Dan Masias more thoroughly to obtain details as to the anatomical measurements and physiognomy of the creatures he claimed to see as close as 30 feet from his house.

Ethnohistoric "legends" and continued reports of Bigfoot types on every continent except the Antarctic means the phenomenon is not new. Robbins states that the creatures "are showing up in a state far outside the Sasquatch's natural domain." To infer that these creatures' "natural" domain is usually indigenous to the Pacific Northwest is a misconception of facts. Though researchers agree to the creatures' nomadism, there is controversy whether the Sasquatch is an animal with fur or a unique race of nature — "people" having long body hair.

As a social scientist and authority on the Bigfoot/Sasquatch phenomenon, I have collected reports from 26 states during my 32 years of research. These creatures show up in rural and semi-rural areas outside what most people consider wilderness. In North America

they seem extremely adaptable to a number of climatic-geographic regions. I have interviewed witnesses claiming encounters in Louisiana, Arizona, New Mexico and Georgia. News clippings about Bigfoot in Florida abound; yet those in Alaska are infrequent, if not rare. John Green has done an excellent job of documenting Sasquatch activity around the United States and Canada, at least as of 1978.

I estimate that only five percent of encounters are reported to researchers, the news media or authorities. It would be expected that more creatures exist in larger tracts of land not inhabited by people; yet all *isolated* woodlands, even if they are small, are potential domains for the elusive Sasquatch.

Researchers are reporting at least two species of creatures. The apelike type is said to have long arms, hunched shoulders, a face and cranium resembling an anthropoid ape, having a sagittal crest or peaked head. The humanlike hominoid is more *humanoid* with a round head. As part of the overall picture, it is important to establish which race of creature inhabits Colorado.

Robbins states that tracks ended in



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the snow as if a physical being just disappeared. This sounds preposterous to most people, for who in the material world, looking for a clever man-animal that has eluded veteran Bigfoot hunters over the last 30 years, would consider the existence of a primitive-looking parapsychical being possessing interdimensional abilities? And therein lies the paradox that is the secret to the enigma.

My upcoming book *The Psychic Sasquatch: A UFO Connection* discusses this aspect, documenting several percipients who have had Bigfoot/psychic experiences that reflect an interdimensional universe. Only when amateur researchers and anthropocentric scientists become interdisciplinary in their approach and stop *subjectively* rationalizing paranormal behavior with the Bigfoot experience will real headway in solving the mystery be made. If the present paradigm does not fit, then it is the *responsibility* of science to investigate and revise it if unknown natural phenomena are occurring beyond the scope of presently known physical laws.  
— Jack Lapsertis, Roseburg, Oreg.

**PERFECT HARMONY**

During my studies with the Rosicrucian Order (A.M.O.R.C.), I learned to meditate and alter my level of awareness and hear the "Music of the Spheres" as so aptly described in D. Scott Rogo's "The Harmonies of Heaven" (November 1988 FATE).

In the late 1960's I had an unexpected experience. My husband and I lived in a house with the living room and the bedrooms at opposite ends. He would frequently stay up into the wee hours of the morning watching TV in the living room while I was asleep in the bedroom.

Sometimes the sounds would disturb me. Twice I heard chanting, but when I told my husband to turn down the TV, he already had it turned low. When I returned to the bedroom the chanting continued until it faded.

In 1968 we moved into a fairly sound-proof apartment. Again I was awakened from a sound sleep by slow melodious music increasing in volume, then fading away. Once the music seemed stationary and slightly different — a joyous ceremony which stopped abruptly. My husband and TV were not responsible and the sounds continued when I went back to bed.

In 1975 we moved into a two-bedroom mobile home. The experience happened once before my husband died in 1976.

A few years later I took a class in music appreciation of Renaissance music. Gregorian chanting was similar to what I had been hearing for years.  
—Clare Hodgins, Escondido, Calif.

\*\*\*

I have heard music from no "discernible" source most of my life but never so much as since moving to northeastern Nevada, especially at night. One day on my way to town I met a couple of neighbors who were going into the countryside. I asked what station was broadcasting the beautiful music. They both said, "We don't have a radio."

There are times of full orchestration, sometimes great choral groups. The music is very light and tricky — an invitation to dance.

My family laughed at me until one of my sisters came for a two-week stay and heard music, too.

Rogo is looking in the wrong places at the wrong people. —B. Senneff, Montello, Nev.

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### PSYCHIC AWARENESS

Eleanor Criswell in "Psychic Counseling" (November 1988 FATE) mentions that most people who are endowed with psi abilities are extroverted. But is it possible that these people at an early stage of their lives passed through a period of involuntary introversion?

It is possible that extroverts who were once introverts had, during the time of their "unnatural" introversion, developed and nurtured their psi faculties, but such faculties were not maximally and detectably utilized. Children with psi abilities and imaginary playmates may be exhibiting a form of extroversion, a social orientation on a receded and immediate level, that level which is associated with introversion and withdrawal. Might not psi abilities be brought forth through an initial introversion, a preliminary period of "psychic tillage"?

The Yogins of Tibet have apparently understood this. They deliberately cultivated their paranormal faculties, the strange abilities described in Mme. Alexandra David-Neel's books (November FATE, page 104). They resorted to such austere and rigorous practices as passing long periods of solitude in mountain fastnesses and dark caves. The latter practice enabled them to undergo extended periods of sensory deprivation.

By such means they brought forth their latent, inner and normally-receded abilities, those associated more with sleep and dreaming than normal waking psychological processes. Mme. David-Neel's descriptions suggest that the Tibetan Yogins lingered in a protracted hypnotic state even while fully awake — James Baker, Cleveland, Ohio.

## ALIEN SYMBOL

Isn't it coincidental how similar the descriptions in Jennie Zeidman's "Boomerang UFOs" (October 1988 FATE) are to the UFOs to the strange symbol held by the "new" American Eagle? In the new design of our country's national emblem, the eagle is grasping a boomerang shape with its talons. Pay close attention to the outlines in the "wings" of the eagle. I may have an overactive imagination, but then again something just may not be right in this world of ours, that soon might be theirs.

—*Michael DeMuth, Louisville, Ky.*

## CONTACTEE CONCLUSIONS

Since 1971 and heavily since 1980 in New York state, I have photographed/observed/chased UFO ships through farm fields with my friends and colleagues. We have realized there are about 15 shapes of metallic craft and about 15 "hybrids" — where an original shape has been added to with extra panels, sections, wires or antennae. The boomerangs seem to come in two sizes, large and small with the jumbo being in excess of 400 feet wide and long, the small being about 20 feet from tip-to-tip.

I have seen both up close. The small one was touching distance to me on one of my more incredible encounters.

The ships have lighting systems inside every metal panel. They can put on any combination of lights in any color, size and shape, thus throwing off the viewer's perception.

There also seems to be some quality about the metal of these ships which renders them somewhat transparent or invisible unless lit by their lights. — *Ellen Crystall, Director, Contactee, Box 12, New Milford, N.J. 07646.*

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### RUNAROUND RIDICULE

Joseph G. Vento's letter ("Report from the Readers," October 1988 FATE) about the Roswell incident of 1947 is typical of the runaround received by average citizens when it comes to UFOs. Our government is good at saying one thing while doing the opposite.

I am tired of all the "official" explanations. A recent example is the UFO spotted by a Japanese airlines pilot who was flying over Alaska enroute to Europe. The FAA explained that one by saying that the pilot was seeing Jupiter and Mars. Unfortunately, unless Jupiter and Mars flew through space and parked themselves in our atmosphere, there is no way that the two planets could be picked up on radar and this object was. Do they expect us to believe that pilots, police, doctors, lawyers, meteorologists, astronomers and even astronauts are seeing things that aren't really there?

To sum it up, Mr. Vento, the fact that your letter was turned over to the FBI by President Reagan's staff should tell you that the government gets nervous when people start asking intelligent questions. —Carol A. Cain, Biloxi, Miss.

### ELECTROMAGNETIC EFFECTS

Comments about power lines and cancer ("I See by the Papers," November 1988 FATE) apparently came from a form letter which Dr. David Carpenter sends in response to inquiries about the New York Power Lines Project, which included one by Dr. David Savitz on childhood cancer risk. By the accurate but incomplete comments without cautionary remarks, the effect on readers is

(Continued on page 126)

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## REPORT FROM THE READERS

*(Continued from page 116)*

thus a frightening one when it need not be.

For example, Carpenter says in his replies, "I wish I could say that the scientific community knows the full story on the dangers posed by electromagnetic fields; however, far more research must be conducted on this subject before we will know for sure what risk, if any, humans face from power lines, electric appliances and other sources of electromagnetic radiation both in the home and on the job."

More to the point he states, "Increasing the risk of cancer, of course, doesn't mean that a person is certain to develop the disease. Health experts estimate that the incidence of cancer among children in the U.S. today is one in 10,000 per year. If the incidence of cancer is raised by 2.1, as suggested by the Savitz study, then the likelihood of getting childhood cancer is two in 10,000 per year."

Another germane point is made by

stating, "Savitz' study by no means proves a cause-and-effect relationship between electromagnetic fields and cancer. Nor does it give us any information on how magnetic fields may generate cancer."

Last of all Carpenter says, "I want to conclude by stressing that people should not be unduly alarmed by the information in our report. It may help to realize that children are commonly exposed to a number of other environmental contaminants which pose a far greater risk than does electromagnetic radiation. We suggest, for instance, that children who live in homes where parents smoke face far more risk of contracting cancer from cigarette smoke than they do from the effects of electromagnetism..." — *John White, Cheshire, Conn.*

#### TRUE SCIENTISTS

"I See by the Papers" column (November 1988 FATE) summarized some recent research published in *Nature* which verified the value of the microdoses that are commonly used in homeopathic medicine. This research was supposedly debunked by *Nature's* editor John Maddox, James "The Amazing" Randi, and National Institutes of Health scientist Walter Stewart.

As is so often the case, the "debunkers" played some serious shenanigans with science. Specifically:

(1) The *Nature* team ignored one blind experiment which showed the biological action of the microdoses.

(2) Of the three trials that supposedly didn't work, one was inadequately stained, acknowledged by both parties. According to Dr. Jacques Benveniste, primary author of the original research, the controls of the other two batches

show that they were also technically unsatisfactory.

(3) The *Nature* team presumed to have disproved Benveniste's five years' work in two days of experiments.

(4) The team didn't include an immunologist, and thus it didn't know that white blood cells are not always sensitive to large doses of antibodies, let alone microdoses of them.

(5) It claimed that some of the original data of the experiment were not available, and yet the specific data in question were printed in the original *Nature* article.

(6) The *Nature* team's response was sent to Benveniste for his reaction. This response included acknowledgement that the microdoses worked in one of the four blind trials. Benveniste made reference to this acknowledgement in his response, but the *Nature* team mysteriously omitted this acknowledgement in its article.

Finally the team ignored the over a dozen good doubleblind studies which have previously verified the value of the homeopathic medicines. These experiments are described in my book *Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21st Century*. One hopes the "debunkers" will one day act like true scientists. — *Dana Ullman, Oakland, Calif.*

#### GONDWANALAND

In "I See by the Papers" (October 1988 FATE) animal life on the Caribbean Islands is discussed. Back in 1960 in Geology I at Carleton College in Northfield, Minn., Duncan Stewart VII taught that all that area, South America and Africa were part of one great land mass called Gondwanaland. It broke up as the plates of the earth moved, but

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plant life is evidence of the former connection. Dr. Stewart did not use a textbook as he propounded the tectonic plate theory and other theories, which at that time were unacceptable to most of his profession.

It has been exhilarating to watch the world's intellectuals slowly accept the ideas and to see them justified as new knowledge is discovered. —Corinne LaPointe Marshall, Siloam Springs, Ark.

### LINGTON NOTES

In September 1988 FATE you were kind enough to publish a letter concerning the passing of American author and long-time FATE subscriber (Barbara) Elizabeth Lington. Yours was the one publication that she always spoke highly of in her correspondence with me. How fitting that of all the publications FATE alone accorded this truly gifted writer of historical novels and police procedurals a public notice of her passing.

The published letter resulted in bringing notice of her passing to other persons who are readers of both FATE and her books. FATE readers deserve to know that the people who publish this magazine are not simply mercenaries out to "turn a buck" by selling a product, but are considerate and compassionate people who regard their readers as more than just a source of income.

If other readers are interested, information concerning the late Miss Lington is available from R.S. Potts, 1223 Glen Terrace, Glassboro, N.J. 08028-1315. —Anthony F. Cambra, Fall River, Mass.

### BUDDHISM BELIEFS

I was pleased to read James McClen-

on's "The Pure Land Beyond Death" (August 1988 FATE). Other readers may like to know that Pureland Buddhism has been in this country for over 100 years. It is a universal, compassionate and viable worldview. Inquiries can be sent to Buddhist Churches of America, 1710 Octavia St., San Francisco, Calif. 94109. —*Stan Bennett, Central Square, N. Y.*

### HORIZONS BROADENED

Without fail I find FATE entertains and enlightens me, but the September issue seemed even better. Even more than usual, it seemed to broaden my horizons and tinkle the celestial music about me. I must also say that "I See by the Papers" is my monthly favorite for intellectually stirring up my appreciation of our noteworthy planet. —*L. Charles Hughes, Brookville, Ind.*

For various reasons I have been drawn to the writings of Talbot Mundy. I've been able to get a variety of newspaper articles about him but nary one book. Can someone help me? I wish to buy them. —*Christine Sampson, 334415 N. Sears Blvd., Wildwood, Ill. 60030.*

### PK MAN SOUGHT

Where can I contact Ted Owens, psychokinesis expert? —*Walter T. Rogers, 3185 South Grand Ave., #206, St. Louis, Mo. 63318.*

### HE'S A SHE

In Lyman Johnston's "Curse of the Zeros" (November 1988 FATE) the author quotes L. Taylor Hansen from *Search*. Lucile Taylor Hansen is a *she*, not a *he*. —*Helen Williams, Milville, Pa., and Clare Hodgins, Escondido, Calif.*

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