

The cover features a background image of Stonehenge under a blue sky with a large, faint, white, stylized sun or moon symbol. In the foreground, a bird is perched on the left, and a man in a dark suit and white shirt stands on the right. The title is centered in a serif font, with 'AND' in yellow. The authors' names are in the top right. A grey box at the bottom contains a list of topics, and a yellow circle with the number 3 is at the very bottom center.

BRAD STEIGER  
AND  
SHERRY  
HANSEN  
STEIGER

THE GALE  
ENCYCLOPEDIA  
OF THE UNUSUAL  
AND  
UNEXPLAINED

AFTERLIFE MYSTERIES  
MEDIUMS AND MYSTICS  
RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA  
MYSTERY RELIGIONS AND CULTS

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## Gale Encyclopedia of the Unusual and Unexplained

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The *Gale Encyclopedia of the Unusual and Unexplained* (GEUU) presents comprehensive and objective information on unexplained mysteries, paranormal abilities, supernatural events, religious phenomena, magic, UFOs, and myths that have evolved into cultural realities. This extensive three-volume work is a valuable tool providing users the opportunity to evaluate the many claims and counterclaims regarding the mysterious and unknown. Many of these claims have been brought to the forefront from television, motion pictures, radio talk shows, best-selling books, and the Internet.

There has been a conscious effort to provide reliable and authoritative information in the most objective and factual way possible, to present multiple viewpoints for controversial subject topics, and to avoid sensationalism that taints the credibility of the subject matter. The manner of presentation enables readers to utilize their critical thinking skills to separate fact from fiction, opinion from dogma, and truth from legend regarding enigmas that have intrigued, baffled, and inspired humankind over the centuries.

## PREFACE

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ADVISORS

Brad E. Steiger has written over 150 books with over 17 million copies in print. His vast writing experience includes biographies, books of inspiration, phenomenon and the paranormal, spirituality, UFO research, and crimes. His first articles on the paranormal appeared in 1954 and, today, he has produced over 2,000 articles on such themes. Steiger has appeared on such television programs as *Nightline with Ted Koppel*, *ABC Evening News with Peter Jennings*, *NBC Evening News with Tom Brokaw*, *This Week* (with David Brinkley, Sam Donaldson, and Cokie Roberts), *The Mike Douglas Show*, *The David Susskind Show*, *The Joan Rivers Show*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *Haunted Hollywood*, *Inside Edition*, *The Unexplained*, and *Giants: The Myth and the Mystery*. Sherry Hansen Steiger is a co-author of 24 books on a variety of topics on the unusual

and unexplained with her husband Brad. Her continual studies in alternative medicine and therapies led to the 1992 official creation of The Office of Alternative Medicine under the Institutes of Health, Education and Welfare in Bethesda, Maryland. Both Steigers have served as consultants for such television shows as *Sightings* and *Unsolved Mysteries*.

The advisors for *GEUU* are Judy T. Nelson, the Youth Services Coordinator for the Pierce County Library System in Tacoma, Washington; Lee Sprince, former Head of Youth Services for the Broward County Main Library in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; and Brad E. Steiger, author of Gale's former Visible Ink Press title *The Werewolf Book: The Encyclopedia of Shape-Shifting Things*. For *GEUU*, both Nelson and Sprince were consulted on *GEUU*'s subject content, its appropriateness, and format; Steiger advised on the content's organization before he became the author of *GEUU*.

## FORMAT

The *Gale Encyclopedia of the Unusual and Unexplained* consists of fourteen broad-subject chapters covering a wide range of high-interest topics: Afterlife Mysteries; Mediums and Mystics; Religious Phenomena; Mystery Religions and Cults; Secret Societies; Magic and Sorcery; Prophecy and Divination; Objects of Mystery and Power; Places of Mystery and Power; Ghosts and Phantoms; Mysterious Creatures; Mysteries of the Mind; Superstitions, Strange Customs, Taboos, and Urban Legends; and Invaders from Outer Space. Each chapter begins with an **Overview** that summarizes the chapter's concept in a few brief sentences. Then the **Chapter Exploration** provides a complete outline of the chapter, listing all topics and subtopics therein, so that the user can understand the interrelationships between the chapter's topics and its subtopics. An **Introduction** consisting of 6 to 12 paragraphs follows; it broadly describes the chapter's theme. Then each topic is

explored, along with each subtopic, developing relevant concepts, geographic places, persons, practices, etc. After each topic, a **Delving Deeper** section provides complete bibliographical citations of books, periodicals, television programs, Internet sites, movies, and theses used, and provides users with further research opportunities. **Boldfaced cross-references** are used to guide users from the text to related entries found elsewhere in the three volumes. Sidebars supplement the text with unusual facts, features, and biographies, as well as descriptions of web sites, etc.

Each chapter contains photographs, line drawings, and original graphics that were chosen to complement the text; in all three volumes, over 250 images enliven the text. Many of these images are provided by Fortean Picture Library—"a pictorial archive of mysteries and strange phenomena"—and from the personal archives of the author, Brad Steiger. At the end of each chapter, a glossary, called **Making the Connection**, lists significant terms, theories, and practices mentioned within the text. A comprehensive glossary of the terms used throughout all three volumes can be found at the end of each volume.

Each volume has a cumulative **Table of Contents** allowing users to see the organization of each chapter at a glance. The **Cumulative Index**, found in each volume, is an alphabetic arrangement of all people, places, images, and concepts found in the text. The page references to the terms include the volume number as well as the page number; images are denoted by italicized page numbers.

## USER COMMENTS ARE WELCOME

Users having comments, corrections, or suggestions can contact the editor at the following address: *Gale Encyclopedia of the Unusual and Unexplained*, The Gale Group, Inc., 27500 Drake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI 48331-3535.

## UNDERSTANDING THE UNKNOWN

The belief in a reality that transcends our everyday existence is as old as humanity itself and it continues to the present day. In fact, in recent years there has been a tremendous surge of interest in the paranormal and the supernatural. People speak freely of guardian angels, a belief in life after death, an acceptance of extrasensory perception (ESP), and the existence of ghosts. In a Gallup Poll released on June 10, 2001, the survey administrators found that 54 percent of Americans believe in spiritual or faith healing; 41 percent acknowledge that people can be possessed by the devil; 50 percent accept the reality of ESP; 32 percent believe in the power of prophecy; and 38 percent agree that ghosts and spirits exist.

## INTRODUCTION

What are the origins of these age-old beliefs? Are they natural phenomenon that can be understood by the physical sciences? Some scientists are suggesting that such mystical experiences can be explained in terms of neural transmitters, neural networks, and brain chemistry. Perhaps the feeling of transcendence that mystics describe could be the result of decreased activity in the brain's parietal lobe, which helps regulate the sense of self and physical orientation. Perhaps the human brain is wired for mystical experiences and the flash of wisdom that illuminated the Buddha, the voices that Mohammed and Moses heard in the wilderness, and the dialogues that Jesus had with the Father were the result of brain chemistry and may someday be completely explained in scientific terms.

Perhaps the origin of these beliefs is to be found in psychology? Humankind's fascination with the unknown quite likely began with the most basic of human emotions—fear. Early humans faced the constant danger of being attacked by predators, of being killed by people from other tribes, or of falling victim to the sudden fury of a natural disaster, such as flood, fire, or avalanche. Nearly all of these violent encounters brought about the death of a friend or family member, so one may surmise that chief among the mysteries that troubled early

humans was the same one that haunts man today: What happens when someone dies?

But belief in the unknown may be more than brain chemistry or a figment of our fears. Perhaps there is some spiritual reality that is outside of us, but with which one can somehow communicate? Perhaps the physical activity of the brain or psychological state (the two are of course related) may be only a precondition or a conduit to a transcendent world? The central mystery may always remain.

## GHOSTLY ENTITIES AND URBAN LEGENDS

There is not a single known culture on planet Earth that does not have its ghost stories, and one can determine from Paleolithic cave paintings that the belief that there is something within the human body that survives physical death is at least 50,000 years old. If there is a single unifying factor in the arena of the unknown and the unexplained it is the universality of accounts of ghostly entities. Of course, not everyone agrees on the exact nature of ghosts. Some insist that the appearance of ghosts prove survival after death. Others state that such phenomena represent other dimensions of reality.

And then there are the skeptics who group most ghost stories in the category of "Urban Legends," those unverifiable stories about outlandish, humorous, frightening, or supernatural events. In some instances, the stories are based on actual occurrences that have in their telling and retelling been exaggerated or distorted. Other urban legends have their origins in people misinterpreting or misunderstanding stories that they have heard or read in the media or from actual witnesses of an event. There is usually some distance between the narrator and his tale; all urban legends claim that the story always happened to someone else, most often "a friend of a friend."

## THE ROOTS OF SUPERSTITION

Whatever their basis in reality, certain beliefs and practices of primitive people

helped ease their fear and the feeling of helplessness that arose from the precariousness of their existence. Others in the community who took careful note of their behavior ritualized the stories of those who had faced great dangers and survived. In such rituals lies the origin of "superstition," a belief that certain repeated actions or words will bring the practitioner luck or ward off evil. Ancient superstitions survive today in such common practices as tossing a pinch of salt over the shoulder or whispering a blessing after a sneeze to assure good fortune.

The earliest traces of magical practices are found in the European caves of the Paleolithic Age, c. 50,000 B.C.E. in which it seems clear that early humans sought supernatural means to placate the spirits of the animals they killed for food, to dispel the restless spirits of the humans they had slain, or to bring peace to the spirits of their deceased tribal kin. It was at this time that early humans began to believe that there could be supernatural powers in a charm, a spell, or a ritual to work good or evil on their enemies. Practices, such as imitating the animal of the hunt through preparatory dance, cutting off a bit of an enemy's hair or clothing to be used in a charm against him, or invoking evil spirits to cause harm to others, eventually gained a higher level of sophistication and evolved into more formal religious practices.

As such beliefs developed, certain tribal members were elevated in status to shaman and magician because of their ability to communicate with the spirit worlds, to influence the weather, to heal the sick, and to interpret dreams. Shamans entered a trance-like condition separating them from life's mundane existence and allowing them to enter a state of heightened spiritual awareness. According to anthropologists, shamanic methods are remarkably similar throughout the world. In our own time, Spiritualist mediums who claim to be able to communicate with the dead remain popular as guides for contemporary men and women, and such individuals as John Edward, James Van Praagh, and Sylvia Browne issue advice from the Other Side on syndicated television programs.

## MONSTERS AND NIGHT TERRORS

Stone Age humans had good reason to fear the monsters that emerged from the darkness. Saber-tooth tigers stalked man, cave bears mauled them, and rival hominid species—many appearing more animal-like than human—struggled against them for dominance. The memories of the ancient night terrors surface in dreams and imagination, a kind of psychic residue of primitive fears. Anthropologists have observed that such half-human, half-animal monsters as the werewolf and other werereatures were painted by Stone Age artists more than 10,000 years ago. Some of the world's oldest art found on ancient sites in Europe, Africa, and Australia depict animal-human hybrids. Such "therianthropes," or hybrid beings, appear to be the only common denominator in primitive art around the planet. These werewolves, were-lions, and were-bats belonged to an imagined world which early humans saw as powerful, dangerous, and frightening.

Images of these creatures persisted into the historical period. The ancient Egyptians often depicted their gods as human-animal hybrids. Pharaoh identified himself with the god Horus, who could be represented as a falcon or a falcon-headed human. Anubis, the god of the necropolis, can be shown as a jackal-headed man, probably because such carrion-eating jackals prowled Egyptian cemeteries. Many other civilizations felt the power of these kinds of images. For example, the ancient Greeks fashioned the minotaur (half-human, half-bull), the satyr (half-human, half-goat), the harpy (half-woman, half-bird) and a host of other hybrid entities—the vast majority unfavorably disposed toward humankind. Examples could be found in other cultures as well.

## CUSTOMS AND TABOOS

In 2001, scientists were surprised when bits of stone etched with intricate patterns found in the Blombos Cave, east of Cape Town on the southern African shores of the

Indian Ocean, were dated at 77,000 years old, thereby indicating that ancient humans were capable of complex behavior and abstract thought thousands of years earlier than previously believed. In Europe, numerous sites have been excavated and artifacts unearthed that prove that structured behavior with customs and taboos existed about 40,000 years ago.

Customs are those activities that have been approved by a social group and have been handed down from generation to generation until they have become habitual. When an action or activity violates behavior considered appropriate by a social group, it is labeled a "taboo," a word borrowed from the Polynesians of the South Pacific. An act that is taboo is forbidden, and those who transgress may be ostracized by others or, in extreme instances, killed.

However, customs vary from culture to culture, and customary actions in one society may be considered improper in another. While the marriage of near-blood relations is prohibited in contemporary civilization, in earlier societies it was quite common. The ancient brother and sister gods of Egypt, Osiris and Isis, provided an example for pharaohs, who at times married their sisters. Polygamy, the marriage of one man and several women or one woman and several men, is prohibited in modern civilization, but there are still religious groups in nearly every nation who justify plural marriages as being ordained by the deity they worship. Adultery, an act of infidelity on the part of a married individual, is one of the most universal taboos. The code of Moses condemned both parties involved in the act to be stoned to death. Hindu religious doctrines demand the death, mutilation, or humiliation of both men and women, depending upon the caste of the guilty parties.

Taboos can change within a society over time. Many acts that were once considered forbidden have developed into an acceptable social activity. While some of the old customs and taboos surrounding courtship and marriage, hospitality and etiquette, and burials and funerals may seem amusing or quaint, primitive or savage, certain elements of such acts as capturing one's bride have been pre-

served in many traditions that are still practiced in the modern marriage ceremony.

## BELIEF IN AN AFTERLIFE

Belief in the survival of some part of us after death may also be as old as the human race. Although one cannot be certain the earliest members of man's species (*Homo sapiens* c. 30,000 B.C.E.) conducted burial rituals that would qualify them as believers in an afterlife, one does know they buried their dead with care and consideration and included food, weapons, and various personal belongings with the body. Anthropologists have also discovered the Neanderthal species (c. 100,000 B.C.E.) placed food, stone implements, and decorative shells and bones with the deceased. Because of the placement of such funerary objects in the graves, one may safely conjecture that these prehistoric people believed death was not the end. There was some part of the deceased requiring nourishment, clothing, and protection in order to journey safely in another kind of existence beyond the grave. This belief persisted into more recent historical times. The ancient Egyptians had a highly developed concept of life after death, devoting much thought and effort to their eternal well-being, and they were not the only early civilization to be concerned about an afterlife.

With all their diversity of beliefs, the major religions of today are in accord in one essential teaching: Human beings are immortal and their spirit comes from a divine world and may eventually return there. The part of the human being that survives death is known in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as the soul—the very essence of the individual person that must answer for its earthly deeds, good or bad. Hinduism perceives this spiritual essence as the divine Self, the *Atman*, and Buddhism believes it to be the summation of conditions and causes. Of the major world religions, only Buddhism does not perceive an eternal metaphysical aspect of the human personality in the same way that the others do. However, all the major faiths believe that after the spirit has left the body, it moves on to

another existence. The physical body is a temporary possession that a human has, not what a person is.

The mystery of what happens when the soul leaves the body remains an enigma in the teachings of the major religions; however, as more and more individuals are retrieved from clinical death by the miracles of modern medicine, literature describing near-death-experiences has arisen which depicts a transition into another world or dimension of consciousness wherein the deceased are met by beings of light. Many of those who have returned to life after such an experience also speak of a life-review of their deeds and misdeeds from childhood to the moment of the near-death encounter.

## PROPHECY AND DIVINATION

The desire to foresee the future quite likely began when early humans began to perceive that they were a part of nature, subject to its limitations and laws, and that they were seemingly powerless to alter those laws. Mysterious supernatural forces—sometimes benign, often hostile—appeared to be in control of human existence.

Divination, the method of obtaining knowledge of the future by means of omens or sacred objects, has been practiced in all societies, whether primitive or civilized. The ancient Chaldeans read the will of the gods in the star-jeweled heavens. The children of Israel sought the word of the Lord in the jewels of the Ephod. Pharaoh elevated Joseph from his prison cell to the office of chief minister of Egypt and staked the survival of his kingdom on Joseph's interpretation of his dreams. In the same land of Egypt, priests of Isis and Ra listened as those deities spoke through the unmoving lips of the stone Sphinx.

Throughout the centuries, soothsayers and seers have sought to predict the destiny of their clients by interpreting signs in the entrails of animals, the movements of the stars in the heavens, the reflections in a crystal ball, the spread of a deck of cards, and even messages from the dead. All of these ancient practices are still being utilized today by those who wish to know the future.



## OBJECTS AND PLACES OF MYSTERY AND POWER

Objects of mystery and power that become influential in a person's life can be an everyday item that an individual has come to believe will bring good fortune, such as an article of clothing that was worn when some great personal success was achieved or an amulet that has been passed on from generation to generation. In addition to such items of personal significance, some individuals have prized objects that reportedly brought victory or good fortune to heroes of long ago. Still others have searched for mysterious relics filled with supernatural attributes that were credited with accomplishing miracles in the past. No physical evidence is available to determine that such an object as the Ark of the Covenant ever existed, but its present location continues to be sought. The Holy Grail, the cup from which Jesus drank at the Last Supper, is never mentioned in the Bible, but by medieval times it had been popularized as the holiest relic in Christendom.

In addition to bestowing mystery and power upon certain objects, humans have always found or created places that are sacred to them—sites where they might gather to participate in religious rituals or where they might retreat for solitude and reflection. In such places, many people claim to experience a sense of the sublime. Others, while in a solemn place of worship or in a natural setting, attest to feeling a special energy that raises their consciousness and perhaps even heals their physical body.

Mysterious megaliths (large stones) were those placed at a special location by ancient people. Such sites include the standing stones of Brittany, the Bighorn Medicine Wheel in Wyoming, and the monuments of Easter Island. All of these places were ostensibly significant to an ancient society or religion, but many were long abandoned by the time they became known to today's world and their significance remains unexplained.

The most well-known megalithic structures are Stonehenge in Great Britain and the complex of pyramids and the Great Sphinx in

Egypt. Like many such ancient places, those sites have been examined and speculated upon for centuries, yet they still continue to conceal secrets and occasionally yield surprising information that forces new historical interpretations of past societies.

There are other places that have become mysterious sites because of unusual occurrences. The claimed miraculous healing at Lourdes, France, the accounts of spiritual illumination at Jerusalem and Mecca, and the sacred visions at Taos, New Mexico, provide testimonies of faith and wonder that must be assessed by each individual.

There are also the "lost" civilizations and mysterious places that may never have existed beyond the human imagination. More than 2,500 years ago, legends first began about Atlantis, an ideal society that enjoyed an abundance of natural resources, great military power, splendid building and engineering feats, and intellectual achievements far advanced over those of other lands. This ancient society was described as existing on a continent-sized area with rich soil, plentiful pure water, abundant vegetation, and such mineral wealth that gold was inlaid in buildings. In the ensuing centuries, no conclusive evidence of Atlantis has been found, but its attributes have expanded to include engineering and technological feats that enhance its legendary status.

Sometimes legends come to life. The Lost City of Willkapanpa the Old, a city rumored to consist primarily of Incan rulers and soldiers, was not discovered until 1912 when a historian from Yale University found the site now known as Machu Picchu hidden at 8,000 feet in altitude between two mountains, Huayana Picchu ("young mountain") and Machu Picchu ("ancient mountain") in Peru.

## MYSTERY SCHOOLS AND CULTS

Once a religion has become firmly established in a society, dissatisfied members often will break away from the larger group to create what they believe to be a more valid form of

religious expression. Sometimes such splinter groups are organized around the revelations and visions of a single individual, who is recognized as a prophet by his or her followers. Because the new teachings may be judged as heretical to the original body of worshippers, those who follow the new revelations are branded as cultists or heretics.

Even in ancient times, the dissenters were forced to meet in secret because of oppression by the established group or because of their desire to hide their practices. Since only devotees could know the truths of their faith, adherents were required to maintain the strictest silence regarding their rites and rituals. The term “mysteries” or “mystery religion” is applied to these beliefs. The word “mystery” comes from the Greek word *myein*, “to close,” referring to the need of the *mystes*, the initiate, to close his or her eyes and the lips and to keep secret the rites of the cult.

In ancient Greece, postulants of the mystery religions had to undergo a rigorous initiation that disciplined both their mind and body. In order to attain the self-mastery demanded by the priests of the mysteries, the neophytes understood that they must restructure their physical, moral, and spiritual being to gain access to the hidden forces in the universe. Only through complete mastery of oneself could one see beyond death and perceive the pathways of the after-life. Many times these mysteries were taught in the form of a play and were celebrated in sacred groves or in secret temples away from the cities.

In contemporary usage, the word “cult” generally carries with it negative connotations and associations. In modern times, a number of apocalyptic cults, such as the Branch Davidians and the People’s Temple, have alarmed the general population by isolating themselves and preparing for Armageddon, the last great battle between good and evil. The mass suicides carried out by members of Heaven’s Gate, People’s Temple, and Order of the Solar Temple have also presented alarming images of what many believe to be typical cultist practice. Recent statistics indicate that there are 2,680 religions in the United States. Therefore, one must be cautious in labeling

any seemingly unorthodox religion as a cult, for what is regarded as anti-social or blasphemous expression by some may be hailed as sincere spiritual witness by others.

## SECRET SOCIETIES AND CONSPIRACIES

There will always be envious individuals who believe that wealthy and powerful members of society have been able to acquire their position only because of secret formulas, magical words, and supernatural rituals. Rumors and legends of secret societies have fueled the imaginations, fears, and envy of those on the outside for thousands of years. Many secret societies, such as the Assassins, the Garduna, the Thuggee, and the Tongs, were made up of highly trained criminals who were extremely dangerous to all outsiders. Others, such as the Knights Templar, the Illuminati, and the Rosicrucians, were said to possess enough ancient secrets of power and wealth to control the entire world.

Conspiracy enthusiasts allege that there are clandestine organizations which for centuries have remained a threat to individual freedoms, quietly operating in the shadows, silently infiltrating political organizations, and secretly manipulating every level of government and every facet of society. One of the favorites of conspiracy theorists, the Freemasons, while once a powerful and influential group throughout the Western world, is today regarded by many as simply a philanthropic and fraternal organization. Another secret society, the Illuminati, deemed by many conspiracy buffs to be the most insidious of all, faded into obscurity in the late eighteenth century. However, there is always a new secret society that seeks to divine arcane and forbidden avenues to wealth and power.

## SORCERY, ALCHEMY AND WITCHCRAFT

Although Christianity affirms the existence of a transcendent reality, it has always

distinguished between *religio* (reverence for God) and *superstitio*, which in Latin means “unreasonable religious belief.” Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire in 395 C.E., and in 525 the Council of Oria prohibited Christians from consulting sorcerers, diviners, or any kind of seer. A canon passed by the Council of Constantinople in 625 prescribed excommunication for a period of six years for anyone found practicing divination or who consulted with a diviner.

Although the Church had issued many canons warning against the practice of witchcraft or magic, little action was taken against those learned men who experimented with alchemy or those common folk who practiced the old ways of witchcraft. In 906 C.E., Abbot Regino of Prum recognized that earlier canon laws had done little to eradicate the practices of magic and witchcraft, so he issued his *De ecclesiasticis disciplinis* to condemn as heretical any belief in witchcraft or the power of sorcerers. In 1,000 C.E., Deacon Burchard, who would later become archbishop of Worms, published *Corrector* which updated Regino’s work and stressed that only God had the power to transform matter. Alchemists could not change base metals into gold, and witches could not shapeshift into animals.

In spite of such decrees, a lively belief in a world of witches and ghosts persisted throughout the Middle Ages and co-existed in the minds of many of the faithful with the miracle stories of the saints. To the native beliefs were added those of non-Christian peoples who either lived in Europe or whom Europeans met when they journeyed far from home, as when they went on the Crusades. By the twelfth century, magical practices based upon the arcane systems of the Spanish Moors and Jewish Kabbalah were established in Europe. The Church created the Inquisition in the High Middle Ages in response to unorthodox religious beliefs that it called heresies. Since some of these involved magical practices and witchcraft, the occult also became an object of persecution. The harsh treatment of the Manichaean Cathars in southern France is an example of society’s reaction to those who mixed arcane practice with heterodox theology.

In spite of persecution, the concept of witchcraft persisted and even flourished in early modern times. At least the fear of it did, as the Salem witch trials richly illustrate. In the early decades of the twentieth century, schools of pagan and magical teachings were reborn as Wicca. Wiccans, calling themselves “practitioners of the craft of the wise,” would resurrect many of the old ways and infuse them with modern thoughts and practices. Whatever its origin, the occult seems to be an object of permanent fascination to the human race.

## ARE WE ALONE?

Is the earth the only inhabited planet? Imagine the excitement if contact is made with intelligent extraterrestrial life forms and humankind discovers that it is part of a larger cosmic community. It would change the way we think of ourselves and of our place in the universe. Or is the belief in extraterrestrials a creation of our minds? The universe is so vast we may never know, but the mysteries of outer space have a grip on the modern psyche, since it seems to offer the possibility of a world that may be more open to scientific verification than witchcraft.

## PURPOSE OF BOOK

Whatever the origin and veracity of the unusual, these beliefs and experiences have played a significant role in human experiences and deserve to be studied dispassionately. These volumes explore and describe the research of those who take such phenomena seriously; extraterrestrials, ghosts, spirits, and haunted places are explored from many perspectives. They are part of the adventure of humanity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Compiling such an extensive work as a three-volume encyclopedia of the unusual and unexplained proved many times to be a most formidable task. During those moments when I felt the labor pains of giving birth to such a

large and exhausting enterprise might be beyond me, I was able to rely upon a number of wonderful midwives. My agent Agnes Birnbaum never failed to offer encouragement and support; my remarkably resourceful and accomplished editor Jolen Marya Gedridge continued to assure me that there truly was light at the end of the tunnel and that the great enterprise would one day be completed; the always pleasant and helpful staff at Gale—

Julia Furtaw, Rita Runchock, Lynn Koch, and Nancy Matuszak—stood by to offer assistance; and most of all, I am forever indebted to my wife Sherry Hansen Steiger for her tireless compiling of the glossaries, her efforts in writing sidebars, her invaluable talents as a researcher, her patience and love, and her always providing a shoulder to cry on during the all-night writing sessions.

—Brad E. Steiger

## CHAPTER 10

# GHOSTS AND PHANTOMS

*There is not a single culture on planet Earth that does not have its ghost stories. Paleolithic cave paintings depicting the human body surviving physical death indicate that this belief is many thousands of years old. In this chapter the universality of accounts of the manifestation of ghostly entities is explored.*

### CHAPTER EXPLORATION

#### GHOSTLY BEINGS

Animal Spirits  
 Apparitions  
 Autoscopy  
 Ghosts of the Living  
 Phantoms  
 Poltergeists  
 Spirits of the Dead  
 Spooklights

#### FAMOUS HAUNTED HOUSES AND PLACES

Bell Witch's Cave  
 Borley Rectory  
 Calvados Castle  
 Epworth Rectory  
 General Wayne Inn  
 The Gray Man of Hinton Ampner  
 Myrtles Plantation  
 The Tedworth Drummer  
 The Whaley House

#### GHOSTS IN THE MOVIES

#### SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION (SHC)



"Poltergeist" movie. (THE  
KOBAL COLLECTION)

## INTRODUCTION

A ghost is believed to be a physical manifestation of the surviving spirit of a person who is known to be deceased. The spirit form of the ghost may appear as a mistlike, amorphous mass; a lifelike, but transparent, image of a person; or an exact physical replica of an individual known to be dead. Even if the person represented by the manifestation is well known or loved by those who encounter its presence, the appearance of a ghost most often provokes feelings of fear or awe.

Although the terms "ghosts" and "phantoms" are generally interchangeable in popular usage, many **psychical researchers** who specialize in such areas of the unknown draw the distinction that phantoms are most often associated with locales that over the years have built up unique atmospheres, such as places of battle, tragedy, or great suffering. In such hauntings, certain ethereal figures may be reported so often over so many years that they seem almost to have assumed an independent life force that has enabled them to continue to exist within the context of a specific battlefield, the ruins of a burned building, or the shadowed places in a hospital corridor. In this chapter the many categories of ghosts and phantoms will be explored, such as apparitions of the dead, the possibility of animal spirits, the phenomenon of "**spooklights**," and the disrupting energy of the poltergeist, a noisy, rambunctious ghost. In addition, the details of such classic hauntings as the **Bell Witch's Cave**, the **Borley Rectory**,

the **Whaley House**, and the **Myrtle Plantation** will be examined.

A Gallup Poll conducted in May 2001 revealed that 38 percent of Americans surveyed believed in the existence of ghosts. Responding to another question in the same survey, 42 percent of the respondents admitted that they believed in the reality of haunted houses, a 13 percent increase since a poll conducted in 1990. In the largest survey of paranormal beliefs ever conducted in the United Kingdom, the Consumer Analysis Group found that 57 percent of the British public believe in ghosts.

Television documentaries, such as the "Haunted History" series on The History Channel and the remaking of "In Search Of" on the Sci Fi Channel, present evidence of ghosts and hauntings that the viewing public is eager to accept as proof of spirits existing in castles, cottages, and taverns around the world. Motion picture producers have found vast audiences eager for such stylish ghost stories as *The Sixth Sense* (1999), *Sleepy Hollow* (1999), and *The Others* (2001).

Books about ghosts—both fiction and non-fiction—remain high on readers' lists of popular titles. Barnes & Noble.com carries 8,102 books with the key words "ghost stories."

And then there is the Internet. There are more than 650,000 websites devoted to the topics of ghosts and hauntings.

In spite of such remarkable interest in ghosts by a large segment of the general public, one of the main reasons why neither science nor society at large has seriously considered the question of ghosts and phantoms is the lack of what scientists consider to be tangible physical evidence that proves that there is anything other than a void waiting for humans upon death. Skeptics remain untouched by the most moving, frightening, or inspirational anecdotes of personal encounters with spirits, and even the most open-minded of contemporary scientists are reluctant to get involved in "ghost hunting" for fear of tarnishing their shields of objectivity. And since ghosts are allegedly spirits of the once-living who have survived physical death, many scientists wish to avoid what they believe to be areas that transgress into abstract and esoteric elements of faith and religion.

But however relentlessly science strives to ignore the evidence for ghosts or to deny the existence of a life after death, the more popular ghost stories seem to become among the general public. The more that science seeks to demystify the world, the more that average people wish to retain a sense of mystery and wonder through belief in ghosts and the supernatural. In such works as *Leaps of Faith: Science, Miracles, and the Search for Supernatural Consolation* (1999), psychologist Nicholas Humphrey insists that science will never be able to explain the world and reassure men and women that there is meaning to life as completely as can belief in the supernatural or the divine.

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## GHOSTLY BEINGS

There is not a single culture on planet Earth that does not have its ghost stories. While individuals around the world may argue politics, religion, and philosophy from the perspective of their own cultural biases, if there is a single unifying factor in the arena of the unknown and the unexplained, it is the manifestation of ghostly entities. Of course not everyone who believes in ghosts agrees on what exactly a ghost is. Some insist that the appearance of ghosts proves survival after death. Others state that such phenomena represent other dimensions of reality.

And not everyone in contemporary cultures believes in ghosts, but polls and surveys continue to indicate that a good many do.

A Gallup Poll done in May 2001 found that 38 percent of Americans surveyed were convinced that ghosts exist, a 13 percent increase from a survey conducted in 1990. While the current era is considered the age of science, the image of the traditional ghost appears to be as compelling and awesome as ever. Perhaps this is because science can never explain the Big Questions or reassure the human psyche as completely as can belief in the supernatural.

The famous psychoanalyst Dr. Carl Jung (1875–1961) described a personal encounter with a ghost in Fanny Moser's book *Spuk* (1950). In 1920, Jung was spending a weekend at an English country house a friend had rented. The nights afforded no rest, however, for the house was subject to the complete repertoire of a full-scale haunting. There were raps on the walls, noxious odors, and the mysterious dripping of liquid. Jung always experienced a sensation of incapacity whenever the phenomena would begin, and cold perspiration would bead his forehead.

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PSYCHOANALYST *Dr. Carl Jung*  
*claimed to have a personal encounter with a ghost.*

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The climax of the haunting occurred when the head of a woman materialized on the pillow of Jung's bed about 16 inches from his own. The ghostly head had one eye open, and it stared at the astonished psychoanalyst. Jung managed to light a candle, and the frightening specter disappeared. He later learned from the villagers that all previous tenants of the country house had terminated their occupancy in short order after a night or two in the haunted house.

In the jargon of parapsychology—the branch of behavioral science that undertakes to examine such phenomena—a ghost is usually a stranger to the one who perceives it while an **apparition** is well known by the one who sees it



Ghost with hand on light bulb. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

and is instantly recognizable as the image of a parent, sibling, or friend. An apparition usually appears at some time of crisis—most often that of physical death—and usually appears only once. In the records of parapsychology and psychical research there are also accounts of experimental cases in which individuals have deliberately attempted to make their apparition, their ghostly image, appear to a particular witness, as in efforts to project one's spiritual essence during an out-of-body experience.

A **poltergeist** is a projection of psychic energy that finds its energy center in the unconscious mind, most commonly in adolescents, and emanates, therefore, from the living rather than from the dead. A poltergeist is a ghost only in common parlance, which links the two because of the “spook-like” nature of the poltergeist that causes the invisible pseudoentity to prefer darkness for its violent exer-

cises of tossing furniture, objects, and people about the room.

Accounts of people reporting having seen **spirits of the dead** are among the most commonly described ghosts in all the cultures of the world. These post-mortem appearances of the dead, in which a recognized ghostly image is seen or heard long after the actual person represented by the apparition has died, are felt by many observers and researchers to prove survival of the human spirit beyond the grave.

Ghosts or apparitions that habitually appear in a room, house, or locale are known as **phantoms**, eerie phenomena that often appear over the years to attain a life force of their own, as if they were some kind of psychic marionettes.

Although people have been reporting seeing ghosts and the spirits of the dead since the earliest historical records of human activity, the



first organized effort to study such phenomena occurred in 1882, as the first major undertaking of the newly formed Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in London. By means of a circulated questionnaire, the SPR asked whether its recipients had ever, when they believed themselves to be completely awake, experienced some kind of visual or auditory phenomena. Of the 17,000 people who responded, 1,684 answered “yes.” From this, the committee members who were conducting the survey estimated that nearly 10 percent of the population of London had experienced some kind of paranormal manifestation, and they sent forms requesting additional details to all those who had indicated such encounters. Subsequent investigation and interviews enabled the early psychical researchers to arrive at a number of basic premises regarding ghosts.

For example, the committee was able to conclude that although ghosts are connected with other events besides death, they are more likely to be linked with death than with anything else. Visual sightings of ghosts were the most common, and of such cases reported, nearly one-quarter had been shared by more than one percipient. Those who answered the second form of the questionnaire requesting more information stated that they had not been ill when they had witnessed the paranormal visitations and they insisted that these manifestations were quite unlike the bizarre, nightmarish creatures that might appear during high fevers or high alcoholic consumption. Of those cases in which the percipients had experienced auditory phenomena, such as hearing voices, one-third were collective, that is, witnessed by more than one percipient at the same time.

After the findings of the research committee had been made public, the SPR began to be flooded by personal accounts of spontaneous cases of ghosts and spirits. In order to aid the committee in the handling of such an influx of information, the SPR worked out a series of questions that could be applied to each case that came in. Among the questions were the following: Is the account firsthand? Has the principal witness been corroborated? Was the percipient awake at the time? Was the apparition recognized? Was the percipient anxious or in a state of expectancy? Could rel-

evant details have been read back into the narrative after the event?

Today, over 120 years after the British Society for Psychical Research began its earnest efforts to chart and categorize ghosts, 42 percent of the residents of that metropolitan area believe in ghosts and almost half of this number said that they had seen or felt the presence of a ghost, according to a survey released on March 20, 2000, by television station GMTV in London.

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*A poltergeist is a projection of psychic energy.*

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In the exploration of the paranormal, it is found that most types of phenomena appear to be universal, the individual circumstances of the accounts fitting themselves to the unique cultural interpretations of whatever area in which they manifest. The ghostly beings described in this chapter are listed by loosely defined categories, for it will soon be apparent that these entities know no strictly set boundaries—especially those established by humans who attempt to explain or to identify them.

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#### ANIMAL SPIRITS

Just as a large percentage of the population of all cultures believe that the ghosts of the dearly departed members of their human families



Native American  
dressed like an animal  
spirit. (CORBIS  
CORPORATION)

might appear to them, so also do many individuals maintain that they have witnessed the spirit of a beloved pet return to a person or a place after physical death.

One of the most beloved authors of dog stories, Albert Payson Terhune (1872–1942), was a great animal lover who kept dozens of pets in Sunnybank, his estate near Pompton Lakes, New Jersey. Although Terhune's favorite dogs were collies, he did have one crossbreed named Rex, who was completely devoted to the writer.

Rex was a large dog with a vicious-looking scar across his forehead which made him appear much more ferocious than he really was. And though he felt it his duty to bark at every guest who walked across the threshold, Rex would contentedly curl up at Terhune's feet as

he sat at the typewriter creating another canine adventure for his legions of devoted readers.

Due to a series of unfortunate events, Rex was killed in March 1916, and the saddened Terhune wrote the story *Lad: A Dog* as a tribute to the memory of his dear pet.

Many months after Rex's death, Terhune was paid a visit by Henry A. Healy, a financier, who knew how much his host had loved his big dog—but who apparently had not been told of Rex's passing. Just before leaving that evening, Healy sighed wistfully and said, "Bert, I wish there was someone or something on earth that adored me as much as Rex worships you. I watched him all evening. He lay there at your feet the whole time, looking up at you as a devotee might look up to his god."

Terhune was shocked by his guest's comments. "Good lord, man!" he exclaimed. "Rex has been dead now for more than a year and a half."

Healy turned pale, but stood by the testimony of his own senses: "I can swear that he was lying at your feet all evening—just as I've seen him do since he was a puppy."

Some weeks later, a longtime friend of Terhune's, Rev. Appleton Grannis, paid a visit to Sunnybank, and after a stroll around the estate and a pleasant afternoon meal, remarked that he thought Bert fancied collies. Terhune replied that was true. In fact all the dogs that he presently owned were collies.

Rev. Grannis firmly disagreed. "Then what dog was it that stood all afternoon on the porch looking in through the French window at you? He's a big dog with a nasty, peculiar scar on his forehead."

While the author knew at once that it was his old friend Rex returning for another visit from the spirit world, Terhune thought better than to attempt to explain the situation to a conventional man of the cloth.

Terhune said that even the other dogs were able to sense the presence of old Rex. One of the collies that had always been careful to keep his distance from the big scar-faced crossbreed continued to skirt very carefully around the rug where Rex had always sat waiting for his master to sit down to write.

Tulsa, Oklahoma, attorney M. Jean Holmes is not an animal activist, but her extensive study of the Bible for her book *Do Dogs Go to Heaven?* (1999) convinced her that the distinction between humans and animals alleged to be found in Scripture is the result of an old translator's "philosophical construction." In her opinion, an examination of the original Hebrew texts for such concepts as "soul" and "spirit" clearly tells that the authors of the various books of the Bible believed that animals have souls and spirits, just as humans do. Stating that she has been enriched by her exploration of various religious practices, from Catholicism to Pentecostalism, Holmes offers a suggestion for those individuals who are troubled about orthodox teachings that deny spirituality to animals. She urges them to allow the Holy Spirit to be their teacher.

Attorney Holmes says that she is not ashamed to be compared to animals, "for most are of the highest character and are very good company. We have much to learn about and from animals."

Holmes was inspired to write her book by her late mother, Irene Hume Holmes, who would often question members of the clergy of various faiths: Did animals have spirits? And if they did, would they go to heaven when they died? Although her mother usually received the standard response that animals did not possess souls and that humans had dominion over their four-legged companions, Holmes's extensive research enabled her to answer at last her mother's oft-posed query, "Do dogs go to heaven?" in the affirmative.

Janice Gray Kolb, author of *Compassion for All Creatures*, says that she had been taught since childhood that her beloved pets did not have souls. Today, however, she states that she has a firm conviction that there will be animals in heaven. "Once I had this inner conviction from the Holy Spirit that animals and all God's creatures do inhabit Heaven with us, then I could never believe otherwise," she writes. "It was irrevocable! No matter what anyone else may argue, I cannot be shaken on this."

As a student of the Bible, Kolb states that God created humans out of the ground, and He created animals out of the ground. The

New American Catholic Bible uses for man "clay of the ground" (Genesis 2:7) and the Living Bible says "dust of the ground." In regard to the animals, the New American Catholic Bible states that they were "formed out of the ground" and the Living Bible states "formed from the soil." Kolb argues that since humans and animals came from the same substance, many Bible scholars, including herself, believe that animals must therefore have a soul. The holy breath that God breathed into man was the same breath that He breathed into the animals, birds, and other creatures. It is Kolb's further contention that God's act of blessing the animals is further proof that all creatures have a soul. "Blessed," she points out, "means 'to make holy,' 'sanctify,' to invoke divine favor upon, 'to honor as Holy.'" God blessed his creation of man and woman, and thereby granted them a soul. Why else would God have blessed the animals if it were not to bestow a soul upon them?

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ORTHODOX teachings deny spirituality to animals.

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In July 2001, ABC News and Beliefnet released the result of their poll of Americans regarding the question of whether pets would one day meet their owners in heaven. Forty-seven percent of pet owners declared their belief that they would be reunited with their beloved animals in heaven; 35 percent of pet owners said heaven was reserved for humans; 48 percent of those respondents who did not own pets believed heaven was off-limits for animals; and about 17 percent said that they would reserve judgment until they themselves walked through the pearly gates.

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#### APPARITIONS

There is usually agreement among psychical researchers that when someone refers to an apparition, he or she is generally speaking of a "ghost" that is known to the percipient, rather than some ethereal unknown presence. Among the most common and universal of all psychic phenomena is that of the "crisis apparition," that ghostly image which is seen, heard, or felt when the individual represented by the image is undergoing a crisis, especially death. A familiar example might be that of a man who is sitting reading in his home in Dearborn, Michigan, who glances up from his newspaper to see an image of his father, dressed in his customary three-piece business suit, waving to him in a gesture of farewell. The percipient is startled, for his father lives in Austin, Texas. However, within the next few minutes the telephone rings, and it is a call from his sister in Austin, informing him that their father has just passed away.

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*It is theorized that at the moment of death the soul is freed from the body and is able to soar free of time and space.*

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Some psychical researchers have theorized that at the moment of death the soul is freed from the confines of the body and is able to soar free of time and space and, in some instances, is able to make a last, fleeting contact with a loved one. These projections at the moment of death betoken that something nonphysical exists within humans that is capable of making mockery of all accepted

physical laws—and even more importantly, is capable of surviving physical death.

Documented stories of such apparitions may be found in the literature of all eras and all cultures. Images of loved ones who have come to say farewell, to offer comfort and solace before their transition to another plane of existence, appear to rich and poor alike.

On the night of June 11, 1923, Gladys Watson had been asleep for three or four hours when she was awakened by someone calling her name. As she sat up in bed, she was able to discern the form of her beloved grandfather leaning toward her. "Don't be frightened, it's only me. I have just died," the image told her.

Watson started to cry and reached across the bed to awaken her husband. "This is how they will bury me," Grandad Parker said, indicating his suit and black bow tie. "Just wanted to tell you I've been waiting to go ever since Mother was taken."

The Watsons' house was next door to the Lilly Laboratories in Indianapolis, Indiana. The bedroom was dimly illuminated with lights from the laboratory. Grandad Parker was clearly and solidly to be seen. Then, before Gladys Watson had awakened her husband, Grandad Parker had disappeared.

Mr. Watson insisted that his wife had had a nightmare. He told her that her grandfather was alive and well back in Wilmington, Delaware.

Gladys Watson was adamant that she knew that she had seen Grandad Parker and that it had been no dream. He had come to bid her farewell.

It was 4:05 A.M. when Watson called his wife's parents in Wilmington to prove that the experience had been a dream. Mrs. Parker was surprised to receive the call. She had been up most of the night with her father-in-law and had been waiting for morning before she would let the Watsons know that Grandad had passed away at 4:00 A.M.

Watson had been awakened by the fully externalized apparition of her grandfather at approximately 3:30 A.M. Indianapolis time. Her husband had gotten out of bed and made the telephone call at about 4:05 A.M. Grandad



Parker had died at 4:00 A.M. Eastern time—half an hour before Gladys Watson saw him.

Watson wrote an account of her experience for the *Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research* (Vol. LXV, No. 3) in which she mentioned that both she and her husband were children of Methodist ministers “...schooled against superstition from the time of their birth.”

When Watson was asked by an investigator for the ASPR whether the experience of hearing her grandfather speak could be compared to hearing someone in the flesh or to hearing with one’s “inner ear,” she answered that it had been as if Grandad Parker had been there in the flesh, speaking in a soft, yet determined voice.

Watson’s father, Rev. Walter E. Parker, Sr., corroborated his daughter’s story in a letter to the ASPR in which he wrote, in part, that Gladys had always been his father’s favorite grandchild and that they had promised to let her know if and when Grandad became seri-

ously ill. (He made his home with them.) “He took sick the day before. We called the doctor and thought he was going to be all right. The end came suddenly around four o’clock in the morning. We were going to wait until later in the morning to get in touch with Gladys. I believe sincerely in the truth of this experience as my daughter writes it.”

John Frederick Oberlin (1740–1826), the famous pastor, educator, and philanthropist, literally transformed the whole life of the Banded-la-Roche valley in the Vosges Mountains of Alsace. Shortly after the clergyman’s arrival in the district, he expressed his immediate and earnest displeasure regarding the superstitions of the natives. Oberlin became especially agitated over the villagers’ reports concerning the apparitions of dying loved ones. The new pastor resolved to educate the simple folk, and he launched a vociferous pulpit campaign against such superstitious tales.

In spite of his orthodox denial of apparitions, the reports of such phenomena continued unabated, and Oberlin was honest enough to

“Ghostbusters” movie.  
(THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

The *HMS Eurydice*, a 26-gun frigate that capsized and sank in Sandown Bay during a blizzard in 1878, is a famous phantom vessel that has been sighted by sailors over the years. On October 17, 1998, Prince Edward of England (1964– ) and the film crew for the television series “Crown and Country” saw the three-masted ship off the Isle of Wight and managed to capture its image on film.

Perhaps the most famous of all ghost ships is the *Flying Dutchman*, whose legend states that as punishment for his impiety and blasphemy, the captain, Cornelius Vanderdecken, must sail until doomsday. The appearance of this supernatural vessel is considered by seafarers to be an omen of ill-fortune.

Another one that is a forerunner of disaster is the ghost ship of the Yangtze River, a medieval Chinese pirate junk. The ghost junk has been said to herald wars, famines, and the deaths of thousands. Off of the Chileo Island, in South America, a ship apparition called the *Caleuche*, is claimed to leave broken down boats and drowned men in its wake.

On January 5, 1931, the *MS Tricouleur*, with a cargo of chemicals, exploded and sank after leaving Calcutta en route to Bombay. Sailors off Ceylon still report seeing her pass them before disappearing into the fog.

Inhabitants along Bay Chaleur of New Brunswick, Canada, sight a “fire ship” that has been appearing for more than a century. Some theorize the ship was an immigrant vessel that sailed mistakenly into the bay instead of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Struck by lightning, it burned and ran aground at the mouth of the Restigouche River.

Many New Englanders claim to have seen another burning vessel, *The Palatine*, a ship from Holland that met with foul play during Christmas week, 1752, and sunk off Block Island near the coast of Rhode Island. In his poem “The Palatine,” John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892) made the unfortunate tragedy of the ill-fated ship a part of American literature.

## GHOST SHIPS

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admit that he was beginning to feel his dogma crumbling around him. In 1806 a dreadful avalanche at Rossberg buried several villages, and the reports of visions of the dying appearing to loved ones became so numerous that Oberlin at last came to believe that the villagers were indeed perceiving spirits of the departed.

In *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World* (1848), Robert Dale Owen relates that Oberlin came to believe that his wife appeared to him after her death. The clergyman maintained that his wife's spirit watched over him as though she were a guardian angel. Furthermore, Oberlin claimed that he could see his wife's spirit, talk with her, and make use of her counsel regarding future events. Oberlin compiled extensive manuscripts that described in detail a series of manifestations in which his wife appeared to him and dictated information regarding life after death. Oberlin became convinced that the inhabitants of the invisible world can appear to the living, and we to them, and that we humans are apparitions to them, as they are to us.

The question that may remain is whether the percipients of apparitions actually observe a discarnate entity, which occupies an objective area in time and space, or whether they perceive the result of a successfully implanted telepathic message-image, which had been transmitted at the moment of death by the dying loved one. The witnesses themselves, however, insist that their experiences cannot be dismissed as only dramatic devices of their imaginations.

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#### AUTOSCOPY

A phenomenon that may be closely related to the projection of the astral self in out-of-body

experiences is that of the appearance of one's own double. Goethe (1749–1832), a German poet, had the astonishing experience of meeting himself as he rode away from Strassburg. The phantom wore a pike grey cloak with gold lace that Goethe had never seen before. Eight years later, as Goethe was on the same road going to visit Frederika, it occurred to him that he was dressed in precisely the same cloak that his phantom had been wearing on that earlier occasion.

In 1929, an archbishop wrote to Sir Oliver Lodge to tell him of a most peculiar incident which had occurred one evening when he had returned to his home feeling tired. He sat down in a favorite easy chair, and immediately fell asleep. Then, he wrote in the letter, he was sharply aroused in about a quarter of an hour (as he perceived by the clock). As he awoke he saw an apparition, luminous, vaporous, wonderfully real of himself, looking interestedly and delightedly at himself. After the archbishop and himself had looked at each other for the space of about five seconds, the ghostly self vanished for a few seconds, and then returned even clearer than before.

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*A doppelganger is the astral self in out-of-body experiences and appears as one's own double.*

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Such weird phenomena are termed “auto-scopic hallucinations.” They appear to serve no dual purpose, such as providing a warning or disclosing valuable information, but only seem to present a projection of one's own body image. One sees oneself, as it were, without a mirror.

Dr. Edward Podolsky has compiled a number of cases of people who have reported seeing their own ghosts, and he recorded the experience of a Mr. Harold C. of Chicago, Illinois, who returned home after a hard day at the office with a splitting migraine. As he sat down to dinner, he saw, sitting opposite him, an exact replica of himself. This astonishing double repeated every movement he made during the entire course of the meal. Since that time, Mr.

C. has seen his double on a number of occasions—each time after an attack of migraine.

As Mrs. Jeanie P. was applying makeup, she saw an exact duplicate of herself also touching up her features. Mrs. P. reached out to touch the double, and the image reached out to touch her. Mrs. P. actually felt her face being touched by her mysterious double.

There are two main theories about the cause of autoscopy. One theory regards the phenomenon as being due to the result of some irritating process in the brain, particularly of the parietotemporal-occipital area (the visual area). A more psychological theory sees in autoscopy the projection of memory pictures. Certain pictures are stored in the memory and when conditions of stress or other unusual psychological situations arise these memories may be projected outside the body as real images.

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#### GHOSTS OF THE LIVING

Psychical research has identified the following types of situations in which out-of-body experiences (OBEs) or astral projections might occur:

1. Projections that occur while the subject sleeps.
2. Projections that occur while the subject is undergoing surgery, childbirth, tooth extraction, etc.
3. Projections that occur at the time of accident, during which the subject suffers a violent physical jolt that seems, literally, to catapult the spirit from the physical body.
4. Projections that occur during intense physical pain.
5. Projections that occur during acute illness.
6. Projections that occur during near-death experiences (NDEs), wherein the subject

is revived and returned to life through heart massage or other medical means.

7. Projections that occur at the moment of physical death when the deceased subject appears to a living percipient with whom he or she has had a close emotional link.

In addition to these spontaneous, involuntary experiences, there also seem to be those voluntary and conscious projections during which the subjects deliberately endeavor to free their spirit, their soul, from their physical body. It would appear that certain people have exercised this peculiar function of the transcendent self to the extent that they can project their spiritual essence at will and produce ghosts, apparitions, of the living.

Early psychical researcher Edmund Gurney (1847–1888) told of the incredible experiments of a Mr. S. H. Beard in his *Phantasms of the Living*, published in 1886. Beard began his experiments with “astral projection” in November of 1881 on a Sunday evening after he had been reading about the great power which the human will is capable of exercising. Exerting the whole force of his being on the thought that he would be present in spirit on the second floor of a particular house, Beard managed to project an apparition of himself that was visible to his fiancée, Miss L. S. Verity.

Three days later, when Beard went to call upon Verity, a very excited young woman told him that she and her 11-year-old sister had nearly been frightened out of their wits by an apparition that had looked just like him. Beard felt quite pleased with the success of his experiment. Verity’s sister confirmed his “ghost’s” appearance; in fact, the whole matter of a spectral visitation had been brought up without any allusion to the subject on Beard’s part.

Verity later told Edmund Gurney that she distinctly saw Beard in her room, about one o’clock. “I was perfectly awake and was much terrified,” she said. “I awoke my sister by screaming, and she saw the apparition herself. Neither my sister nor I have ever experienced hallucinations of any sort.”

Although Beard did not disclose his intentions to Verity, he was by no means finished with his experiments. The second time he was seen by a married sister of Verity’s, whom he



had met briefly only once before. Beard walked up to the bed on which the sister lay, took her long hair into his hand, and, a bit later, took her hand into his.

When investigator Gurney learned of Beard's second successful projection, he wrote him a note and urged him to let him know the next time that he planned to experiment. Beard complied, and, in a letter dated March 22, 1884, he told the researcher simply, "This is it."

Gurney next heard from Beard on April 3. A statement from Verity was enclosed: "On Saturday night...I had a distinct impression that Mr. S. H. B. was present in my room, and I distinctly saw him whilst I was widely awake. He came towards me and stroked my hair . . . The appearance in my room was most vivid and quite unmistakable."

Again, Verity testified that she had voluntarily given Beard the information without any prompting on his part. Beard concluded his experiments after this episode for Verity's nerves "had been much shaken, and she had been obliged to send for a doctor in the morning."

Sylvan J. Muldoon was one of those who claim that astral projection can be learned, developed, and mastered by the serious-minded. In his two books, *The Projection of the Astral Body* (1929) and *The Case for Astral Projection* (1936), Muldoon offers a detailed record of many experiments he personally conducted, and provides a systematic method of inducing the conditions necessary for astral projection. According to Muldoon, it is possible to leave the body at will and retain full consciousness in the "astral self." Muldoon was also cognizant of a "silver cord" connecting the phantom body and the physical body. This cord, said Muldoon, is extremely elastic and permits a journey of considerable distance. Muldoon claimed to have been able to move objects while in his astral self and to have gained information that he could not have acquired via any of the normal sensory channels.

In his book *Far Journeys* (1987), Robert Monroe provides details of his Gateway Program, which claims to be able to teach any serious subject the ability to travel out of the body and to escape the known dimensions of the physical universe. Monroe has spent many

## ELECTRONIC VOICE PHENOMENA— RECORDING GHOSTS ON TAPE

**T**homas Alva Edison (1847–1931), who first developed the cylinder recorder, did so in an effort to communicate with the dead, not to record music. Edison believed that the soul was composed of swarms of highly charged entities that lived in the cells, and that left the physical body after death, entering another cycle of life and becoming immortal.

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years researching various techniques in moving the soul or mind out of the physical body and has established an institute where students can experience his methods and techniques.

The area of "living ghosts" that has received the greatest amount of study in the twenty-first century is that of the near-death-experience (NDE). In December 2001, the prestigious British medical publication *The Lancet* released the results of an extensive study conducted by Dr. Pim van Lommel and his colleagues at Hospital Rijnstate in Arnhem, Netherlands, which indicates that a number of subjects experienced visions or lucid thoughts while they were clinically dead. Some of those subjects also reported out-of-body experiences, indicating that the mind/soul and the brain are independent of one another and that consciousness can exist when



Russ Tamblyn, Clair Bloom, and Richard Johnson in a scene from the 1963 movie "The Haunting." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

the brain has flatlined and the electroencephalograph registers no measurable brain activity.

Frederic W. H. Myers (1843–1901) has written that cases of astral projection present perhaps not the most useful, "but the most extraordinary achievement of the human will. What can lie further outside any known capacity than the power to cause a semblance of oneself to appear at a distance? What can be more a central action—more manifestly the outcome of whatsoever is deepest and most unitary in man's whole being? Of all vital phenomena, I say, this is the most significant; this self-projection is the one definite act which it seems as though a man might perform equally well before and after bodily death."

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**PHANTOMS**

Almost every city, town, or village in the world has a bit of folklore about a Phantom Dog with red eyes that guards the grave of a master long dead, a Phantom Nun who still walks the ruins of a convent that burned to

the ground decades ago, a Phantom Horseman who patrols the grounds of an old battlefield. Phantoms comprise that category of ghosts that have been seen again and again by countless men and women over many years and have literally begun to assume independent existences of their own, becoming, in a sense, “psychic marionettes,” responding to the fears and expectations of their human percipients. In some dramatic instances, an entire section of landscape seems to be haunted. In most cases of this particular type of haunting, a tragic scene from the past is recreated in precise detail, as some cosmic photographer had committed the panorama to ethereal film footage. Battles are waged, trains are wrecked, ships are sunk, the screams of earthquake victims echo through the night—all as it actually took place months, years, or centuries before.

Thomas A. Edison (1847–1931), the electrical wizard, theorized that energy, like matter, is indestructible. He became intrigued by the idea of developing a radio that would be sensitive enough to pick up the sounds of times past—sounds which were no longer audible to any ears but those of the psychically sensitive. Edison hypothesized that the vibrations of every word ever uttered still echoed in the ether. If this theory ever should be established, it would explain such phenomena as the restoration of scenes from the past. Just as the emotions of certain individuals permeate a certain room and cause a ghost to be seen by those possessing similar telepathic affinity, so might it be that emotionally charged scenes of the past may become imprinted upon the psychic ether of an entire landscape. An alternate theory maintains that surviving minds, emotionally held to the area, may telepathically invade the mind of sensitive individuals and enable them to see the scene as they, the original participants, once saw the events occurring.

Whatever the reasons may be, it cannot be denied that some locales definitely have built up their own “atmospheres” over the years and that such auras often give sensitive people feelings of uneasiness—and often sensations of fear and discomfort. Whether this may be caused by surviving minds, a psychic residue, or an impression of the actual event in the psychic ether is a question that remains

unsolved at the present stage of parapsychological research.

Paranormally restored battle scenes offer excellent examples of what seem to be phantoms caused by the collective emotions and memories of large groups of people. Perhaps the most well-known, most extensively documented, and most substantially witnessed was the Phantom Battle of Edge Hill which was “refought” on several consecutive weekends during the Christmas season of 1642. The actual battle was waged near the village of Keinton, England, on October 23 between the Royalist Army of King Charles and the Parliamentary Army under the Earl of Essex.

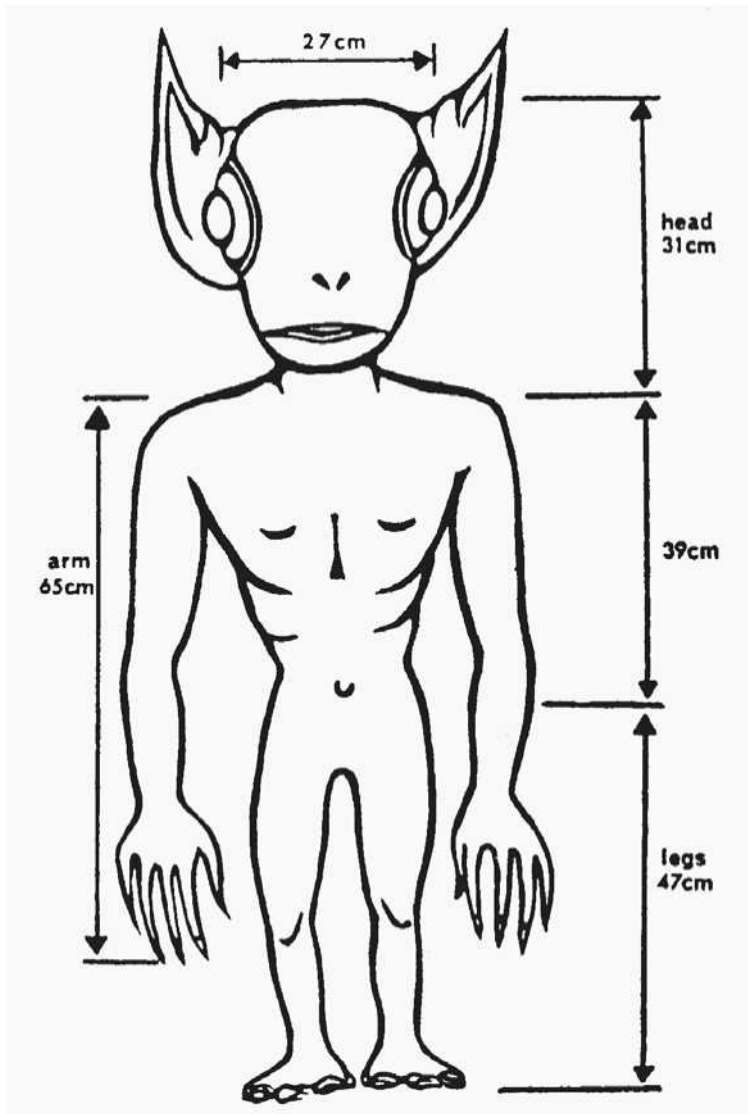
It was on Christmas Eve that several countryfolk were awakened by the noises of violent battle. Fearing that it could only be another clash between soldiers that had come to desecrate the sanctity of the holy evening and the peace of their countryside, the villagers fled from their homes to confront two armies of phantoms. One side bore the king’s colors; the other, Parliament’s banners. Until three o’clock in the morning, the phantom soldiers restaged the terrible fighting of two months before.

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*ALMOST every city, town, or village in the world has a bit of folklore about a phantom.*

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The actual battle had resulted in defeat for King Charles, and the monarch grew greatly disturbed when he heard that two armies of ghosts were determined to remind the populace that the Parliamentary forces had triumphed at Edge Hill. The king suspected that certain Parliamentary sympathizers had fabricated the tale to cause him embarrassment. The king sent three of his most trusted officers to squelch the matter. When the emissaries returned to court, they swore oaths that they themselves had witnessed the clash of the phantom armies. On two consecutive nights, they had watched the ghostly reconstruction and had even recognized several of their comrades who had fallen that day.



**Phantom attacker.**  
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

On August 4, 1951, two young English-women vacationing in Dieppe, France, were awakened just before dawn by the violent sounds of guns and shell fire, dive bombing planes, shouts, and the scraping of landing craft hitting the beach. Cautiously peering out of their windows, the two young women saw only the peaceful pre-dawn city. They knew, however, that just nine years previously, nearly 1,000 young Canadians had lost their lives in the ill-fated Dieppe raid.

Demonstrating an unusual presence of mind, the young Englishwomen kept a record of the frightening sounds of war, noting the exact times of the ebb and flow of the invisible battle. They presented their report to the Society for Psychical Research, whose investi-

gators checked it against detailed accounts of the event in the war office. The times recorded by the women were, in most cases, identical to the minute of the raid that had taken place nine years before.

Another area which seems to be drenched with the powerful emotions of fighting and dying men is that of the small island of Corregidor, where in the early days of World War II (1939–45), a handful of American and Filipino troops tried desperately to halt the Japanese advance against the city of Manila and the whole Philippine Islands, valiantly fighting almost beyond human endurance. According to several witnesses, their ghosts have gone on fighting.

Today, the only living inhabitants of the island are a small detachment of Filipino marines, a few firewood cutters, and a caretaker and his family. And then there are the non-living inhabitants.

Terrified wood cutters have returned to the base to tell of bleeding and wounded men who stumble about in the jungle. Always, they describe the men as grim-faced and carrying rifles at the ready. Marines on jungle maneuvers have reported coming face to face with silently stalking phantom scouts of that desperate last-stand conflict of more than 60 years ago. Many have claimed to have seen a beautiful red-headed woman moving silently among rows of ghostly wounded, ministering to their injuries. Most often seen is the ghost of a nurse in a Red Cross uniform. Soldiers on night duty who have spotted the phantom have reported that, shortly after she fades into the jungle moonlight, they find themselves surrounded by rows and rows of groaning and dying men in attitudes of extreme suffering. According to the caretaker and his family, the sounds that come with evening are the most disconcerting part of living on an island full of phantoms. Every night the air is filled with horrible moans of pain and the sounds of invisible soldiers rallying to defend themselves against phantom invaders.

Veterans of the Korean conflict returned with tales of a phantom town that came to life on cold, still nights. By day, Kumsong, Korea, was nothing but piles of battered rubble. The population had long since given up residence

of their war-ravished village to the rats. The American troops, who looked down on the charred ruins from their positions in the front-line bunkers, called Kumsong “The Capital of No Man’s Land.” But on some nights, soldiers would come back from their frozen bunkers with stories of music, singing, and the laughter of women that had drifted up from the ghost town. So many Allied troops heard the ghostly music that “Ching and his violin” became a reality to the front-line soldiers.

Although both haunted landscapes and haunted houses seem most liable to receive their emotional energy from the psychic charges generated by scenes of violence and tragedy, there have been reports of pleasant restorations of the past.

On a rainy evening in October of 1916, Edith Olivier was driving from Devizes to Swindon in Wiltshire, England. The evening was so dreary that Olivier wished earnestly for a nice, warm inn in which to spend the night. Leaving the main road, she found herself passing along a strange avenue lined by huge gray megaliths. She concluded that she must have been approaching Avebury. Although Olivier had never been to Avebury before, she was familiar with pictures of the area and knew that the place had originally been a circular megalithic temple that had been reached by long stone avenues.

When she reached the end of an avenue, she got out of her automobile so that she might better view the irregularly falling megaliths. As she stood on the bank of a large earthwork, she could see a number of cottages, which had been built among the megaliths, and she was surprised to see that, in spite of the rain, there seemed to be a village fair in progress. The laughing villagers were walking merrily about with flares and torches, trying their skill at various booths and applauding lustily for the talented performers of various shows.

Olivier became greatly amused at the care-free manner in which the villagers enjoyed themselves, completely oblivious to the rain. Men, women, and children walked about without any protective outer garments and not a single umbrella could be seen. She would have joined the happy villagers at their fair if she

had not been growing increasingly uncomfortable in the rain, which was becoming steadily heavy. She decided that she was not made of such hardy stock as the sturdy villagers and got back into her automobile to resume her trip.

Edith Olivier did not visit Avebury again until nine years had passed. At that time, she was perplexed to read in the guidebook that, although a village fair had once been an annual occurrence in Avebury, the custom had been abolished in 1850. When she protested that she had personally witnessed a village fair in Avebury in 1916, the guide offered Olivier a sound and convincing rebuttal. Even more astounding, perhaps, was the information she acquired concerning the megaliths. The particular avenue on which she had driven on that rainy night of her first visit had disappeared before 1800.

Edith Olivier’s experience begs the question: Just how substantial is a phantom? Can a scene from the past return and assume temporary physical reality once again? Did Olivier drive her automobile on an avenue that was no longer there, or did she drive on a solid surface that had once been there and had temporarily returned?

According to those who have encountered them, a materialized phantom seems as solid as any human. Modern science no longer regards solids as solids at all but rather as congealed wave patterns. Psychical researcher James Crenshaw notes that the whole imposing array of subatomic particles—electrons, protons, positrons, neutrinos, mesons—achieve “particle-like characteristics” in a manner similar to the way that wave patterns in tones and overtones produce characteristic sounds. Crenshaw theorizes that ghosts may be made up of transitory, emergent matter that “...appears and disappears, can sometimes be seen and felt before disappearing...behaves like ordinary matter but still has no permanent existence in the framework of our conception of space and time. In fact, after its transitory manifestations, it seems to be absorbed back into another dimension or dimensions....”

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#### POLTERGEISTS

The perverse talents of the poltergeist (German for "pelted or thrown ghost") range from the ability to toss pebbles and smash vases, to the astonishing ability to materialize human or beastlike entities, complete with voices, intelligent responses, and disagreeable odors. From humankind's earliest records to today's newspaper story, every reported poltergeist case follows the same basic patterns. Cultural influences seem to matter little, if at all. A poltergeist manifestation is similar in character whether it takes place in Indonesia, Iceland, or Long Island. Only the interpretation of the disturbance varies. What is attributed to the destructive impulse of a demon to one

people, is attributed to the destructive impulse of a fragmented psyche to another.

According to many contemporary psychological researchers poltergeist manifestations are dramatic instances of psychokinesis (PK) (the mind influencing matter) on the rampage. Although the pranks of the poltergeist were formerly attributed to malicious tricks perpetrated by demons and disembodied spirits, the great majority of psychical researchers today hold that some faculty of PK is at work. "The poltergeist is not a ghost," the psychoanalyst Dr. Nandor Fodor once wrote, "but a bundle of projected repressions."

Quite probably, according to many researchers, the sex changes that occur during puberty have a great deal to do with the peculiar type of PK that is responsible for poltergeist activity. Researchers have only begun to realize some of the vast chemical changes that take place in the body during adolescence. Who can say what may happen in the lower levels of the subconscious? Psychological researchers have noted that more often a girl than a boy is at the center

of poltergeistic disturbances and that the sexual change of puberty is associated with either the beginning or the termination of the phenomena. Researchers have also observed that the sexual adjustments of the marital state can also trigger such phenomena.

The poltergeist often finds its energy center in the frustrated creativity of a brooding adolescent, who is denied accepted avenues of expression. Those who have witnessed poltergeistic activity firsthand have been convinced that the energy force is directed by a measure of intelligence or purpose. Observers ranging from skeptical scientists, hard-nosed journalists, and innocent bystanders alike have reported seeing poltergeist-borne objects turn corners, poltergeist-manipulated chalk write intelligible sentences on walls, and poltergeist-flung pebbles come out of nowhere to strike children. But, as one investigator commented, the phenomena are exactly such as would occur to the mind of a child. In *Poltergeists* (1940), Sacheverell Sitwell wrote that the poltergeist always directed its power toward “the secret or concealed weaknesses of the spirit...the recesses of the soul. The mysteries of puberty, that trance or dozing of the psyche before it awakes into adult life, is a favorite playground for the poltergeist.”

Why it should be the baser elements of the adolescent human subconscious that find their expression in the poltergeist is a matter of great speculation among psychological researchers. Physical violence is almost always expressed toward the adolescent energy center of the poltergeist—and a parent, a brother, or a sister may come in for their share of the punishment as well. If the poltergeist sticks around long enough (its average life is about two weeks) to develop a voice or the ability to communicate by raps or automatic writing, its communications are usually nonsensical, ribald, or downright obscene.

Cases of poltergeists pelting innocent families with stones and pebbles comprise by far the largest single category of poltergeistic phenomena and therefore seem to be the most common example of PK running wild. Natural scientist Ivan T. Sanderson cautioned researchers against using the term “throwing” when speak-



**Enfield poltergeist case/investigator Maurice Gross.** (GUY LYON PLAYFAIR/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

ing of poltergeist activity. According to Sanderson's observations, the stones are “dropped” or “lobbed” or “just drift around” rather than thrown. “Stone-dropping is a purely physical phenomenon,” stated Sanderson, “and can be explained on some physical principles, though not necessarily on Newtonian, Einsteinian, or any others that concern our particular space-time continuum.”

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**PSYCHICAL** researchers believe poltergeist manifestations are dramatic instances of psychokinesis.

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Ghost image of a woman  
frightening an elderly  
man in a double exposed  
film from ca. 1910.  
(CORBIS CORPORATION)



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#### SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

According to the “USA Snapshots” feature in the April 20, 1998, issue of *USA Today*, 52 percent of adult Americans believe that encounters with the dead are possible. In his 1994 analysis of a national sociological survey, Jeffrey S. Levin, an associate professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, found that two-thirds of Americans claimed to have had at least one mystical experience. Of that remarkably high number, 39.9 percent said that they had an encounter with a ghost or had achieved contact with the spirit of a deceased person. According to a survey published in the December 1997 issue of *Self*, 85 percent of its readers believed in the reality of communication with the spirit world.

The more that is learned of the remarkable powers of the human psyche, the more difficult it is to prove that one has actually made contact with a spirit of a deceased person, rather than experienced some facet of **extrasensory perception**, such as **clairvoyance** or **telepathy**. In order for psychical researchers to consider

accounts of alleged communication with the dead to be authentic, they must first of all be veridical; that is, they must relate to an actual event that was occurring, had occurred, or would occur. In addition, these cases must each contain an independent witness who could further testify to the truth and import of the experience. The account of James Chaffin’s will is a case that truly seems suggestive of survival of the human personality after death.

On September 7, 1921, James Chaffin of Davie County, North Carolina, died as the result of a fall. A farmer, Chaffin was survived by his widow and four sons, but the will that he had had duly attested by two witnesses on November 16, 1905, left all of his property to the third son, Marshall.

One night in the latter part of June 1925, four years after James Chaffin’s death, James Pinkney Chaffin, the farmer’s second son, saw the spirit figure of the deceased standing at his bedside and heard the specter tell of another will. According to the son, his father had appeared dressed as he often had in life. “You will find the will in my overcoat pocket,” the spirit figure said, taking hold of the garment and pulling it back.

The next morning James Pinkney Chaffin arose convinced he had seen and heard his father and that the spirit had visited him for the purpose of correcting some error. His father’s black overcoat had been passed on to John Chaffin, so James traveled to Yadkin County to examine the pocket to which the spirit had made reference. The two brothers found that the lining of the inside pocket had been sewn together, and when they cut the stitches, they found a roll of paper that bore the message: “Read the 27th chapter of Genesis in my daddie’s [sic] Old Bible.”

James P. Chaffin was then convinced that the specter had spoken truthfully, and he brought witnesses with him to the home of his mother where, after some search, they located the dilapidated old Bible in the top drawer of a dresser in an upstairs room. One of the witnesses found the will in a pocket that had been formed by folding two of the Bible’s pages together.



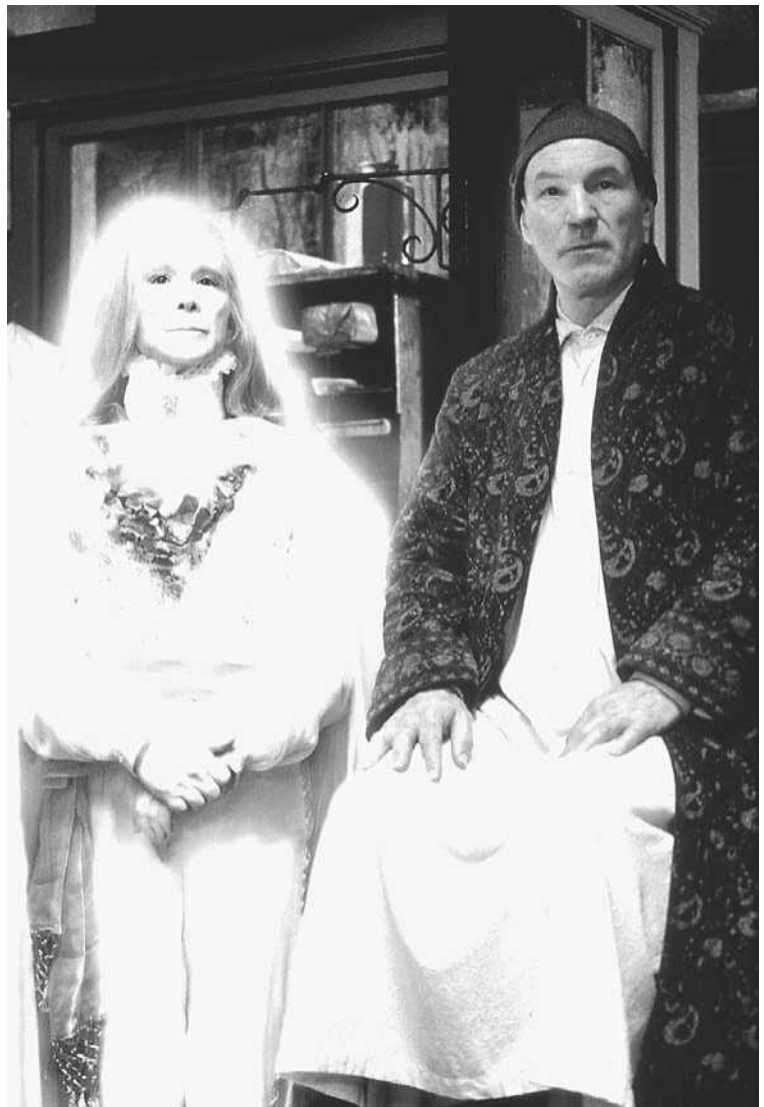
The new will had been made by James Chaffin on January 16, 1919, 14 years after the first will. In this testament, the farmer stated that he desired his property to be divided equally among his four sons with the admonition that they provide for their mother as long as she lived.

Although the second will had not been attested, it would, under North Carolina law, be considered valid because it had been written throughout in James Chaffin's own handwriting. All that remained was to present sufficient evidence that the hand that had written the second will was, without doubt, that of the deceased.

Marshall Chaffin, the sole beneficiary under the conditions of the old will, had passed away within a year of his father, nearly four years before the spirit of James Chaffin had appeared to his second son, James Pinkney Chaffin. Marshall's widow and son prepared to contest the validity of the second will, and the residents of the county began to look forward to a long and bitter court battle between members of the Chaffin family. The scandal mongers were immensely disappointed when 10 witnesses arrived in the courtroom prepared to give evidence that the second will was in James Chaffin's handwriting. After seeing the will, Marshall Chaffin's wife and son immediately withdrew their opposition. It seemed evident that they, too, believed the will had been written in the hand of the testator.

James Pinkney Chaffin later told an investigator for the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* that his father had appeared to him before the trial and told him that the lawsuit would be terminated in such a manner. "Many of my friends do not believe it is possible for the living to hold communication with the dead," James Pinkney Chaffin said, "but I am convinced that my father actually appeared to me on these several occasions and I shall believe it to the day of my death."

It seems strange that James Chaffin should have kept the second will secret, especially in view of the subsequent claim that his disturbed spirit came back from beyond the grave to right the wrong that had been done to his



widow and three disinherited sons. Perhaps the farmer had intended some sort of deathbed revelation and had these plans go unrealized when his life was cut short by accident.

**Joel Grey and Patrick Stewart in the television production of "The Christmas Carol." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)**

Society for Psychical Research investigators were unable to establish any kind of case for a subconscious knowledge of the will in the old Bible or of the message in the coat pocket. Fraud must be ruled out because of the ease in which 10 reliable witnesses, well-acquainted with James Chaffin's handwriting, could be summoned to testify to the authenticity of the handwriting in the will. Charges of a fake will would seem to be further negated by the immediate withdrawal from the contest of Marshall Chaffin's widow and son once they were allowed to examine the document.

Evidently they, too, recognized the handwriting of the elder Chaffin.

**FIFTY-TWO** percent of Americans believe encounters with the dead are possible.

The *Journal's* summation of the strange case of James Chaffin's will stated the difficulty in attempting to explain the case along normal lines. For those willing to accept a supernatural explanation of the event, it should be noted that the Chaffin case is of a comparatively infrequent type, in which more than one of the witness's senses is affected by the spirit. J. P. Chaffin both "saw" his father's spirit and "heard" him speak. The auditory information provided by the spirit was not strictly accurate, for what was in the overcoat pocket was not the second will, but a clue to its whereabouts. But the practical result was the same.

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#### SPOOKLIGHTS

Nestled far from the nearest city of Hickory, the Brown Mountain region of North Carolina has been a subject of fascination for more than 100 years, for nearly every night along the mountain ridges mysterious lights can be seen for which scientists have failed to find any logical explanation. From sunset until dawn, globes of various colored lights, ranging in size from mere points to 25 feet in diameter, can be seen rising above the tall trees and flickering off again, as they fall to the mountain passes below.

Various legends have sprung up about the origin of the lights. Some say the Cherokee spirits and Catawba braves made the lights and search the valley for maiden lovers. It seems that the two tribes had a big battle hundreds of years ago, in which nearly all of the men of the two tribes were killed. Apparently this legend has some basis in fact, because at least a half a dozen Native American graves have been found in the area.

According to some local residents, the lights first began to be sighted on a regular basis sometime in 1916. At the time it was thought that the mystery lights might have been caused by the headlights on locomotives or cars running through a nearby valley. However, during the spring of that year, all bridges were knocked out by a flood and the roads became too muddy for cars to travel—yet the Brown Mountain lights were seen in greater number than before.

Some who have witnessed the phenomena believe that the lights are intelligently controlled. They say that they have seen them butting into each other and bouncing like big basketballs. Certain observers swear that they have tracked the lights at speeds of almost 100 miles per hour. On one Saturday night in 1959, according to some area residents, more than 5,000 persons turned out to see the lights.

Some of the spookiest lights on record are the ones linked popularly to ghosts and their haunting grounds. In the little town of Silver Cliff, Colorado, ghost lights have plagued the local cemetery since 1880. Silver Cliff is itself almost a ghost town: In 1880 it boasted a population of 5,087; by the 1950s it had only 217 inhabitants.

The ghost lights reached the mass media in the spring of 1956 in the *Wet Mountain Tribune*, and on August 20, 1967, in the *New York Times*. Local folklore has it that the lights were first seen in 1880 by a group of miners passing by the cemetery. When they saw the flickering blue lights over the gravestones, they left in a hurry. Since then, the lights have been observed by generations of tourists and residents of Custer County. Many of these witnesses have noted that the curious blue lights cannot be seen as clearly on the sandstone markers. This convinced several spectators

that the lights were only a reflection of house-lights in the valley.

Not so, insisted county judge August Menzel. In the *New York Times* he told of the night when everyone in Silver Cliff and nearby Westcliff shut off their lights. Even the street lights were turned off, but the graveyard lights still danced as brightly as ever.

If the ghostly gravemarkers cannot be attributed to the reflection of ordinary house and municipal lights, just what can they be? Old-timers and younger theorists have come up with many suggestions. Some believe that the lights are reflections from the stars. Yet the lights are just as clear on a starless, moonless night. Others theorize that they are caused by phosphorescing ore and glowing wood—but the darker the night, the brighter the lights. It was suggested that radioactive ores were causing the flickering lights. But Geiger counters were then employed to cover the entire area, and no radioactivity was discovered.

Finally the seekers of a plausible explanation confessed total bafflement. None of the theories would hold water, and the lights themselves could never be approached for a close enough look. As soon as anyone came too near, the lights would disappear, only to pop up again in another section of the cemetery. Photographers were hired, but no one managed to capture the elusive blue lights on film.

At this point the old-timers simply smile and provide the fitting explanation for any classic ghost story. According to local legend, the cemetery, which is still in use, is the final resting place for many miners who died while digging precious ores. The flickering lights of the graveyard resemble the little lights worn on the miners' caps, and the ghostly lights belong to the restless souls of the miners, who still search for the gold they never found.

A far more notorious ghost light is located in the tri-state area of Spooksville, in a corner of Missouri, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Spooksville's ghostly light is advertised as a tourist attraction, and brings in countless numbers of the curious. The mysterious light, known variously as "spook light" or "ghost light" to the visitors and inhabitants of the region, was officially dubbed a UFO by the U.S. Air Force.

This alone has caused the Spooksville area to be called the "UFO" airport.

In appearance the ghost light resembles a bright lantern. Often the light dims before the spectators, then bounces back over the mountains in a brilliant blaze of light. Hundreds of firsthand encounters with the mysterious ghost light are on record. These accounts demonstrate actual experiences with the unknown, sometimes frightening, but always interesting.

During World War II (1939–45) the U.S. Corps of Engineers scoured the entire area, using the latest scientific equipment of the time. For weeks they tested caves, mineral deposits, and highway routes, exhausting every possible explanation for the origin of the mystery lights. They finally left, confounded.

Perhaps the most famous spook lights in the United States are the eerie illuminations that appear in the night sky just east of Marfa, Texas, a small ranching community southeast of El Paso. Settler Robert Ellison, who feared that he was seeing Apache campfires in the distance, first spotted the strange lights in 1883. When he investigated the next day, he could find no ashes where he had seen the lights. Local folklore soon attributed the ghost lights to the spirits of slain warriors seeking peace, the ghosts of murdered settlers, the restless spectre of the Apache chief Alsate, or the quests of lost lovers yearning to be reunited. Some area residents have stories of being guided home to safety by the mysterious lights, while others tell of being terrified by close encounters with the glowing orbs.

Theorists have ascribed the Marfa Lights to natural phenomena, such as ball lightning, electrostatic charges, or gas emissions. Certain scientists have blamed a combination of solar activity and seismic activity that creates a kind of underground lightning that on occasion rises above ground level to be seen as the eerie lights.

There are many more ghost lights haunting the nooks and crannies, mountain peaks and valleys, of the planet Earth. Experts have tried to explain the mystery of spook lights by using the existing structure of physics and known natural phenomena, such as ball lightning, will o' the wisps, and swamp gas, but so

far all attempts at scientific explanation have been unsuccessful.

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## FAMOUS HAUNTED HOUSES AND PLACES

In a Gallup Poll conducted in May 2001, 42 percent of the respondents said that they believed that houses could be haunted by ghosts or spirits of the dead. Psychoanalyst Dr. Nandor Fodor theorized that genuinely haunted houses were those that had soaked up emotional unpleasantness from former occupants. Years, or even centuries, later, the emotional energy may become reactivated when later occupants of the house undergo a similar emotional disturbance. The “haunting”—mysterious knocks and rappings, opening and slamming doors, cold drafts, appearance of ghostly figures—is produced, in Fodor’s hypothesis, by the merging of the two energies, one from the past, the other from the present. In Fodor’s theory, the reservoir of absorbed emotions, which lie dormant in a haunted house, can only be activated when emotional instability is present. Those homes which have a history of happy occupants, the psychoanalyst believed, are in little danger of becoming haunted.

Psychic investigator Edmund Gurney put forth the hypothesis that the collective sighting of a ghost is due to a sort of telepathic “infection.” One percipient sees the ghost and, in turn, telepathically influences another person, and so on.

In his presidential address to the Society for Psychic Research in 1939, H. H. Price, a

distinguished professor of logic at Oxford University, put forth his “psychic ether” theory of hauntings. Price hypothesized that a certain level of mind may be capable of creating a mental image that has a degree of persistence in the psychic ether. This mental image may also contain a degree of telepathic ability by which it can affect others. Price’s theory holds that the collective emotions or thought images of a person who has lived in a house some time in the past may have intensely “charged” the psychic ether of the place—especially if there had been such powerful emotions as fear, hatred, or sorrow, supercharged by an act of violence. The original agent, Price theorized, has no direct part in the haunting. It is the charged psychic ether which, when presented with a percipient of suitable telepathic affinity, collaborates in the production of the idea-pattern of a ghost.

Ghosts, according to Price, may be manifestations of past events that have been brought to the minds of persons sensitive enough to receive a kind of “echo” from the past. These sensitive individuals receive impressions from those emotion-charged events that have left some trace of some energy in the inanimate objects at the place where they occurred. This information, or memory, may be transmitted as telepathic messages that can be received at some deep level of the human subconscious. These impressions then express themselves in the conscious mind in such a form as an uneasy feeling or a ghost.

Perhaps every old house, courtroom, hospital ward, apartment, or railroad depot is “haunted.” Any edifice that has been much used as a setting for human activity almost certainly has been saturated with memory traces of the entire gamut of emotions. But it may be this multiplicity of mental images that works against the chances of a ghost popping up in every hotel room and depot lobby. An over-saturation of idea-patterns in the majority of homes and public places may have left only a kaleidoscopic mass of impressions that combine to produce the peculiar atmosphere one senses in so many places. It is only when an idea-pattern that has been supercharged with enormous psychic intensity finds the mental level of a percipient with the necessary

Because Hollywood has produced so many motion pictures portraying ghosts and the afterlife, it should come as no surprise that many former homes and places of certain movie stars who have passed on to the other side are said to be haunted. The following places are said to be haunted by Hollywood greats:

- Ever since the late 1920s, the spirit form of the Great Lover, Rudolph Valentino (1895–1926), has been seen in and around his former home, Falcon's Lair, on Bella Drive.
- The former house of Joan Crawford (1904–1977) on Bristol Avenue has an eerie history of mysterious fires that kept breaking out on the wall where the headboard of her bed once rested.
- Clifton Webb (1891–1966), who in life was a militant nonsmoker with a distaste for cats, is said to make life difficult for cigarette smokers and cat fanciers in his former home on Rexford Drive.
- The ethereal form of Marilyn Monroe (1926–1962) has been seen to materialize in front of her earthly home on Helena Drive.
- When popular singer Englebert Humperdinck bought Jayne Mansfield's (1933–1967) "Pink Palace" on Sunset Boulevard shortly after her death, he claimed he encountered her ghost.
- Guests at the Roosevelt Hotel on 7000 Hollywood Boulevard have reported encounters with the ghosts of Marilyn Monroe and Montgomery Clift (1920–1966). People have sighted the spirit of Monroe near the full-length mirror on the lower level, and many guests have had their sleep interrupted by Clift blowing on a trumpet in Room 928 as his spirit still rehearses for his role as the bugler in *From Here to Eternity* (1953).
- Mae West (1892–1980) loved to host seances in her old home in the Ravenswood Apartments on Rossmore Avenue, and her spirit has remained strongly attached to the building.

## HAUNTED HOLLYWOOD

- The "Man of Steel," George Reeves (1914–1959), who starred in the series *Superman* (1950–57), is claimed to have been seen in the home on Benedict Canyon Drive where his body was found.

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degree of telepathic affinity that a real ghost can appear.

A ghost, then, in Price's theory, has nothing to do with the "supernatural." The appearance of a specter is an out-of-the-ordinary occurrence, a paranormal happening, but there is a "natural" cause for the manifestation of the ghost. Once science determines just how the energy released by intense emotions is able to permeate the matter of wood, stone, metal, and gems and just how the furnishings of a room are able to absorb these vibrations, it will be as easy to "dehaunt" a house as it is to rid it of pests. Medical doctors have learned to deal with the unseen world of viruses; physicists have learned to work with such unseen lines of force as electricity; so may it be one day with the "psychic germs" that infect haunted houses and the invisible field of force that dictates the mechanism of ghosts.

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HAUNTINGS *are in the minds of  
persons sensitive enough to receive a kind of "echo"  
from the past.*

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In the hauntings described in this chapter, however, there were no psychical researchers available who had the ability to negate the effect of the powerful psychic energies that had been released by entities from other dimensions, spirits of the dead, or unconscious psychokinetic projections of the living.

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**BELL WITCH'S CAVE**

According to most accounts, the disturbances began one night in 1817 with mysterious rappings on the windows of the Bells' cabin near Clarksville, Tennessee. Twelve-year-old Elizabeth "Betsy" Bell began to complain of an invisible rat gnawing on her bedpost at night, and the entire family, including the parents, John and Luce, experienced the midnight confusion of having their covers pulled off their beds.

When the Bell family arose one morning, stones littered the floor of their front room and the furniture had been overturned. The children, Betsy, John, Drewry, Joel, and Richard, were goggle-eyed and spoke of ghosts and goblins. John Bell lectured his family severely. They would keep the problem to themselves. They didn't want their family to become the subject for common and unsavory gossip.

That night, Richard was awakened by something pulling his hair, raising his head right off the pillow. Joel began screaming at his brother's plight, and from her room, Betsy began howling that the gnawing rat had begun to pull her hair, too.

Most of the family awakened the next day with sore scalps, and John Bell reversed his decision. It was obvious that they needed help. That day he would confide in James Johnson, their nearest neighbor and closest friend.

Johnson accompanied his friend to the cabin that evening. The tale that Bell told was an incredible one, but Johnson knew that his neighbor was not given to flights of fancy. While he watched at Betsy's bedside that night, Johnson saw the young girl receive several blows on the cheeks from an invisible antagonist. He adjured the spirit to stop in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and there was no activity from the ghost for several minutes, but then Betsy's hair received a yank that brought a cry of pain from her lips. Again Johnson adjured the evil spirit, and it released the girl's hair.

Johnson concluded that the spirit understood the human language and that Betsy was the center of the haunting. He met with other neighbors, and they decided to help the Bell family as best they could. A committee kept

watch at the Bell house all night to try to placate the spirit, but all this accomplished was to bring about an especially vicious attack on the unfortunate Betsy. A number of neighbors volunteered their own daughters to sleep with Betsy, but this only managed to terrorize the other girls as well. Nor did it accomplish any useful purpose to take Betsy out of the cabin into the home of neighbors—the trouble simply followed her there and upset the entire house.

By now the haunting had achieved wide notoriety, and the disturbances were thought to be the work of a witch, who had set her evil spirits upon the Bell family. Each night the house was filled with those who sat up trying to get the “witch” to talk or to communicate with them by rapping on the walls. The disturbances soon became powerful enough to move outside the cabin and away from Betsy. Neighbors reported seeing lights “like candles or lamps” flitting through the fields, and farmers began to suffer stone-throwing attacks from the Bell Witch.

These particular peltings seemed to have been more in the nature of fun than some of the other manifestations of the spirit. Young boys in the area would often play catch with the witch if she happened to throw something at them on their way home from school. Once an observer witnessed several boys get suddenly pelted with sticks that flew from a nearby thicket. The sticks did not strike the boys with much force, and, with a great deal of laughter, the boys scooped the sticks up and hurled them back into the thicket. Once again, the sticks came flying back out. The observer cut notches in several of the sticks with his knife before the boys once again returned the witch’s volley. He was able to identify his markings when the playful entity once again flung the sticks from the thicket.

The witch was not so gentle with the scoffers who came to the Bell home to expose the manifestations as trickery. Those who stayed the night invariably had their covers jerked from their beds. If they resisted the witch’s yanking, they were slapped soundly on the face.

Spiritists, clergymen, reporters, and curiosity seekers had waged a ceaseless campaign to

urge the witch to talk and declare herself and her intentions. At last their efforts were rewarded. At first the voice was only a whistling kind of indistinct babble, then it became bolder—a husky whisper speaking from darkened corners. At last, it became a full-toned voice that spoke not only in darkness but also in lighted rooms and, finally, during the day as well as the night. Immediately the charge of ventriloquism was heard from the skeptical. To put a halt to the accusations of trickery, John Jr. brought in a doctor, who placed his hand over Betsy’s mouth and listened at her throat while the witch’s voice chatted amicably from a far corner of the room. The doctor decreed that the girl was in no way connected with the sounds.

From the beginning of the witch’s visitation, it had minced no words in its dislike of John Bell, Betsy’s father. The spirit often swore to visitors in the Bell home that she would keep after him until the end of his days.

To a visitor’s question concerning its identity, the witch once answered that it was a spirit who had once been very happy, but it had been disturbed and made unhappy. Later, the witch declared itself to be the spirit of an Indian and sent the family on a wild bone chase to gather up all of its skeletal remains. If her bones were all put back together, she would be able to rest in peace, the entity lied to them.

Later, the witch told the family with a merry cackle that she was the ghost of old Kate Batts, a woman who had been an eccentric recluse and who had earned the appellation of “witch” from the citizens of Clarksville. When the word spread that it was the ghost of old Kate who was haunting the Bells, the entire mystery became much more believable to several doubting neighbors.

The Bell home became crowded, indeed, when the witch’s “family” moved in with her. Four hell-raisers named Blackdog, Mathematics, Cypocryphy, and Jerusalem, each speaking in distinct voices of their own, made every night party time during their stay with their “mother.” The sounds of raucous laughter rattled the shingles of the Bell home, and witnesses noted the strong scent of whiskey that permeated every room in the house.

When two local preachers arrived to investigate the disturbances, the witch delivered each of their Sunday sermons word for word and in a perfect imitation of their own voices.

The Bell Witch was adept at producing odd objects apparently from thin air. Once, at one of Mrs. Bell's Bible study groups, the ladies were showered with fresh fruits. Betsy's friends were treated to bananas at one of her birthday parties. Although the father, John Bell, was the butt of malicious pranks and cruel blows, the witch looked after Mrs. Bell solicitously. Once when she was ill, the witch was heard to tell her to hold out her hands. When Luce Bell did so, a large quantity of hazelnuts dropped into her palms. When Mrs. Bell weakly complained that she could not crack them, family members and neighbors watched in wide-eyed fascination as the nuts cracked open and the meats were sorted from the shells.

Next to the materialization of fruits and nuts, the witch was especially fond of producing pins and needles. Mrs. Bell was provided with enough pins to supply the entire county, but sometimes the witch would impishly hide them in the bedclothes or in chair cushions—points out.

John Jr., Betsy's favorite brother, was the only member of the family besides the mother who received decent treatment from the witch. The invisible force often whipped Joel and Richard soundly, and Drewry was so frightened of the witch that he never married, fearing that the entity might someday return and single out his own family for particular attention. John Jr. was the only one of Betsy's brothers who could "sass back" at the witch and get away with it. The witch even went to special pains to get John Jr. to like it, and the mysterious entity often performed demonstrations of ability solely for his benefit.

The cruelest act perpetrated on Betsy was the breaking of her engagement to Joshua Gardner (or Gardiner). Friends and family acclaimed the two young people to be ideally suited for one another, but the witch protested violently when the engagement was announced. The witch screamed at Joshua whenever he entered the Bell home and embarrassed both young peo-

ple by shouting obscenities about them in front of their friends.

A friend of the family, Frank Miles, learned of the witch's objection to Betsy's engagement and resolved to stand up to the evil spirit on her behalf. He challenged the entity to take any form it wished, and he would soon send her packing. Suddenly his head jerked backwards as if a solid slap had stung his cheeks. He put up his forearms to block a series of facial blows, and then dropped his guard as he received a vicious punch in the stomach. Miles slumped against a wall, desperately shaking his head to recover his senses.

Frank Miles looked helplessly at Betsy Bell, who watched the one-sided boxing match. Reluctantly, he picked up his hat and coat. A man couldn't fight an enemy he couldn't see.

General Andrew Jackson (1767–1845), Old Hickory himself, decided to have his try at defeating the witch. An old friend of John Bell, Jackson set out from The Hermitage accompanied by a professional "witch-layer" and several servants. As his party approached the Bell place, Jackson was startled when the wheels of his coach suddenly froze and the full strength of the horses could not make them budge an inch. A voice from the bushes cackled a greeting to Jackson and uttered a command that "unfroze" the wheels. The general and his men realized that the element of surprise was lost. The witch knew they were coming.

That night the witch-layer fled in terror when the witch attacked him, and General Jackson's men followed him out the door. According to the old stories, Jackson told John Bell that fighting the witch was worse than having faced the British at the battle of New Orleans. Old Hickory wanted to stay for a week and face down the spirit, but his committee of ghost chasers had had enough, so he left with his men.

With the decisive defeat of her champions, Miles and Jackson, Betsy had no choice but to give in to the witch's demands and break her engagement with Joshua Gardner. On the night on which Betsy returned the ring, the



witch's laughter could be heard ringing victoriously from every room in the house.

Shortly after the entity had accomplished the severing of Betsy's marriage agreement with her fiancé, it once more began to concentrate its energy on the destruction of John Bell. Richard was walking with his father on that day in December of 1820 when John Bell collapsed into a spasmodically convulsing heap.

John Bell was brought home to his bed where he lay for several days in a weakened condition. Even during the man's illness, the witch would not leave him in peace, but continued to torment him by slapping his face and throwing his legs into the air. On the morning of December 19, 1820, John Bell lapsed into a stupor from which he would never be aroused. The witch sang bawdy songs all during John Bell's funeral and annoyed the assembled mourners with sounds of its crude celebration throughout the man's last rites.

After the death of her father, the witch behaved much better toward Betsy. It never again inflicted pain upon her and actually addressed her in terms of endearment. During the rest of the winter and on into the spring months, the manifestations decreased steadily. Then, one night after the evening meal, a large smoke ball seemed to roll down from the chimney of the fireplace out into the room. As it burst, a voice told the family: "I'm going now, and I will be gone for seven years."

True to its word, the witch returned to the homestead in 1828. Betsy had entered into a successful marriage with another man; John Jr. had married and now farmed land of his own. Only Mrs. Bell, Joel, and Richard remained on the home place. The disturbances primarily consisted of the witch's most elementary pranks—rappings, scratchings, pulling the covers off the bed—and the family agreed to ignore the unwanted guest. Their plan worked, and the witch left them after two weeks of pestering them for attention. The entity sought out John Jr. and told him in a fit of pique that it would return to one of his descendants in "one hundred years and seven."

Dr. Charles Bailey Bell should have been the recipient of the Bell Witch's unwelcome return visit, but Bell and his family survived the year

1935 without hearing the slightest unexplained scratch or undetermined rapping. Charles Bell has written the official record of the mysterious disturbances endured by his ancestors in *The Bell Witch: A Mysterious Spirit, or Our Family Troubles* (reprint of pamphlet, 1985).

Today, the abandoned homestead of the Bell family is owned by a private trust, and no visitors are allowed to explore the property. The only site connected with the legends of the Bell Witch and open to the public is the Bell Witch Cave, which continues to produce accounts of unusual lights and eerie images on photographs.

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#### BORLEY RECTORY

The haunting phenomena usually began each night in Borley Rectory shortly after Reverend and Mrs. Smith had retired for the evening. They would be lying in bed, and they would hear the sound of heavy footsteps walking past their door. Reverend G. E. Smith soon took to crouching in the darkness outside of their room with a hockey stick gripped firmly in his hands. Several nights he lunged at "something" that passed their door—always without result.

Bells began to ring at all hours and became an intolerable nuisance. Hoarse, inaudible whispers sounded over their heads. Small pebbles appeared from nowhere to pelt them. A woman's voice began to moan from the center of an arch leading to the chapel. Keys popped from their locks and were found several feet

from their doors. The Smiths found themselves living in what Dr. Harry Price would soon come to call “the most haunted house in England.”

In the summer of 1929, Price answered the plea of the haunted rector and his wife. Leaving London, Price and an assistant drove to the small village of Borley, reviewing what they already knew about the eerie rectory. The building, though constructed in modern times, stood on the site of a medieval monastery whose gloomy old vaults still lay beneath it. Close at hand had been a nunnery, whose ruins were much in evidence. About a quarter of a mile away stood a castle where many tragic events had occurred, ending with a siege by Oliver Cromwell. There was a persistent legend about a nun who had been walled up alive in the nunnery for eloping with a lay brother who had been employed at the monastery. The lay brother, who received the punishment meted out for such sins, was hanged. Inhabitants of the rectory, and several villagers, had reported seeing the veiled nun walking through the grounds. A headless nobleman and a black coach pursued by armed men had also been listed as a frequent phenomenon.

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## BORLEY *Rectory presents a combination of a “haunting” and the phenomenon of poltergeistic activity*

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The rectory had been built in 1863 by the Reverend Henry Bull (sometimes called Martin in the literature of psychical research). He had fathered 14 children and had wanted a large rectory. He died in the Blue Room in 1892 and was succeeded in occupancy by his son, Harry, who died at the rectory in 1927. The building was vacant for a few months—while a dozen clergymen refused to take up residence there because of the eerie tales they had heard—until Reverend G. E. Smith and his family accepted the call in 1928.

Price, the well-known psychical researcher, did not have to wait long for the phenomena to put on a show for him. Price and his assis-

tant had just shared a lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Smith when a glass candlestick struck an iron stove near the investigator’s head and splashed him with splinters. A mothball came tumbling down the stairwell, followed by a number of pebbles.

Price busied himself for the next several days with interviewing the surviving daughters of Henry Bull, the builder of the rectory, and as many former servants as had remained in the village. The eldest of the three surviving daughters told of seeing the nun appear at a lawn party on a sunny July afternoon. She had approached the phantom and tried to engage it in conversation, but it had disappeared as she had drawn near to it. The sisters swore that the entire family had often seen the nun and that their brother had said that, when dead, he would attempt to manifest himself in the same way. It was their father, Henry Bull, who had bricked up the dining room window so that the family might eat in peace and not be disturbed by the spectral nun peeping in at them.

A man who had served as gardener for the Bull family told Price that every night for eight months he and his wife heard footsteps in their rooms over the stables. Several former maids or grooms testified that they had remained in the employ of the Bulls for only one or two days before they were driven away by the strange occurrences which manifested themselves on the premises.

Mrs. Smith was not at all reluctant to admit that she, too, had seen the shadowy figure of a nun walking about the grounds of the rectory. On several occasions, she had hurried to confront the phantom, but it had always disappeared at the sound of her approach. The Smiths left the rectory shortly after Price’s visit. They had both begun to suffer the ill effects of the lack of sleep and the enormous mental strain that had been placed on each of them.

Borley Rectory presents an interesting combination of a “haunting” and the phenomenon of poltergeistic activity. Harry Price maintained that approximately one-half of all hauntings include some type of poltergeistic disturbance. Henry Bull had 14 children who lived in the rectory. Phenomena began to become active about 10 years after he had

moved into the rectory with his family. It is also interesting to record that the phenomena reached new heights of activity when the Reverend Lionel Algernon Foyster, a cousin of the Bull family, took up residence in the Rectory on October 16, 1930. The reverend brought with him his wife, Marianne, and his four-year-old daughter Adelaide. (Many accounts of Borley Rectory refer to the Foysters as Rev. B. and Marianne Morrison.)

The Foysters had lived there only a few days when Mrs. Foyster heard a voice softly calling, "Marianne, dear." The words were repeated many times, and, thinking her husband was summoning her, she ran upstairs. Foyster had not spoken a word, he told her, but he, too, had heard the calling voice.

Once, Mrs. Foyster laid her wristwatch by her side as she prepared to wash herself in the bathroom. When she completed her washing, she reached for the watch and discovered that the band had been removed. It was never returned. Reverend Foyster was quick to realize that the weird tales that he had heard about Borley Rectory had all been true. He could hardly deny them in view of such dramatic evidence. He was not frightened, however, as he felt protected by his Christian faith. He used a holy relic to quiet the disturbances when they became particularly violent and remained calm enough to keep a detailed journal of the phenomena that he and his family witnessed.

Marianne Foyster received the full fury of the haunting's attack from the beginning of their occupancy. One night, while carrying a candle on the way to their bedroom, she received such a violent blow in the eye that it produced a cut and a black bruise that was visible for several days. A hammerhead was thrown at her one night as she prepared for bed. She received a blow from a piece of metal that was hurled down a flight of stairs. Another time, she narrowly missed being struck by a flat iron, which smashed the chimney of the lamp that she was carrying.

In addition to persecuting Mrs. Foyster, the entity seemed determined to establish contact with her. Messages were found scrawled on the walls: "Marianne...please... get help."



**The Borley Rectory—The Most Haunted House in England.** (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

The entity may or may not have been suggesting that the Foysters once again bring Dr. Harry Price upon the scene. At any rate, that is exactly what they did. Advised by the Bull sisters of the famed investigator's interest in the Borley phenomena, Reverend Foyster wrote to London to inform Price of renewed activity in the rectory.

Price gained permission to stay in the rectory with two friends, and upon arrival, the researcher and his party once again examined the house from attic to cellar. The haunting wasted no time in welcoming the returning investigator. While he was examining an upstairs room, an empty wine bottle hurled itself through the air, narrowly missing him. The party was brought back down to the kitchen by the screams of their chauffeur, who had remained behind to enjoy a leisurely smoke. The distraught man insisted that he had seen a large, black hand crawl across the kitchen floor.

During conversation, Mrs. Foyster disclosed that she had seen the "monster" that had been causing all the eerie disturbances. Reverend Foyster showed Price the entry that he had made in his journal on March 28 when his wife had confronted the entity while ascending a staircase. She had described it as a monstrosity—black, ugly, and ape-like. It had reached out and touched her on the shoulder. Price later learned that others had seen the creature on different occasions.

The Foysters also told Price and his team that the phenomena had begun to produce items that they had never seen before. A small tin trunk had appeared in the kitchen when the family was eating supper. A powder box and a wedding ring materialized in the bathroom, and, after they had been put away in a drawer, the ring disappeared overnight. Stone-throwing had become common, and Reverend Foyster complained of finding stones in their bed and under their pillows as well.

Although Reverend Foyster was a brave man, he had never enjoyed good health nor the kind of stamina necessary to outlast a full-scale haunting. The Foysters endured the phenomena at the rectory for five years before leaving in October of 1935. After the Foysters left, the bishop decreed that the place was for sale.

In May of 1937, Harry Price learned that the rectory was empty and offered to lease the place for a year as a kind of ghost laboratory. His sum was accepted, and the investigator enlisted a crew of 40 assistants, mostly men, who would take turns living in the rectory for a period of one year. Price outfitted the place and issued a booklet that told his army of researchers how to correctly observe and record any phenomena that might manifest themselves.

Shortly after the investigators began to arrive, strange pencil-like writings began to appear on the walls. Each time a new marking was discovered, it would be carefully circled and dated. Two researchers reported seeing new writing form while they were busy ringing and dating another. It appeared that the entity missed Mrs. Foyster. "Marianne...Marianne..." it wrote over and over again. "Marianne... prayers...please help."

The organized investigators were quick to discover a phenomenon that had not been noted by any of the rectors who had lived in Borley. This was the location of a "cold spot" in one of the upstairs passages. Certain people began to shiver and feel faint whenever they passed through it. Another "cold spot" was discovered on the landing outside of the Blue Room. Thermometers indicated the temperature of these areas to be fixed at about 48 degrees, regardless of what the temperature of the rest of the house may have been.

The phantom nun was seen three times in one evening by one observer, but was not noticed at all by any of the other investigators. A strange old cloak kept the researchers baffled by continually appearing and disappearing. Several of Price's crew reported being touched by unseen hands.

On the last day of Harry Price's tenancy on May 19, 1938, Marianne Foyster's missing wedding ring once again materialized. The investigator snatched it up, lest it disappear, and brought it home to London with him.

In late 1938, the Borley Rectory was purchased by a Captain W. H. Gregson, who renamed it "The Priory." He was not at all disturbed by warnings that the place was haunted, but he was upset when his faithful old dog went wild with terror on the day they moved in and ran away, never to be seen again. He was also mildly concerned with the strange track of unidentified footprints that circled the house in fresh fallen snow. The tracks were not caused by any known animal, the captain swore, nor had any human made them. He followed the tracks for a time until they mysteriously disappeared into nothingness.

Captain Gregson did not have long to puzzle out the enigma of Borley. At midnight on February 27, 1939, the "most haunted house in England" was completely gutted by flames. Gregson testified later that a number of books had flown from their places on the shelves and knocked over a lamp, which had immediately exploded into flame.

Borley Rectory has remained one of the most haunted houses in Britain, but in December 2000, Louis Mayerling, who claimed Borley was a second home to him until it burned in 1939, wrote a book entitled *We Faked the Ghosts of Borley Rectory* in which he claimed that Harry Price and the world had been taken in by hoaxsters. Mayerling states that he first arrived at Borley in 1918 to find Rev. Harry Bull and his family taking great delight in perpetuating local folklore about a phantom nun and other paranormal activity. According to the author, the Foysters were also in on the hoax, encouraging Mayerling, a teenager at the time, to walk around the gardens at dusk in a black cape.

Mayerling admits that there was one incident he was unable to explain. On Easter in 1935, the acclaimed playwright George Bernard Shaw; T. E. Lawrence, the famous “Lawrence of Arabia”; Sir Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England; and Bernard Spilsbury, the Home Office criminal forensic scientist—all believers in the haunting phenomena at Borley—joined Mayerling and Marianne Foyster for a seance at the rectory. All at once, Mayerling recalls, all the kitchen bells clanged as one and a brilliant silver-blue light seemed to implode around them from the walls and the ceilings. From his previous experience creating eerie sounds and noises in the rectory, Mayerling knew that it was impossible to make all the bells sound at once and he had no idea what had caused the lightning-like flash around them. He was, in fact, blinded by the phenomenon and eventually recovered sight in only one eye. Shaw and Norman refused to stay the night after such a violent display of the paranormal, and Mayerling confesses in his book that memory of the experience still set his spine to tingling.

Mayerling’s confession of pranks during the occupancy of the Bull and Foyster families does not explain the extensive phenomena reported by Price’s team of researchers during its year-long observation of the rectory nor the manifestations noted by Gregson after he assumed ownership of Borley. Since the admitted pranksters were not present at the rectory during those years, the authenticity of the haunting of Borley will remain a controversial subject among psychical researchers.

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#### CALVADOS CASTLE

The disturbances that took place in the Norman castle of Calvados, France, from October 12, 1875, to January 30, 1876, were written up and published in the *Annales des Sciences Psychiques* in 1893 by M. J. Morice. Although the master of Calvados kept a diary that could later be used as a documentary of the phenomena, he insisted that his family name not be mentioned in connection with the “haunting.” He is, therefore, referred to in the narrative only as M. de X. His immediate family consisted of Mme. de X, and their son, Maurice. The remainder of the household consisted of Abbe Y., tutor to Maurice; Emile, the coachman; Auguste, the gardener; Amelina, the housemaid; and Celina, the cook.

On the evening of October 13, Abbe Y. came down to the drawing room and told M. and Mme. de X. that his armchair had just moved. He insisted that he had distinctly seen it move out of the corner of his eye. M. de X. calmed the abbe and returned with him to his room. He attached gummed paper to the foot of the cleric’s armchair, fixed it to the floor, and told him to call if anything further should occur.

About ten that evening, the master of Calvados was awakened by the ringing of the abbe’s bell. He got out of bed and hurried to the man’s room. Here he found the tutor with his covers pulled up to the bridge of his nose, peering out at him as if he were a frightened child. M. de X. saw that the armchair had moved about a yard and that several candlesticks and statuettes had been upset. And, the abbe complained, there had been rappings on his wall.

The next evening, the manifestations did not confine themselves to the abbe’s room. Loud blows were heard all over the castle. M. de X. armed his servants and conducted a search of the entire building. They could find nothing. It would be a pattern that they would repeat again and again as the haunting phenomena began its siege in earnest. Night after night, its hammering fist would pound on doors and rap on walls. The inhabitants of Calvados Castle would not know a night of unmolested slumber for more than three months.

The curate of the parish arrived to witness the phenomena and was not disappointed. Nei-

ther was Marcel de X., who had come to try to determine the origin of the manifestations. That night, the sound of a heavy ball was heard descending the stairs from the second floor to the first, jumping from step to step.

The parish priest was also invited to stay a night in the castle. He heard the heavy tread of a giant descending the stairs and proclaimed the activity to be supernatural. Marcel de X. agreed with the priest. He had quickly concluded that this ghost would be a most difficult one to banish and had decided to leave Calvados Castle to the noisy spirit. He wished M. de X. the best of luck and returned to his home.

On Halloween, the haunting seemed to outdo itself with a display of phenomena that kept the household from going to bed until three o'clock in the morning. The center of the activity had now become what was called the green room, and the phenomena seemed always to either begin or end with loud rappings in this empty room. The ghost now seemed to walk with a tread that had nothing human about it. It was like two legs deprived of their feet and walking on the stumps.

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*THE abbe fared the worst throughout the duration of the phenomena.*

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It was during a violent November rain-storm that the ghost acquired a voice. High above the howl of the wind and the rumble of the thunder, the beleaguered household heard a long shriek that at first sounded like a woman outside in the storm calling for help. The next cry sounded from within the castle. The members of the household gathered together as if seeking strength from their unity. Three sorrowful moans sounded as the thing ascended the staircase.

The men of Calvados left the sitting room to carefully inspect the castle. They found nothing. There was no woman in the castle, and no sign that anything had entered the castle from the storm. They heard no more sounds until everyone was awakened at 11:45 the next

night by terrible sobs and cries coming from the green room. The cries seemed to be those of a woman in horrible suffering. During the next few nights, the activity seemed to become intensified and the cries of the sorrowful woman in the green room had become shrill and despairing.

Shortly after the "weeping woman" had arrived to add to the confusion at Calvados, a cousin of Mme. de X., an army officer, appeared to pay them a visit. He scoffed at the wild stories the members of the household told him, and against all their pleas, he insisted upon sleeping in the green room. They need not worry about him, he assured them, he always had his revolver at his side.

The officer strode boldly to the green room, left a candle burning as a night light, and went straight to sleep. He was awakened a short time later by what seemed to be the soft rustling of a silken robe. He was instantly aware that the candle had been extinguished and that something was tugging at the covers on his bed. In answer to his gruff demands to know who was there, he felt a cold breath of air blow out the candle he had relit and the rustling noise seemed to become louder, and something was definitely determined to rob him of his bedclothes. When he shouted that whoever was there must declare himself or he would shoot, the only response to his demand was an exceptionally violent tug on the covers.

It was a simple matter to determine where his silent adversary stood by the sound of the rustling and the pull on the bedclothes, so he decided to shoot three times. The lead slugs struck nothing but the wall, and he dug them out with a knife that next morning.

The abbe fared the worst of any member of the household throughout the duration of the phenomena. Whenever the cleric left his room, he always made certain that the windows were bolted and his door was locked. The key to his room was secured to a leather thong that he kept belted to his waist. These precautions never accomplished the slightest bit of good. Upon returning to his room, the abbe would inevitably find his couch overturned, the cushions scattered about, his windows opened, and his armchair placed on his

desk. Once he tried nailing his windows closed. He returned to find the windows wide open, and by way of punishment, the couch cushions were balanced precariously on the outside windowsill. Such pranks the abbe could bear with much more patience than the time the invisible invader dumped every one of his books on the floor. Only the Holy Scriptures remained on the shelves.

The most vicious attack on the clergyman occurred once when he knelt at his fireplace stirring the coals, preparatory to placing new kindling on the andirons. Without warning, a huge deluge of water rushed down the chimney, extinguishing the fire, blinding the abbe with flying sparks, and covering him with ashes. The tutor woefully concluded that such actions could only be the work of his satanic majesty, the devil.

The only other person who actually suffered physical pain dealt out by the haunting phenomena was Mme. de X., who was in the act of unlocking a door when the key suddenly disengaged itself from her grip and struck her across the back of her left hand with such force that she bore a large bruise for several days.

One night the invisible creature roamed the corridors as if it were a lonely wayfarer seeking admittance to the rooms of each of the members of the household. It knocked once or twice on the doors of several bedrooms, then, true to pattern, it paused to deal 40 consecutive blows to the abbe's door before it returned to thump about in the green room.

The weary household had its only respite during the long siege when the reverend father H. L., a Premonstrant Canon, was sent there by the bishop. From the moment the Reverend Father entered the castle until the moment he left, there was not the slightest sound from the noisy nuisance. But after the clergyman had made his departure there was a sound as if a body had fallen in the first-floor passage, followed by what seemed to be a rolling ball delivering a violent blow on the door of the green room—and the haunting had once again begun its devilment in earnest.

On January 20, 1876, M. de X. left for a two-day visit to his brother, leaving his wife to keep up the journal of the haunting. Mme. de

## HAUNTED HOTELS in THE US

- The Old Stagecoach Inn, Waterbury, Vermont
- St. James Hotel, Cimarron, New Mexico
- Kennebunk Inn, Kennebunkport, Maine
- The Dorrington Hotel, Dorrington, California
- Hotel Monte Vista, Flagstaff, Arizona
- The Brookdale Lodge, near Boulder Creek, California
- The Horton Grand Hotel, San Diego, California
- The Hotel del Coronado, San Diego, California

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X. recorded an eerie bellowing, like that of a bull, which bothered everyone during the master's absence. A weird drumming sound was also introduced and a noise much like someone striking the stairs with a stick.

Upon the master's return to Calvados, the ghost became more violent than it had ever been before. It stormed into the rooms of Auguste the gardener and Emile the coachman and turned their beds over. It whirled into the master's study and heaped books, maps, and papers on the floor. The midnight screams increased in shrillness and urgency and were joined by the roaring of a bull and the furious cries of animals. A rhythmic tapping paraded up and down the corridors as if a small drum and bugle corps were conducting maneuvers. For the first time, the rappings seemed to direct themselves to the door of

Maurice, the son of M. and Mme. de X. Terrible screams sounded outside his room, and the violence of the successive blows on his door shook every window on the floor.

On the night of January 26, the parish priest arrived with the intention of conducting the rites of exorcism. He had also arranged for a Novena of Masses to be said at Lourdes that would coincide with his performance of the ancient ritual of putting a spirit to rest. The priest's arrival was greeted by a long, drawn-out cry and what sounded like a stampede of hooved creatures running from the first floor passage. There came a noise similar to that of heavy boxes being moved, and the door to Maurice's room began to shake as if something demanded entrance.

The rites of exorcism reached their climax at 11:15 on the night of January 29. From the stairway came a piercing cry, like that of a beast that had been dealt its deathblow. A flurry of rappings began to rain on the door of the green room. At 12:55, the startled inhabitants of Calvados Castle heard the voice of a man in the first-floor passage. M. de X. recorded in his journal that it seemed to cry Ha! Ha!, and immediately there were 10 resounding blows, shaking everything all around. A final blow struck the door of the green room; then there was the sound of coughing in the first-floor passage.

The family rose and cautiously began to move about the castle. The priest slumped in exhaustion, sweat beading his forehead from the long ordeal. There was no sound of the hammering fist, no raucous screams, no shaking of doors, no shifting of furniture. They found a large earthenware plate that had been broken into 10 pieces at the door to Mme. de X.'s room. No one had ever seen the plate before that night.

Although it appeared that the haunting was over, several days after the exorcisms had been performed, Mme. de X. was sitting at a writing desk when an immense packet of holy medals and crosses dropped in front of her on her paper. It was as if the ghost had but suffered a momentary setback and was announcing that it must retreat for a time to recuperate and lick its wounds.

Towards the end of August, soft knockings and rappings began to be heard. On the third

Sunday in September, the drawing room furniture was arranged in horseshoe fashion with the couch in the middle. A few days afterward, Mme. de X. lay terrified in her bed and watched the latch to her room unbolt itself. M. de X. was out of the castle for a few days on business, and she was alone with the servants.

The duration of the phenomena was much briefer this time, and the restless ghost seemed to be content to play the organ and to move an occasional bit of furniture about the room of Maurice's new tutor. Eventually the phenomena became weaker and weaker until the only thing that haunted Calvados Castle was the memory of those terrible months when the haunting phenomena had run rampant.

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#### EPWORTH RECTORY

One of the most famous cases in the annals of noisy hauntings is the one that visited the Reverend Samuel Wesley and his family at Epworth Rectory in 1716. Among the 19 children of the Reverend Wesley who witnessed the phenomena were John and Charles, the founders of Methodism and the authors of some of Christendom's best-loved hymns.

It was on the first of December that the children and the servants began to complain of eerie groans and mysterious knockings in their rooms. They also insisted that they could hear the sound of footsteps ascending and descending the stairs at all hours of the night.

Reverend Wesley heard no noises for about a week and severely lectured the child or servant who brought him any wild tale about a ghost walking about in the rectory. If there were any noises in the rectory, he told his family one night at dinner, they were undoubtedly caused by the young men who came around in the evenings. The reverend had four grown daughters who had begun to entertain beaux and suitors, and their father's





veiled sarcasm did not sit at all well with them. "I wish the ghost would come knocking at your door, Father," one of them told him.

The girls were so angry with their father that they fought down their fright and vowed to ignore the noises until they became so loud that their no-nonsense parent could not help acknowledging them. They didn't have long to wait. The very next night, nine loud knocks thudded on the walls of Reverend and Mrs. Wesley's bedchamber. The clergyman thought some mischief-maker had managed to get into the rectory unnoticed and was trying to frighten them. He would buy a dog big enough to gobble up any intruder.

True to his word, the clergyman obtained a huge mastiff and brought it into the rectory. That night, however, as the knocks began to sound, Reverend Wesley was startled to see his canine bodyguard whimper and cower behind the frightened children.

Two nights later, the sounds in the house seemed so violent that Wesley and his wife were forced out of bed to investigate. As they

walked through the rectory, the noises seemed to play about them. Mysterious crashing sounds echoed in the darkness. Metallic clinks seemed to fall in front of them. Somehow managing to maintain their courage, the Wesleys searched every chamber but found nothing.

After he called a family meeting to pool their knowledge about the invisible guest, Reverend Wesley learned from one of the older girl's observations that the disturbances usually began at about ten o'clock in the evening and were always prefaced by a "signal" noise, a peculiar kind of winding sound. The noises followed a pattern that seldom varied. They would begin in the kitchen, then suddenly fly up to visit a bed, knocking first at the foot, then the head. These seemed to be the ghost's warming-up exercises. After it had followed these preliminaries, it might indulge any spectral whim which appealed to it on that particular night.

"Why do you disturb innocent children?" Wesley roared in righteous indignation one night as the knockings in the nursery became especially violent. "If you have something to say, come to me in my study!"

**Epworth Rectory.**

(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

As if in answer to Wesley's challenge, a knock sounded on the door of his study with such force that the cleric thought the boards must surely have been shattered.

Wesley decided to secure reinforcements in the fight against the "deaf and dumb devil" which had invaded his rectory. He sent for Mr. Hoole, the Vicar of Hoxley, and told him the whole story. The Vicar said that he would lead devotions that night and see if the thing would dare to manifest itself in his presence.

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## EPWORTH *Rectory is the most famous cases in the annals of noisy hauntings.*

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The "thing" was not the least bit awed by the Vicar of Hoxley. In fact, it put on such a good show that night that the clergyman fled in terror, leaving Wesley to combat the demon as best he could.

The children had overcome their initial fear of the invisible being and had come to accept its antics as a welcome relief from the boredom of village life. "Old Jeffery," as they had begun to call their strange guest, had almost achieved the status of a pet, and it was soon observed that it was quite sensitive. If any visitor slighted Old Jeffery by claiming that the rappings were due to natural causes, such as rats, birds, or wind, the haunting phenomena were quickly intensified so that the doubter stood instantly corrected.

The disturbances maintained their scheduled arrival time of about ten o'clock in the evening until the day that Mrs. Wesley remembered the ancient remedy for ridding a house of evil spirits. They would get a large trumpet and blow it mightily throughout every room in the house. The sounds of a loud horn were said to be unpleasing to evil spirits.

The ear-splitting experiment in exorcism was not only a complete failure, but now the spirit began to manifest itself in the daylight as well. The children seemed almost to welcome the fact that Old Jeffery would be available dur-

ing their playtime hours as well as being an amusing nighttime nuisance. Several witnesses reported seeing a bed levitate itself to a considerable height while a number of the Wesley children squealed gaily from the floating mattress. The only thing that bothered the children was the creepy sound, like that of a trailing robe, Old Jeffery had begun to make. One of the girls declared that she had seen the ghost of a man in a long, white robe that dragged on the floor. Other children claimed to have seen an animal similar in appearance to a badger, scurrying out from under their beds. The servants swore that they had seen the head of a rodent-like creature peering out at them from a crack near the kitchen fireplace.

Then, just as the Wesleys were getting accustomed to their weird visitor, the disturbances ended as abruptly as they had begun. Old Jeffery never returned to plague Epworth Rectory with its phenomena, but the memory of its occupancy has remained to bewilder scholars of more than two centuries.

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### GENERAL WAYNE INN

Located on the old Lancaster roadway between Philadelphia and Radner, the General Wayne Inn has been in continuous operation since 1704 when Robert Jones, a Quaker, decided to serve travelers with a restaurant and a place of lodging. The land was purchased from fellow Quaker William Penn and was originally called the Wayside Inn. Because of the inn's location near Merion, the site of numerous battles during the Revolutionary War (1775–83), it was renamed the General Wayne Inn in 1793 in honor of a local hero, General Anthony Wayne (1745–1796). During the colonies' war of independence, the inn played host to General George Washington and the Marquis de la Fayette, as well as a number of

their antagonists, the British Redcoats and their Hessian mercenaries. From time to time throughout its history, the inn has also served as a post office, a general store, and a social center for newly arrived immigrants.

No longer an inn, the three-story stone and timber building still serves meals as well as an extensive menu of ghosts—some say as many as 17. When Barton Johnson bought the General Wayne Inn in 1970, he was well aware of its reputation for being haunted. In 1972, New Jersey psychics Jean and Bill Quinn conducted a **seance** in which at least 17 different entities declared their presence and provided a bit of their personal history. Johnson, his wife, and their two sons also participated in the seance.

When Wilhelm, a Hessian soldier who was killed in the Revolutionary War, identified himself, he explained that most of the time he liked to stay down in the cellar. His spirit claimed that it was restless because he had been stripped of his clothes at the time of his death so that another soldier might use them. Wilhelm had been humiliated by being buried in his underwear, so he was searching for a proper uniform to wear in the afterlife. The restaurant's maitre de had little sympathy for Wilhelm's plight, however. He had seen the ghost on so many occasions that he finally told Johnson that he would no longer venture down to the cellar.

In addition to Wilhelm, who manifested at the 1972 seance, there was a little boy ghost, who cried for his lost mother; two female entities who had worked at the inn and had died young under bizarre circumstances; eight other Hessian soldiers who had once been quartered at the inn and who had died nearby in battle; a Native American who seemed primarily to be observing the others; and an African American who was an entity of few words. Many customers and employees had seen the spirits of the Hessians over the years. Usually they played harmless pranks, such as blowing on the necks of young women, but one of their spectral number enjoyed terrifying anyone whose job it was to stay after closing and clean up.

Ludwig, the spirit of another Hessian soldier, materialized for many nights at 2:00 A.M. in the

bedroom of Mike Benio, a contractor who also had psychic abilities. The entity appealed to Benio to unearth his bones, which had been buried in the basement of the inn, and give them a proper burial in a cemetery. When Johnson returned from a vacation, Benio asked permission to excavate a certain area of the cellar that was under the parking lot. Here, Benio found a small, unknown room that contained fragments of pottery and some human bones. After giving the remains a proper burial, the ghost of Ludwig was at peace and no longer manifested at the General Wayne Inn.

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**THE** *spirits of the Hessians had been seen by many customers and employees at the General Wayne Inn.*

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On one occasion, when Johnson wished to test the claims made during the seance that the Hessian soldiers frequented the inn's bar after closing time, he placed a tape recorder in the room. The next morning during playback, Johnson could clearly hear the sounds of bar stools being moved about, the water faucet being turned on and off, and glasses catching the water. Some nights later, on a Monday night when the bar was closed for the entire evening, a customer looking in the inn's front window claimed to have seen a man dressed in a Revolutionary War-era Hessian's uniform, sitting slumped at the bar.

Jim Webb and his partner Guy Sileo bought the inn in 1995. When Webb was found murdered in his office on December 27, 1996, and Felicia Moyse, a 20-year-old assistant chef, committed suicide on February 22, 1997, some people felt that the place had added two more ghosts to its roster. Others recalled that one of the General Wayne Inn's most frequent customers in 1839 would have found the growing ghostly and gory history of the place to be right up his alley. The guest in question was Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), who scratched his initials on a window of the inn in 1843.

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**THE GRAY MAN OF HINTON AMPNER**

The account of the disturbances that gripped Hinton Ampner was first set down by Mary Ricketts, who, with her children, servants, and her brother, witnessed manifestations of a most eerie and frightening sort. Ricketts was intelligent and widely read, and her reputation for truthfulness forever went unsullied. Her brother, John Jarvis, was named Baron Jarvis and Earl St. Vincent for his distinguished naval services. The Hinton Ampner case was published in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* in April 1893.

In 1757, Mary had married William Henry Ricketts of Canaan, Jamaica, and they moved into the large country home outside of Hinton Ampner, England. From the very first there had been disturbances, the sound of doors slamming, the shuffling of footsteps. Ricketts had spent many nights watching for the "prowlers" that he was convinced had somehow gained entrance into the house. They had lived there for about six months when their nurse swore that she saw a gentleman in a drab-colored suit of clothes go into the yellow room. Such things as these the Rickettses tolerated for four years, firmly convinced that the noises were the result of wind and prowlers, and that the gray man and a once-sighted figure of a woman were the products of the servant's imagination.

For several years, Mary Ricketts accompanied her husband on his frequent business trips to the West Indies, but, in 1769, having now mothered three children, she decided to remain alone in England at the old manor house that they occupied. Because they were convinced of a natural explanation for the disturbances, William had no pronounced anxiety when Mary told him that she felt that she should remain in England with the children

while he made the trip to Jamaica. After all, she did have eight servants to assist her, and it was quite unlikely that any prowler would try to take on such odds.

The phenomena seemed almost to have been waiting for William Ricketts to leave on an extended trip before it began its manifestations in earnest. He had only been gone a short time when, one afternoon while lying down in her room, Mary heard the noise of someone walking in the room and the rustling of silk clothing as it brushed the floor. She opened her eyes to see absolutely no one. She called the servants and a thorough search was made of the upstairs rooms and closets. The cook reminded her mistress that she had heard the same rustling noise descending the stairs on several occasions and had once seen the tall figure of a woman in dark clothes. Ricketts found herself being less dismissive of the servants' stories now that she, too, had heard the spectral rustling of an invisible lady.

Nocturnal noises continued, and, one night, as Mary Ricketts lay sleeping in the yellow room which the "gray man" had been seen to enter, she was awakened by the heavy plodding steps of a man walking toward the foot of her bed. She was too frightened to reach for the bell at her bedside. She jumped from her bed and ran from the room into the nursery. The children's nurse was instantly out of her bed, rubbing her sleep-swollen eyes and wondering what on earth had so upset the mistress of the house. The nurse became immediately awake when Mary Ricketts told her about the heavy footsteps. The rest of the servants were summoned and again a fruitless search was made to discover some human agency who might be responsible for the disturbance.

It was in November that the knocking and rappings began. A few months later, after the first of the year, Mary Ricketts and her household noticed that the entire house seemed to be filled with the sound of a "hollow murmuring." A maid, who had spent the night in the yellow room, appeared at the breakfast table palefaced and shaken over the dismal groans that she had heard around her bed most of the night.

By midsummer the eerie sound of voices in the night had become intolerable. They began

before the household went to bed, and with brief intermissions were heard until after broad day in the morning. Mary Ricketts could frequently distinguish articulate sounds. Usually a shrill female voice would begin, and then two others with deeper and manlike tones joined in the discourse. Although the conversation often sounded as if it were taking place close to her, she never could distinguish actual words.

At last, Mary Ricketts appealed to her brother, the Earl St. Vincent, to come to her aid. Earlier, he had spent a few days at Hinton Ampner and had heard nothing, but now the urgency in his sister's letter convinced him that whatever was troubling her was real—at least to her and the servants. When the Earl St. Vincent arrived at the mansion, he had in his company a well-armed manservant. The earl was convinced that some disrespectful pranksters had conspired to annoy his sister and her household, and he was determined to deal out swift justice. Captain Luttrell, a neighbor of the Rickettses, joined in this campaign to exorcise the spooks. Captain Luttrell was familiar with the old legends of the area and had accepted the possibility of a supernatural agency at work, but he had volunteered his services to determine the cause of the disturbances, regardless of their origin.

The three armed men were kept on the go all night by the sound of doors opening and slamming. Mary Ricketts's brother became a believer in the world unseen. He soon concluded that the disturbances were definitely not the results of any human activity. Captain Luttrell declared that Hinton Ampner was unfit for human occupancy and urged Mary Ricketts to move out at once.

The Earl St. Vincent agreed with his sister's neighbor, but he realized that she could not quit the house so easily. She needed a certain amount of time to notify her husband and landlord of her decision, and the necessary preparations had to be made to obtain a different house. He told Mary that he would stand guard every night for a week, sleeping by day and watching by night.

The brother had maintained his vigil for about three nights when Mary was awakened by the sound of a pistol shot and the groans of

a person in mortal agony. She was too frightened to move, but she felt secure in the knowledge that her brother and his servant were quite capable of handling any monster.

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PAST wrongs doings began to form a chain of evil at Hinton Ampner.

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When her brother awakened the next afternoon, Mary quickly questioned him about the struggle that she heard the night before. The Earl St. Vincent frowned and shook his head in disbelief. He had heard no shot nor any of the terrible groaning.

The earl himself was forced to experience the frustration of hearing sounds that no one else could perceive on the next day. He was lying in his bed, having just awakened from his afternoon's sleep, when he heard a sound as if an immense weight had fallen through the ceiling to the floor. He leaped out of bed, fully expecting to see a gaping hole in both ceiling and floor. There was not the slightest splinter, nor had anyone else in the mansion heard the crash. Even his servant, who slept in the bedroom directly below, had heard nothing.

The earl insisted that his sister leave at once, and, because he was unable to stay at Hinton Ampner any longer, he ordered his Lieutenant of Marines to the mansion to assist Mary in her moving chores and to maintain the nightly watch. Mary Ricketts gave notice to her landlord, Lady Hillsborough, and immediately set the servants to work packing trunks and bags. The night after her brother left, she and the entire household heard a crash such as the one that he had described. The crash was followed by several piercing shrieks, dying away as though sinking into the earth.

To disguise her fear, the nurse flippantly remarked how pleasant the sound was and how she would love to hear more noises such as that. The unfortunate woman was troubled with horrid screaming and groaning in her room every night until the household moved.

Mary Ricketts returned to Hinton Ampner only once after she had moved away. She entered the house alone and heard a sound that she had never heard before, a sound that she said caused her “indescribable terror.”

Lady Hillsborough sent her agent, a Mr. Sainsbury, to stay a night in the house and to test the truth of the rumors about her manor. Mr. Sainsbury did not last the night.

In 1772, a family named Lawrence moved into Hinton Ampner. Their servants reported seeing an apparition of a woman, but the Lawrences threatened their servants not to make any statements. They lasted a year before they moved out. After their occupancy, the house was pulled down to be used in the construction of a new manor.

When Mary Ricketts resided in the mansion, an old man had come to her with a tale about having boarded up a small container for Lord Stawell, the original owner of Hinton Ampner. He had suggested that the small box might have contained treasure and might offer a clue to the haunting. Workmen discovered the container when they were stripping the mansion. It was found to conceal the skeleton of a baby.

When Mary Ricketts learned of this startling discovery, it seemed to offer the final key to the legend of Hinton Ampner. The villagers said Lord Stawell had engaged in illicit relations with the younger sister of his wife, who had lived with them at the manor. It had been the subject of ancient gossip that his sister-in-law had borne his child—a child that had been murdered at its birth. When Lady Stawell died, her sister, Honoria, became the mistress of Hinton Ampner. The past wrongs began to form a chain of evil: The first Lady Stawell, wronged by a younger sister and an indiscreet husband; the innocent babe, born of an illicit union, murdered, its body boarded up in the walls of the manor. Lord Stawell, the perpetrator of most of the sins, was himself left on his bed in the yellow room to die in agony, while his family waited outside, ignoring his groans of pain.

It was shortly after Lord Stawell’s death in 1755 that the groom swore that his old master had appeared to him in his room. The groom

knew that it was the master because of the drab-colored gray clothing that Lord Stawell was so fond of wearing. From that time on, the “gray man” and his groans and plodding footsteps were heard in the corridors of Hinton Ampner. The lady was said to have been the phantom of the first Lady Stawell.

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#### MYRTLES PLANTATION

According to the Smithsonian Institution, the Myrtles Plantation located three miles north of St. Francisville, Louisiana, is the most haunted house in the United States. Built on the site of an ancient Native American burial ground in 1794 by General David Bradford, the plantation has been the location for at least 10 violent deaths. Throughout the years, owners and their guests have fled the house in the middle of the night, terrified by the appearance of frightening ghosts—and the entities continue to be sighted to this day.

The haunting began when Bradford’s daughter Sara Matilda married a young judge named Clark Woodruffe. Although the Woodruffes were happily married and their union had produced two daughters, Clark began an extramarital affair with Chloe, one of the house slaves, when Sara Matilda was carrying their third child, who would also be a daughter. Although Judge Woodruffe had a reputation for integrity with the law, he was also known as being promiscuous. At first, Chloe tried to deny the sexual demands of her master, but she knew that if she fought against them, she could be sent to work in the fields. Eventually, the judge grew tired of her and chose another house slave as his new mistress. When Chloe saw that she had fallen from favor, she feared that she would also lose her position as a servant in the mansion and be ordered to the fields.

Chloe hoped that she might somehow win back Woodruffe’s affections and not be in danger of being sent to the brutal work in the fields. One evening, as she stood nearby the

judge and Sara Matilda, listening for any mention of her name and what she feared would be her dreaded fate, Woodruffe grew annoyed with her presence and accused her of eavesdropping on a private family conversation with his wife. Angrily, the judge ordered his overseers to cut off one of Chloe's ears as punishment. From that time on, Chloe wore a green headscarf with an earring pinned to it to hide her missing ear.

Wise in the ways of herbs and potions, Chloe came up with what she believed might be the perfect means that would guarantee her status of house slave and keep her out of the fields. She baked a birthday cake for the Woodruffes' oldest daughter and placed oleander, a poison, into the mix, scheming that the family would become ill and her services would be required to nurse them back to health. Tragically, Chloe inadvertently sprinkled too much oleander into the cake mix and Sara Matilda and two of her daughters became extremely ill and died within hours after the birthday party. Neither the judge nor the baby ate any of the poisoned cake.

Grief-stricken and ashamed of what she had done, Chloe confided in another slave that she had only intended to make the mother and her daughters ill so that she would be the one to take care of them. Chloe's choice of a confidante proved to be her undoing, for rather than keeping the secret, the woman loudly proclaimed to her fellow slaves that the death of the mistress of the house and her two daughters had not been due to some mysterious sudden illness. A mob made up of both the Woodruffes' slaves and their white neighbors chased Chloe into the surrounding woods where they caught her and hanged her. Later her body was cut down, weighted with rocks, and thrown into the river. Judge Woodruffe closed off the room where the birthday party had been held and never allowed it to be used again while he lived. This decree was relatively short-lived, for Clark Woodruffe was murdered a few years later.

Since that scene of mob violence in antebellum Louisiana, the ghost of Chloe has been often sighted both inside and outside of the plantation house. She is most often seen wear-

ing a green headscarf wrapped turban-style around her head with an earring pinned over her missing ear. Her spirit is also held responsible for stealing earrings from many guests over the nearly 200 years since her hanging.

John and Teeta Moss, the current owners of the Myrtles Plantation, have converted the place into a bed and breakfast, and Hester Eby, who manages house tours of the mansion and grounds, states that the haunting phenomena continue unabated. Teeta Moss even photographed a shadowy image of Chloe standing near the house. According to Eby and members of the staff, resident ghosts frequently reported include those of the two poisoned Woodruffe girls, who are often heard playing and running in the halls. Many guests have heard babies crying when there are no infants present in the mansion, and a floating candle moving slowly up the stairs has been often reported.

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MYRTLES Plantation is the most haunted house in the United States.

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Other ghosts include those of a woman in a black skirt who floats about a foot off the floor and who is seen dancing to music that cannot be heard by the living; a man who was stabbed to death in a hallway over an argument concerning a gambling debt; an overseer who was robbed and killed in 1927 and who angrily demands that guests leave the place and return to their own homes; an unseen pianist who plays the grand piano but who ceases at once if someone enters the room. There is another ghost of a young girl that seems to appear only when a thunderstorm approaches the plantation. The spectral image has long curly hair, wears an ankle-length dress, and is seen cupping her hands and trying to peer inside the window of the game room.

Many guests have heard the sounds of footsteps on the stairs and have seen the image of a man staggering to reach the hallway at the top. Hester Eby says that it is commonly believed that the ghost is that of William Winter, an attorney who owned the Myrtles Plantation in

the late nineteenth century. According to the story surrounding his death, a stranger on horseback who claimed to be in desperate need of an attorney called him to the porch one evening. When Winter stepped outside to see how he might be of service, the man shot him and rode away. Fatally wounded, Winter staggered through the house, painfully climbed the stairs, and died in the arms of his wife.

Throughout the years, many residents and their employees have heard their names called by invisible entities. The haunting phenomena seemed to fade and flow, intensifying and then lessening in its manifestations. Now that the place is also a bed and breakfast hotel, Eby said that the staff knows when the Myrtles is having a bad night by the number of guests who call up at midnight and demand to leave the place at once.

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#### THE TEDWORTH DRUMMER

The bizarre haunting phenomena that beset the family of John Mompesson of Tedworth, England, in March of 1661 had overtones of witchcraft and the fixing of a terrible curse. The "demon" of Tedworth is so much a part of the legend and folklore of England that ballads and poems have been written in celebration of the incredible prowess of the pesky ghost.

John Mompesson, a justice of the peace, had brought before him an ex-drummer in Cromwell's army, who had been demanding money of the bailiff by virtue of a suspicious pass. The bailiff had believed the pass to be counterfeit, and Mompesson, who was familiar with the handwriting of the gentleman who had allegedly signed the note, immediately declared the paper to be a forgery.

The drummer, whose name was Drury, begged Mompesson to check his story with Colonel Ayliff of Grettenham. The colonel would vouch for his integrity, the drummer insisted. Mompesson was swayed by the drummer's pleas that he not be put into jail, but he told the man that he would confiscate his drum until he had checked out his story. Drury demanded that his drum be returned, but Mompesson told him to be on his way and to give thanks for his own freedom.

Mompesson had the drum sent to his house for safekeeping, then left on a business trip to London. Upon his return, his wife informed him that the household had been terrorized by strange noises in the night. She could only accredit the sounds to burglars trying to break into the house. On the third night of his return, Mompesson was brought to his feet by a loud knocking that seemed to be coming from a side door. With a pistol in one hand and another in his belt, Mompesson opened the door. No one was there, but now the knocking had begun at another door. He flung that one open, too, and finding no one there, walked around the outside of the house in search of the culprit. He found no one on his search, nor could he account for the hollow drumming that sounded on the roof when he went back to bed.

From that night on, the drumming came always just after the Mompessons had gone to bed. It made no difference whether they retired early or late, the invisible drummer was ever prepared to tap them an annoying lullaby. After a month of being contented with rooftop maneuvers, the disturbances moved inside—into the room where Mompesson had placed the ex-soldier's drum. Once it had established itself in the home, the ghostly drummer favored the family with two hours of martial rolls, tattoos, and points of war each evening.

On the night in which Mrs. Mompesson was being delivered of a child, the drummer was respectfully quiet. It maintained this silence for a period of three weeks, as if it were allowing the mother to fully recover her strength before it began its pranks in earnest.

The children were the ones who suffered most when the drummer terminated its truce. With terrible violence, the thing began beat-





ing on their bedsteads at night. It would raise the children's beds in time with its incessant drumming, and, when it finally did quiet down, it would lie under their beds scratching at the floor. The Mompessons hopefully tried moving their children to another room, but it did no good. The drummer moved right along with them.

By November 5, the ghostly drummer had achieved such strength that it could hand boards to a servant who was doing some repair

work in the house. This was witnessed by a roomful of people, but Mompesson soon forbade his servant such familiarities with their invisible tormenter.

When the thing began to leave behind offensive, sulphurous fumes, the Mompessons took this as sufficient evidence that their unwelcome guest had come directly from the pit of Hades. A Reverend Cragg was summoned to conduct a prayer meeting in the house. The drummer maintained a reverent

**"The Tedworth Drummer" poltergeists (1662–1663).** (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

silence during the minister's prayers, but upon the last "amen," it began to move chairs about the room, hurl the children's shoes into the air, and toss every object that it could get its invisible hands on. A heavy staff struck Rev. Cragg on the leg, but the astonished clergyman reported that a lock of wool could not have fallen more softly.

The knocking had become so loud at nights that it awakened neighbors several houses away. The Mompesson's servants had also become subject to receiving nocturnal visits from the drummer. Their beds were raised while they attempted to sleep, and at times it curled up about their feet.

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**BALLADS** *and poems have been written in celebration of the incredible prowess of the Tedworth Drummer.*

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The ghost particularly delighted in wrestling with a husky servant named John. It would jerk the bedclothes off the sleeping man, throw shoes at his head, and engage in a hearty tug-o'-war with the man, who was trying desperately to keep the covers on his bed instead of on the floor. At times, the powerful entity would entwine itself around John and forcibly hold him as if he were bound hand and foot. With a tremendous effort of brute strength, the servant would free himself from the grasp of his invisible opponent and reach for the sword that he kept beside his bed. John had found that the brandishing of his sword was the only action that could make the thing retreat.

By January 10, 1662, nearly a year after its unwelcome arrival, the entity had acquired a voice and the ability to simulate the sound of rustling silk and the panting of animals. It had begun by singing in the chimney, then moved into the children's bedroom where it chanted: "A witch, a witch! I am a witch!" When Mompesson rushed into the nursery with his pistol, the disturbances ceased at once.

That night it came to his bedside, panting like a large dog. The bedroom, even though

lacking a fireplace, and on a particularly cold and bitter winter's night, became very hot and filled with a noxious odor.

On the following morning, Mompesson scattered fine ashes over the chamber floor to see what sort of imprints might be made by the incredible entity. He was rewarded by the eerie discovery of the markings of a great claw, some letters, circles, and other weird footprints.

It was at this point in the manifestations that Rev. Joseph Glanvil arrived to conduct his investigation. The phenomena were most cooperative for Rev. Glanvil and provided him with ample evidence of their existence from the very first moment of his arrival. It was eight o'clock in the evening and the children were in bed, enduring their nightly ritual of scratching, bed-liftings, and pantings. Rev. Glanvil tried desperately to trace the source of the disturbances, but could find nothing. He was momentarily elated when he noticed something moving in a linen bag, but upon scooping up the cloth, and hoping to find a rat or a mouse in his clutches, he was dismayed to find himself left holding an empty bag.

Later that night, when Rev. Glanvil and a friend retired for the evening, they were awakened by a loud knocking. When the clergyman demanded to know what the entity wished of them, a disembodied voice answered that it wanted nothing of the two men. The next morning, however, Rev. Glanvil's horse was found trembling in a state of nervous exhaustion, appearing as though it had been ridden all night. Glanvil had scarcely mounted the horse for his return trip when the animal collapsed. Although the horse was well-attended and cared for, it died within two days.

One night in the children's bedroom, the voice shrieked its claim that it was a witch over a hundred times in rapid succession. The next day, the harried Mompesson fired his pistol at an animated stick of firewood and was astonished to see several drops of blood appear on the hearth! The firewood fell to the floor and a trail of blood began to drip on the stairway as the wounded ghost retreated.

When the invisible thing returned three nights later, it seemed to vent its anger on the children. Even the baby was tormented and not

allowed to sleep. At last Mompesson arranged to have the children taken to the house of friends. At this tactic, the drummer pounded severely on Mompesson's bedroom door, then quit its post there to show itself to a servant.

The terrified man told Mompesson that he could not determine the exact proportions of the entity, but he had seen a great body with two red and glaring eyes, which for some time were fixed steadily upon him.

When the children were returned to their home, the thing seemed to want to make up to them. The Mompessons and their servants could hear distinctly a purring, like that of a cat in the nursery. The contented purring, however, turned out to be but another ploy of the devilish drummer. Four hours later, it was beating the children's legs against the bedposts and emptying chamber pots into their beds.

A friend who had stayed the night in the haunted house had all of his coins turned black. His unfortunate horse was discovered in the stables with one of its hind legs firmly fastened in its mouth. It took several men working with a lever to dislodge the hoof from the animal's jaws.

About this time, Drury, the man whose drum Mompesson had confiscated, was located in Gloucester Gaol where he had been sentenced for thievery. Upon questioning, he freely admitted witching Tedworth's justice of the peace. He boasted that he had plagued him and that Mompesson would have no peace until he had given him satisfaction for taking away his drum.

Mompesson had the drummer tried for witchcraft at Sarum, and the man was condemned to be transported to one of the English colonies. Certain stories have it that the man so terrified the ship's captain and crew by "raising storms" that they took him back to port and left him on the dock before sailing away again. Witchcraft was a real thing to the people of 1663, and noisy hauntings were often recognized as the work of Satan. While on board ship, Drury had told the captain that he had been given certain books of the black arts by an old wizard, who had tutored him in the finer points of witchcraft.

By the time a king's commission had arrived to investigate the haunting, the phenomena had been quiet for several weeks. The cavaliers spent the night with the Mompessons, then left the next morning, declaring that the entire two-year haunting was either a hoax or the misinterpretation of natural phenomena by credulous and superstitious men.

Reverend Joseph Glanvil's frustration with His Majesty's investigators is obvious in the conclusion of *Saducismus Triumphatus*, his account of the Mompesson family's ordeal, where he stated that it was bad logic for the king's investigators to conclude a matter of fact from a single negative against numerous affirmatives, and so affirm that a thing was never done. "This is the common argument of those that deny the being of apparitions," Glanvil declared. "They have traveled all hours of the night and have never seen any thing worse than themselves (which may well be) and thence they conclude that all apparitions are fancies or impostures."

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#### THE WHALEY HOUSE

The Thomas Whaley mansion, completely furnished with antiques from the days of early California, is also considered to be a haunted house. Immediately after its construction was completed in 1857, the mansion became the center of business, government, and social affairs in Old San Diego. The oldest brick house in Southern California, the Whaley house served as a courthouse, a courtroom, a theater, and a boarding house—as well as the family home of Thomas and Anna Whaley and their children.

Today, no one is allowed in the Whaley House after 4 P.M., but police officers and responsible citizens say that someone—or

something—keeps walking around half the night turning all the lights on. Located at 2482 San Diego Avenue in Old San Diego, the Whaley House has been restored and is now owned and operated by the San Diego Historical Society as a tourist attraction. Often, while conducting tours through the old mansion, members of the society have heard eerie footsteps moving about other parts of the house when the rooms were visibly unoccupied.

June Reading, a former director of the Whaley House, told of footsteps being heard in the master bedroom and on the stairs. Windows, even when fastened down with three four-inch bolts on each side, would fly open of their own accord—often in the middle of the night, triggering the burglar alarm. People often reported having heard screams echoing throughout the second story of the mansion, and once a large, heavy china closet had toppled over by itself. Numerous individuals had sensed or psychically seen the image of a scaffold and a hanging man on the south side of the mansion.

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## No one is allowed in the Whaley House after 4 P.M.

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According to Reading, 10 years before Thomas Whaley constructed his home on the site, a sailor named Yankee Jim Robinson had been hanged on the spot of what would later become the arch between the music room and the living room in the mansion. Whaley had been an observer when Yankee Jim kept his appointment with the hangman.

Some visitors to the Whaley House have reported seeing a gaudily dressed woman with a painted face lean out of a second-story window. In Reading's opinion, that could well be an actress from one of the theatrical troupes that had leased the second floor in November 1868.

The Court House Wing of the mansion is generally thought to be the most haunted spot in the Whaley House, due to the violent emo-

tions that were expended there in the early days of San Diego. Many individuals who have visited the old house have heard the sounds of a crowded courtroom in session and the noisy meetings of men in Thomas Whaley's upstairs study. According to many psychological researchers, the fact that this one single mansion served so many facets of city life, in addition to being a family home, almost guarantees several layers of psychic residue permeating themselves upon the environment.

Many sensitive visitors to the Whaley House have also perceived the image of Anna Whaley, who, some feel, still watches over the mansion that she loved so much. And who, according to a good number of those who have encountered her presence, deeply resents the intrusion of strangers.

Reading remembered the night in 1964 when television talk show host Regis Philbin and a friend saw Anna Whaley as they sat on the Andrew Jackson sofa at 2:30 A.M. The ghostly image floated from the study, through the music room, and into the parlor. At that moment, Philbin, in nervous excitement, dissolved the apparition with the beam of his flashlight.

In the fall of 1966, a group of newspeople volunteered to stay in Whaley House to spend the night with Yankee Jim. Special permission was granted to the journalists by the historical society, and the ghost hunters settled in for their overnight stay. The wife of one of the reporters had to be taken home by 9:30 P.M. She was badly shaken and claimed that she had seen something on the upper floor that she refused to describe. The entire party of journalists left the house before dawn. They, too, refused to discuss the reason for their premature departure, but some people say the ghost of Yankee Jim, still protesting the horror of his death, confronted them. Since that time, night visits have not been permitted in Whaley House.

In addition to the sightings of the primary spirits of Thomas and Anna Whaley, Reading said that the other ghosts most often seen include those of Yankee Jim, who walks across the upstairs sitting room to the top of the stairs; a young girl named Washburn, a play-

mate of the Whaley children; and “Dolly Varden,” the family’s favorite dog. And then there are the screams, the giggles, the rattling doorknobs, the cooking odors, the smell of Thomas Whaley’s Havana cigars, Anna’s sweet-scented perfume, the sound of footsteps throughout the house, and the music box and piano that play by themselves.

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## GHOSTS IN THE MOVIES

From the very beginnings of photography and cinema, **spiritualists** and **psychical researchers** have hoped to be able to capture evidence of ghosts on film and thereby offer proof of the survival of the human spirit. While there are thousands of alleged spirit photographs that psychics claim to be authentic; reel upon reel of ghostly phenomena caught on film that investigators purport to be genuine; and, more recently, an increasing number of videocassettes of glowing lights in haunted houses that the amateur photographers insist are real, the great majority of such photographic evidence has only garnered charges of trickery or gullibility from the skeptics. However, even the skeptics like a spine-tingling ghost story now and then. Among the best are the following films:

*Topper* (1937)—A comedy with decidedly nonthreatening ghosts, this film delighted theater audiences and removed tales of hauntings from the familiar creepy castles and the wild-eyed people with psychotic impulses that had become overly familiar in the horror films of the 1920s and 1930s. Directed by Norman Z. McLeod, the script was adapted from the Thorne Smith novel about Cosmo Topper, a meek and mild banking executive, who was

the only one who could see George and Marian Kirby, the ghostly couple who harassed him and tried to get him to enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle. The fact that the ghostly couple were played with wit and style by Cary Grant and Constance Bennett, two popular and attractive actors, no doubt boosted the appeal of the film and its two sequels.

*The Uninvited* (1943)—This motion picture presents an eerie and compelling story, as well as delivering a serious study of haunting phenomena. Roderick Fitzgerald (Ray Milland) and his sister Pamela (Ruth Hussey) move into a home on the Cornish coast of England that has been abandoned for many years. Soon, they discover that the house is haunted.

Milland and Hussey portray two ordinary, but intelligent and rational, people who must deal with a place occupied by an evil entity. The film is extremely subtle in presenting the spirits, and therein lies much of its power to seize the imagination and to provoke genuine chills. Director Lewis Allen never forces his hand, but focuses instead on allowing the audience to feel the emanations from the spirit world along with the actors.

*The Innocents* (1961)—This adaptation of Henry James’s *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) is made particularly effective by director Jack Clayton’s decision to allow the audience to see the ghosts only through the eyes of the protagonist, the governess Miss Gliddens (Deborah Kerr). The film is a psychological masterpiece, dealing with ghosts that may or may not be truly there.

*The Haunting* (1963)—This film has become a classic with horror film buffs and serious psychical researchers, both of whom laud director Robert Wise for choosing to use subtlety in the manner in which he presents the ghosts in this adaptation of Shirley Jackson’s *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959). Although the motion picture contains a number of chilling scenes, the spirits themselves are ambiguous, as well as frightening. The presentation of the haunting phenomena in this motion picture is extremely effective, and Wise uses camera angles and lighting techniques that emphasize a sense of a terrible

reality within a surrealistic world of the supernatural. The 1999 version is far inferior.

*The Shining* (1980)—Adapted from Stephen King's 1977 novel, director Stanley Kubrick crafted a film that many assess as a masterpiece of horror. Director Kubrick manages to create a film that interacts with the viewer's own imagination on many levels, thereby making even more credible the appearance of ghosts and the protagonist's descent into violence and insanity.

*Ghost Story* (1981)—Four successful elderly men (Fred Astaire, Melvyn Douglas, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and John Houseman), members of the Chowder Society, have shared a terrible secret for 50 years. Although the Peter Straub novel upon which this film is based held many more levels of ghostly and ghostly surprises, director John Irvin does a fine job of converting a multigenerational ghost story to the motion picture medium.

*Poltergeist* (1982)—Steven Spielberg stated that in *Poltergeist* he, as screenwriter, and Tobe Hooper, who assumed the directorial reins for the film, sought to walk the thin line between the scientific and the spiritual. Starring Craig T. Nelson and JoBeth Williams as Steve and Diane Freeling, who move into a new home which unknown to them has been built over a graveyard, the film became extremely popular with motion picture audiences. The tension in the film centers on little Carol Anne (Heather O'Rourke), who announces that "they're here," shortly before the entities pull her into a spiritual vortex. The challenges faced by the Freeling family as they struggle to reclaim Carol Ann from the spirit world make for a presentation of unrelenting suspense. Neither of the sequels was able to maintain the edge-of-the-seat tensions of the original film.

*Ghost Busters* (1984)—Three parapsychology professors (Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, and Harold Ramis) lose their funding at the university, so they establish a ghost-removal business. Big trouble arises when Dana Barrett (Sigourney Weaver) discovers an ancient god in her refrigerator and becomes possessed by Zuul, the Gate Keeper. Ghosts and evil spirits galore will plague the entire planet if the Gate Keeper meets with Vinz Clortho (Rick Moranis), the Key Master. It is up to the Ghost

Busters to save the world. The sequel, *Ghost Busters II* (1989), although retaining all the principals of the original, lacked the energy and the excitement to sustain another box office success.

*Ghost* (1990)—In addition to presenting an interesting depiction of the interaction of a ghost (Patrick Swayze) and a spirit medium (Whoopi Goldberg), this film also offers a touching love story. *Ghost* is ranked as number 32 on the list of the top-grossing movies of all time.

*The Sixth Sense* (1999)—M. Night Shyamalan won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay and was nominated as Best Director for this film, ranked as number 14 on the list of the top-grossing movies of all time. The plaint of young Cole Sear (Haley Joel Osment) to child psychologist Malcolm Crowe (Bruce Willis) "I see dead people" was among the most familiar quotes of 1999. Because the audience is able to see the ghosts, the "dead people," along with Cole, the spirits are presented as solid, physical beings, rather than wispy, ethereal images. The film has a twist ending that brought many audiences back for a second viewing.

*The Others* (2001)—While Grace Stewart (Nicole Kidman) awaits the return of her husband in the final days of World War II (1939–45), she lives with her two children (James Bentley, Alakina Mann) in an old mansion on the island of Jersey. The children suffer from a disease that does not allow them to be touched by direct sunlight.

The children begin to fear that the large old house is haunted, and they insist to their mother that they have even seen ghosts in certain rooms. Grace Stewart will have none of such talk, and she reprimands Bertha Mills (Fionnula Flanagan), her principal domestic, that neither she nor any member of the household help should ever encourage such childish fantasies. But eventually, Stewart must also face the reality that has overtaken all of them.

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Although ghosts and phantoms are frequent subjects for television documentaries, there have been few series that have treated the spirit world in a serious manner. In 1953, *Topper*, a fantasy-comedy about a businessman who is harassed by a ghostly couple trying to get him to loosen up and enjoy life, became a successful television series. The characters were derived from *Topper* (1937), a comedy that became popular enough among motion picture audiences to produce two sequels.

On *Alcoa Presents: One Step Beyond*, which premiered in the 1950s, serious students of **psychical research** recognized many classic cases of ghosts and phantoms presented in a balanced manner, but with the actual names and places changed.

The emphasis was on romantic comedy in the television series *The Ghost and Mrs. Muir* (1968–70) in which the restless spirit of a handsome sea captain (Edward Mulhare) haunted a beautiful widow (Hope Lange) in a picturesque New England seaside cottage. The series was another successful adaptation of a popular motion picture (*The Ghost and Mrs. Muir*, 1947).

Serious treatment of ghosts and phantoms remained largely the province of documentaries until *The X-Files* premiered in the 1993–94 season. Although FBI agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) investigated many areas of the paranormal, hauntings and ghostly phenomena were treated as matters of serious inquiry throughout the series' nine-year run.

*The Others* (1999–2000) also treated the spirit world seriously, but was canceled after one season. The series starred Julianne Nicholson as a college student with latent mediumistic abilities who was mentored by an experienced **medium** (Bill Cobbs).

In September 2002, the series *Haunted* premiered with Matthew Fox as a private investigator who received assistance from the spirit world while solving crimes. In October 2002, the Sci Fi Channel began an eight-week revision of the classic series *In Search Of* with host Mitch Pileggi offering occasional segments on ghosts.

## GHOSTS ON TELEVISION SERIES

Today, the most popular television programs dealing with ghosts and the afterlife are *Crossing Over* with **John Edward** and *Beyond* with **James Van Praagh**. Their presentations consist primarily of their professed ability as mediums to establish communication with spirits and to relay personal communications to family members who have come to the studio as members of the audience.

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## SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION (SHC)

The enigma of spontaneous human combustion (SHC) is considered the most bizarre and frightening of all the phenomena in the world of the unexplained and the unknown. Some believe that stories of SHC are only urban legends, eerie tales of people bursting into flames that never really happened to real people. But this is not the case. Urban legends happen to a friend of a friend, but are really untraceable back to any true original narrator of the event. In the case of spontaneous human combustion, one is left with the charred remains and ashes of individuals who were once fully living, breathing, feeling human beings.

Spontaneous human combustion is included in the chapter on ghosts and hauntings because for centuries certain scientists and psychical researchers have suggested that the phenomena may be due to some kind of internalized psychokinetic facet of the human mind. **Poltergeists** have been known to cause spontaneous outbreaks of fires, and mysterious fires and lights have been part of the repertoire of a haunted house since humans first began to keep records of such phenomena. Then, too, there are those theorists who place the blame for SHC directly on vengeful spirits or malicious entities from other dimensions of reality. Whatever the true cause of SHC, such accounts have haunted men and women for centuries, thus the mystery is placed in this chapter.

In December 2001, a 73-year-old woman in Garden Grove, California, died from the third-degree burns that she had suffered over

90 percent of her body. Firefighters and the coroner's office were left with the puzzle of how this could be possible when the fire took only four minutes to extinguish and was confined to a couch, a table, and the chair in which the victim was sitting.

Was this another case of spontaneous human combustion? In many ways it is similar to so many other unexplained instances of SHC.

On March 24, 1997, 76-year-old John O'Connor was found dead in his living room at Gortaleen in northern Ireland. An intense and localized heat had left only his head, upper torso, and feet unburned, as well as the chair in which he was sitting. There was very little smoke damage done to the room or the furniture.

In December 1956, Virginia Caget of Honolulu, Hawaii, walked into the room of Young Sik Kim, a 78-year-old disabled person, to find him enveloped in blue flames. By the time firemen arrived on the scene, Kim and his easy chair were ashes. Strangely enough, nearby curtains and clothing were untouched by fire, in spite of the fierce heat that would have been necessary to consume a human being.

On August 19, 1966, Doris Lee Jacobs of Occano, California, burned to death in her trailer home at 1342 23rd Street. Although Jacobs suffered burns on over 95 percent of her body, the inside of the trailer was only partially scorched. Officials could offer no explanation for the fire, because it was the woman, not the trailer, who had burst into flames.

How can human flesh be heir to such dangers as spontaneous combustion? Spontaneous combustion, it is assumed, is confined to oily rags and newspapers piled up in poorly ventilated corners of basements and garages.

On September 20, 1938, in Chelmsford, England, a woman burst into blue flames in the midst of a crowded dance floor. No one was able to extinguish the blaze that seemed to be fed by her own flesh, and in minutes she was but a heap of ashes.

On July 30, 1937, a woman who had been paddling about in a small boat with her husband and children at England's Norfolk



Broads was engulfed by terrible blue flames and was nothing but a mound of ash in a matter of a few horrifying moments. Neither any member of her family nor the wooden boat was harmed.

Dr. D. J. Gee, a lecturer in forensic medicine at the University of Leeds, England, wrote of a case of SHC for the journal *Medicine, Science and the Law* (5:37–8, January 1965). According to Gee, the victim was a slim, 85-year-old woman who lived with her son and daughter-in-law in a ground-floor apartment. Her family had left the apartment by 9:30 A.M. on the day she died. Neighbors had discovered smoke issuing from a kitchen window and found the smoldering remains of a human body on the hearth.

When Gee visited the apartment two hours later, he noticed that the room was exceedingly warm and the ceiling felt hot. The paintwork was blistered and the walls and furnishings begrimed by soot. Only a part of the wooden edge of the hearth was burned, and a small section, approximately one foot in diameter, of the floor was damaged. The rug had not been burned, but it was greasy with tiny fragments of fat. A tea towel lying near where the body had been found was barely singed, and a large pile of dry firewood remained unaffected.

Gee concluded from his examination that the woman must have suffered a heart attack and fallen into the fire. The body was ignited at the head by the fire and had been sufficiently inflammable to burn to such an extensive degree without any other source of heat, like a candle. The draft from the chimney had prevented the spread of flames to other parts of the room.

In a 1961 study Dr. Gavin Thurston studied the literature of SHC and came to a number of conclusions, among them:

1. That under certain conditions a body will burn in its own fat with little or no damage to surrounding objects.
2. The combustion is not spontaneous, but started by an external source of heat.
3. This has occurred where the body has been in the path of a draft up a chimney from a lighted fire. Oxygenation of the flue prevents outward spread of the fire.



Men sifting through the aftermath of an alleged spontaneous combustion incident. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

In order to test Thurston's theories, Gee conducted some experiments of his own. He learned that human fat, when melted in a crucible, would only burn at a temperature somewhere near 250 degrees centigrade. However, a cloth wick prepared in liquid fat will burn even when the temperature of the fat has dropped as low as 24 degrees centigrade.

Gee also enveloped a layer of human fat in several layers of thin cloth in order to produce a roll about eight inches long. Combustion of the roll proceeded slowly along its length, burning with a smoky yellow flame and producing a great deal of soot. In both of these experiments, a fan was arranged so that combustion would proceed in a direction opposite the flow of air.

Gee admitted that these experiments were by no means conclusive, but argued that they supported the theory put forward by Thurston, which he believed to be the most reasonable explanation for the occurrence of spontaneous human combustion.

On April 7, 1969, Grace Walker of Long Beach, California, was found on the floor of her living room with burns covering 90 percent of her body. Although she was still alive when discovered, she was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital. Investigating police officers said

that the only signs of fire in the house were the ashes left from Walker's clothes, which had been burned from her body by the flames from her flesh. There were no burners lighted on the stove and not a single match was to be found in Walker's house. Friends and relatives said that the woman did not smoke and never carried matches on her person.

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SPONTANEOUS *human combustion*  
seems to strike without warning and without  
leaving a clue.

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The strange phenomenon of ball lightning has been used by many scientists in an attempt to explain the even stranger mystery of spontaneous human combustion, but it is as difficult to isolate in laboratories for study as SHC. In 1960, Louise Matthews of South Philadelphia survived an eerie experience that might substantiate the theory of ball lightning as a factor in at least some of the mysterious cremations that have taken place throughout the world and throughout all recorded time. Matthews claimed that she was lying on her living room sofa when she glanced up to see a large red ball of fire come through both the closed window and the venetian blinds without harming either. At first Matthews thought that an atomic bomb had fallen, and she buried her face in the sofa. But the ball of fire passed through the living room, into the dining room, and drifted out through a closed dining room window. Matthews said that it made a sizzling noise as it floated through her house. And she was able to exhibit visible proof of her experience: As the ball of fire had passed over her, she had felt a tingling sensation in the back of her head. Her scalp was left as smooth and clean as her face.

In his experiments regarding the effects of fire on flesh and bone, Dr. Wilton Krogman, professor of physical anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, tested bones still encased in human flesh, bones devoid of flesh but not yet allowed to dry out, and bones that have dried. He burned cadavers in a wide vari-

ety of fires fed by such combustibles as hickory and oak, gasoline, oil, coal, and acetylene. Krogman learned that it takes a terrific amount of heat to completely consume a human body, both flesh and skeleton. Cadavers that were burned in a crematorium burn at 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit for more than eight hours, burning under the best possible conditions of both heat and combustion, with everything controlled, are still not reduced to ash or powder. Only at temperatures in excess of 3,000 degrees Fahrenheit did he observe bone fuse so that it ran and became volatile.

How, then, can a human being burn beyond recognition—in a number of cases in less than an hour—yet not cause the fire to spread beyond the chair in which the victim was sitting or the small area of the floor on which he or she might have sprawled? According to Krogman, the temperatures required to bring about such immolation should ignite and consume anything capable of burning within a considerable radius of the blaze.

In what has become one of the classic cases of SHC, Mary H. Reeser of St. Petersburg, Florida, was last seen relaxing comfortably in an armchair in her apartment at 9:00 P.M. on Sunday evening, July 2, 1951. When a telegram was delivered to her 11 hours later, nothing remained of the 170-pound woman but a skull that had shrunk to the size of a baseball, one vertebra, and a left foot wearing the charred remains of a black slipper.

St. Petersburg Fire Chief Nesbit said that he had never seen anything like it in all his years of investigating fires. Police Chief J. R. Reichart received an FBI report stating that there was no evidence that any kind of inflammable fluids, volatile liquids, chemicals, or other accelerants had been used to set the widow's body ablaze. A spokesman for a St. Petersburg mattress company pointed out that there is not enough material in any overstuffed chair to cremate a human body. Cotton, he said, comprises the basic stuffing of such a chair, and this material is often combined with felt and hair or foam-rubber cushions. None of these materials is capable of bursting suddenly into violent flames, although they do possess properties that enable them to smolder for long periods of time.

At first Krogman theorized that a “super lightning bolt” might have struck Reeser, her body serving as a conductor to ground the current through a wall-type heater behind the chair. He discarded this theory as soon as he learned that local weather bureau records showed no lightning in St. Petersburg on the night Reeser met her bizarre death.

Krogman remarked that he had never seen a skull so shrunken or a body so completely consumed by heat. Such evidence was contrary to normal experience, and he regarded it as the most amazing thing he had ever seen. If he were living in the Middle Ages, he mused, he would suspect black magic.

Spontaneous human combustion seems to strike without warning and without leaving a clue. It seems to occur primarily among the elderly and among women, but there is no standard rule for these grim cases of preternatural combustibility. Nearly every theory, such as that those who imbibe heavily might be more susceptible to the burning death, has been disproved and rejected. At this time, no investigator has determined the critical set of circumstances that might bring body cells to the stage at which they might spontaneously burst into the flames that feed on the body's own fatty tissue, and SHC remains a baffling mystery in the annals of the unexplained and the unknown.

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## MAKING THE CONNECTION

**apparition** The unexpected or sudden appearance of something strange, such as a ghost.

From the Latin *apparitus*, past participle of *apparere*, meaning to appear.

**astral self** Theosophical belief that humans possess a second body that cannot be perceived with normal senses, yet it coexists with the human body and survives death.

**automatic writing** Writing that occurs in an unconscious state or when one is in a trance or supposed telepathic contact with a spirit.

**discarnate** The lack of a physical body. Coined from dis- and the Latin stem *carn*, meaning *flesh*.

**Geiger counter** An instrument named after its inventor, German physicist Hans Geiger (1882–1945), that is used to measure and detect such things as particles from radioactive materials.

**hallucinations** A false or distorted perception of events during which one vividly imagines seeing, hearing or sensing objects or other people to be present, when in fact they are not witnessed by others.

**megalith** Very large, sometimes enormous stones that stand alone or are a part of architecture of prehistoric structures.

**Novena of Masses** In the Roman Catholic Church, the recitation of prayers or devotions for a particular purpose, for nine consecutive days. From the Latin *nus*, meaning nine each and from *novem*, meaning nine.

**paranormal** Events or phenomena that are beyond the range of normal experience and not understood or explained in terms of current scientific knowledge.

**phenomena** Unusual or extraordinary things or occurrences that are experienced or perceived. From Latin via the Greek word *phainomenon*, meaning that which appears. Past participle of *phainein*, to bring to light or to shine.

**philanthropist** Someone who is benevolent or generous in his or her desire or activities to improve the social, spiritual or material welfare of humankind. From the late Latin, ultimately, Greek *philanthropos*,

humane; *philos*; loving and *anthropos*, human being.

**psychoanalyst** One who uses the therapeutic methods of psychiatric analysis, such as dream analysis and free association, as developed by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939)

to treat patients in order to gain awareness of suppressed subconscious experiences or memories that might be causing psychological blocks.

**rectory** The house or dwelling that a rector lives in.

## CHAPTER 11

# MYSTERIOUS CREATURES

*Stone Age humans feared “monsters” that emerged from the darkness. Saber-toothed tigers stalked them; cave bears mauled them, and rival hominid species struggled against them for survival. Ancient night-terrors surface in the dreams and imaginations of present-day humans, and sometimes the monsters turn out to be real.*

### CHAPTER EXPLORATION

#### APELIKE MONSTERS

Bigfoot  
Orang Pendek  
Skunk Ape  
Yeti

#### CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

Chupacabra  
Ghoul  
Golem  
Imp  
Incubus  
Jersey Devil  
Succubus  
Vampire  
Werewolf

#### MONSTERS OF LAND, SEA, AND AIR

Dragons  
Loch Ness and Other Lake Monsters  
Sea Serpents  
Thunderbirds

#### WEE FOLK AND THEIR FRIENDS

Elves  
Fairies  
Gnomes  
Goblins  
Gremlins  
Leprechauns  
Menehune  
Mermaids  
Nisse  
Selkies  
Trolls

#### ACTORS WHO FACED (OR BECAME) MOVIE MONSTERS

## INTRODUCTION

Some psychologists have suggested that there is something within the human psyche that craves monsters and mysterious creatures. For some individuals, the very idea that **vampires**, **werewolves**, and **chupacabras** are out there, lurking in the shadows, makes the adrenaline surge in an otherwise humdrum and dull workaday world. Others may find that the notion of long-necked monsters swimming in the world's lakes, ape-like giants prowling the forests and prehistoric behemoths trampling down remote jungles ignites their creative fires. Creatures that defy science, reason, and logic can thrive well in the human imagination.

Other researchers see some people's fear of monsters as a kind of psychic residue of primitive fears when early humankind dreaded night-fall and the predators that stalked the darkness for victims. Dr. Christopher Chippindale of Cambridge University's museum of archaeology and anthropology has observed that such half-human, half-animal monsters as the werewolf and other were-creatures were painted by Stone Age artists more than 10,000 years ago. Some of the world's oldest art found at ancient sites in Europe, Africa, and Australia depict animal-human hybrids. "In other words," Chippindale told the *Guardian* newspaper, "werewolves and vampires are as old as art." Composite beings from a world between animals and humans, he said, are a common theme to be found in the earliest of cave and rock art. Such "therianthropes," or hybrid beings, are, in fact, the only common denominator in primitive art around the planet. These werewolves, werelions, and were-bats belonged to an imagined world that early humans saw as powerful, dangerous, and frightening.

Chippindale commented that these ancient depictions of were-animals remain among the most potent images that humankind has ever created. When modern anthropologists or archaeologists enter the caves with electric lights, he said, the paintings "are still frightening."

Once humankind's psyche had absorbed such hybrid monsters from the Stone Age, it

continued to fashion human-animal deities of great power, such as the gods of ancient Egypt, which included the cat goddess Bast, the canine-headed Anubis, the hawkman Horus, and so on. From such were-beings, it was a natural progression to fashion other mystical creatures, such as the minotaur (half-human, half-horse), the satyr (half-human, half-goat), the harpy (half-woman, half-bird), and a host of other hybrid entities—the vast majority unfavorably disposed toward humankind. And somewhere along the way, certain people developed a genetic disorder known as porphyria, which often brought about psychosis and an extreme hypersensitivity to sunlight, thereby suggesting that they were truly vampires. Others succumbed to the mental illness called lycanthropy (from the Greek, *lykan*, wolf, and *thrope*, man; literally, "wolf man") in which people believed themselves to become actual werewolves.

While many psychologists and anthropologists perceive the origin of humankind's fear of vampires, werewolves, and other blood-sucking monsters to lie in the ancient nightmares of Stone Age peoples, other researchers called cryptozoologists (from *kryptos*, Greek for hidden) seek to prove that such creatures as **Bigfoot**, the **Loch Ness Monster**, and **sea serpents** really exist. Such determined individuals point out that the mountain gorilla was considered a superstition of the native people of Africa until 1902 when Oscar van Beringe, a German explorer, shot two of them while climbing a volcano in the eastern Congo. Cryptozoologists argue that such physical evidence as hair samples, feces, and casts of footprints indicate that unknown species of apes or apemen unrecognized by science may exist in the Himalayan mountains, the remote forests of northern California and Canada, and other parts of the world.

Some cryptozoologists claim that the Loch Ness Monster and sea serpents could be survivors from the age of the dinosaurs. The coelacanth, a bizarre fish older than the great reptiles by millions of years, was thought to have been extinct for 65 million years until one was caught off the coast of South Africa in 1938. Since that time, more than 200 have turned up in fishnets from Indonesia to Kenya.

If the coelacanth survived for over 380 million years, cryptozoologists maintain, why couldn't certain of the giants from the relatively recent Jurassic Era, roughly 150 million years ago, be hiding in our deepest forests, seas, and lakes?

Michael Shermer, founder of the Skeptics Society and author of *Why People Believe Weird Things* (1997), says that people believe in monsters and other things that go bump in the night because they satisfy a human search for significance and a desire to have meaning in their lives. Robert Pyle, an ecologist and author of *Where Bigfoot Walks*, expresses his opinion that creatures such as Bigfoot fill a human need for something to believe in and keep alive the concept of wilderness in the modern world.

In this chapter a wide range of mysterious creatures will be encountered, from those monsters dwelling only in the nightmares inherited from Stone Age ancestors to those that just might be waiting to be discovered by the next expedition into a hitherto unexplored region of jungle, forest, or ocean depth.

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been reported since the Middle Ages. In 840 C.E., Agobard, the Archbishop of Lyons, told of three such demons, "giant people of the forest and mountains," who were stoned to death after being displayed in chains for several days. In his *Chronicles*, Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall Abbey, Essex, England, wrote of a "strange monster" whose charred body had been found after a lightning storm on the night of St. John the Baptist in June 1205. He stated that a terrible stench came from the beast with "monstrous limbs."

Villagers of the Caucasus Mountains have legends of an apelike "wildman" going back for centuries. The same may be said of the Tibetans living on the slopes of Mt. Everest and the Native American tribes inhabiting the northwestern United States. The Gilyaks, a remote tribe of Siberian native people, claim that there are animals inhabiting the frozen forests of Siberia that have human feelings and travel in family units. Based on the eyewitness descriptions of hundreds of reliable individuals around the world who have encountered these creatures, it would seem that the creatures are more humanlike than apelike or bearlike. For one thing, these giants are repeatedly said by witnesses to have breasts and buttocks. Neither apes nor bears have buttocks—nor do they leave flatfooted humanlike footprints.

In 1920, the term "abominable snowman" was coined through a mistranslation of the Tibetan word for the mysterious apelike monster *yeti*, "wildman of the snow." For the next two decades, reports of the creature were common in the Himalayan mountain range, but it was not until the close of World War II (1939–45) that world attention became focused on the unexplained humanlike bare footprints that were being found at great heights and freezing temperatures. The Himalayan activity reached a kind of climax in 1960 when Sir Edmund Hillary (1919– ), conqueror of Mt. Everest, led an expedition in search of the elusive yeti and returned with nothing shown for his efforts but a fur hat that had been fashioned in imitation of the snowman's scalp.

The humanlike creature—whether sighted in the more remote, wooded, or mountainous regions of North America, South America,

## APELIKE MONSTERS

Sightings of monstrous apelike creatures lurking in the darkness of forests and mountainous regions of the world have

Russia, China, Australia, or Africa—is believed by some anthropologists to be a two-footed mammal that constitutes a kind of missing link between humankind and the great apes, for its appearance is more primitive than that of Neanderthal. The descriptions given by witnesses around the world are amazingly similar. Height: six to nine feet. Weight: 400 to 1,000 pounds. Eyes: black. Dark fur or body hair from one to four inches in length is said to cover the creature's entire body with the exception of the palms of its hands, the soles of its feet, and its upper facial area, nose, and eyelids.

Some question the existence of giant ape-like creatures because there is so little physical evidence besides casts of huge humanlike footprints. Some researchers respond by pointing out that Mother Nature keeps a clean house. Scavengers soon eat the carcasses of the largest forest creatures and the bones are scattered. Zoologist Ivan T. Sanderson suggested that if these beings are members of a subhuman race, they may gather up their dead for burial in special caves. Dr. Jeanne-Marie-Therese Koffman agreed that the creatures might bury their dead in secret places. It may be, she theorized, that they may throw the corpses of the deceased into the rushing waters of mountain rivers or into the abysses of rocky caverns. Others remind the skeptical that it is not unusual for certain of the higher animals to hide the bodies of their dead. Accounts of the legendary "elephants' graveyard" are well-known; and in Ceylon, the phrase "to find a dead monkey" is used to indicate an impossible task.

Proving the existence of such creatures may seem to many scientists to be an impossible task, but persistent searchers for undeniable evidence of the apelike beings feel that proof is right around the next corner in some darkened forest.

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#### BIGFOOT

Reports of a large apelike creature in the United States and the Canadian provinces are to be found in the oral traditions of native tribes, the journals of early settlers, and accounts in regional frontier newspapers, but wide public attention was not called to the mysterious beast until the late 1950s when roadbuilding crews in the unmapped wilderness of the Bluff Creek area north of Eureka, California, began to report a large number of sightings of North America's own "abominable snowman." Once stories of giant humanlike monsters tossing around construction crews' small machinery and oil drums began hitting the wire services, hunters, hikers, and campers came forward with a seemingly endless number of stories about the shrill-squealing, seven-foot forest giant that they had for years been calling by such names as Bigfoot, Sasquatch, Wauk-Wauk, Oh-Mah, or Saskehavis.

In North America, the greatest number of sightings of Bigfoot have come from the Fraser River Valley, the Strait of Georgia, and Vancouver Island, British Columbia; the "Ape Canyon" region near Mt. St. Helens in southwestern Washington; the Three Sisters Wilderness west of Bend, Oregon; and the area around the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation, especially the Bluff Creek watershed, northeast of Eureka, California. In recent years, extremely convincing sightings of Bigfoot-type creatures have also been made in areas of New York, New Jersey, Minnesota, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida.

Reports of Bigfoot-type creatures in California go back to at least the 1840s when miners reported encountering giant two-legged beastlike monsters during the gold rush days. Sightings of the Oh-Mah, as the native tribes called them, continued sporadically until August 1958, when a construction crew was building a road through the rugged wilderness near Bluff Creek, Humboldt County, and discovered giant humanlike footprints in the ground around their equipment. For several mornings running, the men discovered that something had been disturbing their small equipment during the night. In one instance, an 800-pound tire and wheel from an earth-moving machine had been picked up and car-

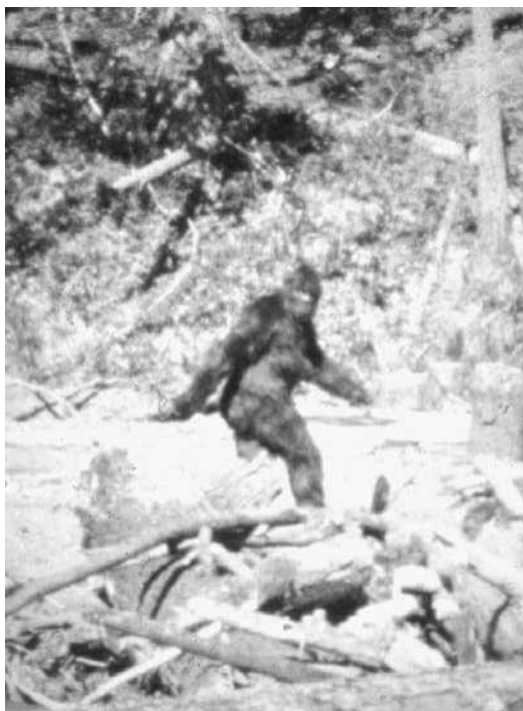


ried several yards across the compound. In another, a 300-pound drum of oil had been stolen from the camp, carried up a rocky mountain slope, and tossed into a deep canyon. And in each instance, only massive 16-inch footprints with a 50-to-60-inch stride offered any clue to the vandal's identity.

When media accounts of the huge footprints were released, people from the area began to step forward to exhibit their own plaster casts of massive, mysterious footprints and to relate their own frightening encounters with hairy giants—stories that they had repressed for decades for fear of being ridiculed. Not to be outdone, Canadians began telling of their own startling encounters with Sasquatch, a tribal name for Bigfoot, that had been circulating in the accounts of trappers, lumberjacks, and settlers in the Northwest Territories since the 1850s. Long before the frontier folk discovered the giant of the woods, the Sasquatch had become an integral element in many of the myths and legends of the native people.

Perhaps the most remarkable and most thoroughly documented account of a Sasquatch from those early days in Canada occurred in 1884 and was recorded in the *Daily British Colonist*, July 4, 1884. In the immediate vicinity of Number 4 tunnel, 20 miles from Yale, British Columbia, a group of railroad men captured a creature that could truly be called half-man and half-beast. The men called him “Jacko” and described him as looking much like a gorilla, standing about four feet, seven inches and weighing 127 pounds. The only sound that issued from him was a kind of half-bark and half-growl. Jacko was described as having long, black, strong hair and resembling a human being with the exception that his entire body, except his hands and feet, were covered with glossy hair about one inch long. His forearm was much longer than a man's forearm, and he possessed extraordinary strength.

The man who became Jacko's “keeper,” George Telbury of Yale, announced his intention to take the man-beast to London, England, to exhibit him. All traces of Jacko vanished after the rash of news stories recounting the details of his capture.



An alleged Bigfoot photographed in 1967 near Bluff Creek, California. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

On October 20, 1967, near Bluff Creek, north of Eureka, California, Bigfoot hunters Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin managed to shoot several feet of movie film of what appears to be a female Bigfoot. With its glossy black hair shining in the bright sun, the Bigfoot walks away from the camera with a stride that is human. It has pendulous breasts, and it looks back at the cameraman as it walks steadily toward a growth of trees. It does not appear to be frightened, but it is obvious that it wishes to avoid contact. Experts say that the creature in the filmstrip is over seven feet tall and estimate its weight at around 400 pounds. It left footprints 17 inches long, and it had a stride of 41 inches. Patterson and Gimlin felt that they had at last provided the scientific community and the world at large with proof of Bigfoot's existence.

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**THE** *seven-foot forest apelike creature is known as Bigfoot, Sasquatch, Wauk-Wauk, Oh-Mah, or Saskehavis.*

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After his examination of the Patterson-Gimlin film, Dr. John R. Napier, director of the

Primate Biology Program of the Smithsonian Institution, commented that while he saw nothing that pointed conclusively to a hoax, he did express some reservations about the exaggerated, fluid motion of the creature. He also said that he thought the Bigfoot was a male, in spite of the pendulous breasts, because of the crest on its head, a signature of male primates.

Dr. Osman Hill, director of Yerkes Region Primate Research Center at Emory University, stated his opinion that the Bigfoot in the filmstrip was hominid (humanlike) rather than pongoid (apelike). If the being in the film was a hoax, Hill commented, it had been incredibly well done.

Technicians at the Documentary Film Department at Universal Pictures, Hollywood, agreed with the scientists' assessment and said that it would take them a couple of million dollars to duplicate the monster on the filmstrip. First, they stated, they would have to create a set of artificial muscles, train an actor to walk like the thing on the film, then place him in a gorilla skin.

Most scientists remained skeptical, and the controversy raged for 30 years. On October 19, 1997, just prior to a press release by the North American Science Institute that would announce their analyses that the creature depicted on the film was genuine, stories appeared in the media claiming that John Chambers, the academy award-winning make-up artist of *The Planet of the Apes* (1968), had been responsible for creating the gorilla suit that had fooled the monster hunters. According to Howard Berger of Hollywood's KNB Effects Group, it was common knowledge within the film industry that Chambers had designed the costume for friends of Patterson who wanted to play a joke on him. Mike McCracken Jr., an associate of Chambers, stated his opinion that he (Chambers) was responsible for designing the gorilla suit.

Roger Patterson died in 1972, never doubting that he had caught a real Bigfoot on film. And none of the individuals who allegedly asked John Chambers to design a gorilla costume in order to hoax Patterson have ever stepped forward and identified themselves. Chambers himself, who was living

in seclusion in a Los Angeles nursing home when the story of the gorilla suit hoax broke, refused to confirm or deny the reports.

Chris Murphy, a Bigfoot researcher, told the *Sunday Telegraph* (October 19, 1997) that "very high computer enhancements of the film show conclusively that, whatever it was, it was not wearing a suit. The skin on the creature ripples as it walks."

Other Bigfoot experts have declared the Patterson-Gimlin film to be an authentic documentary of a genuine female hominoid. Two Russian scientists, Dmitri Bayanov and Igor Bourtsev, minutely analyzed every movement of the female Bigfoot on the controversial film and concluded that it had passed all their tests and their criteria of "distinctiveness, consistency, and naturalness." Who, they ask rhetorically in their chapter in *The Sasquatch and Other Unknown Hominoids*, "other than God or natural selection is sufficiently conversant with anatomy and bio-mechanics to 'design' a body which is perfectly harmonious in terms of structure and function?"

On September 22, 2000, a team of 14 researchers that had tracked the elusive Bigfoot for a week deep in the mountains of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest in Washington State found an extraordinary piece of evidence that may end all arguments about whether or not the creature exists. There, in a muddy wallow near Mt. Adams, was an imprint of Bigfoot's hair-covered lower body as it lay on its side, apparently reaching over to get some fruit. Thermal imaging equipment confirmed that the impression made by the massive body was only a few hours old.

The team of Bigfoot hunters who discovered the imprint—Dr. LeRoy Fish, a retired wildlife ecologist with a doctorate in zoology; Derek Randles, a landscape architect; and Richard Noll, a tooling metrologist—next made a plaster cast of what appeared to be impressions of the creature's left forearm, hip, thigh, and heel. More than 200 pounds of plaster were needed to acquire a complete 3-1/2 x 5-foot cast of the imprint. Dr. Jeff Meldrum of Idaho State University stated that the imprint had definitely not been made by a human getting into the mud wallow.

On October 23, Idaho State University issued a press release stating that a team of investigators, including Dr. Meldrum; Dr. Grover Krantz, retired physical anthropologist from Washington State University; Dr. John Bindernagel, Canadian wildlife biologist; John Green, retired Canadian author and longtime Bigfoot hunter; and Dr. Ron Brown, exotic animal handler and health care administrator, had examined the plaster cast obtained from the mud wallow and agreed that it could not be “attributed to any commonly known Northwest animal and may present an unknown primate.”

According to the university press release, after the cast had been cleaned, “extensive impressions of hair on the buttock and thigh surfaces and a fringe of longer hair along the forearm were evident.” In addition, Meldrum, associate professor of anatomy and anthropology, identified what appeared to be “skin ridge patterns on the heel, comparable to fingerprints, that are characteristic of primates.”

While the cast may not prove without question the existence of a species of North American ape, Meldrum said that it “constitutes significant and compelling new evidence that will hopefully stimulate further serious research and investigation into the presence of these primates in the Northwest mountains and elsewhere.”

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#### ORANG PENDEK

Sumatra has an ancient tradition of apemen known as orang pendek (“little man”) or orang-

utan (“man of the woods”), sometimes referred to as the “Sumatran Yeti.” According to tradition, the first recorded sighting of orang pendek dates back to 1295 when Marco Polo (1254–1324) saw it on one of his expeditions to the island. While many naturalists regard the tales of the orang pendek as native folklore, in 1916 Dr. Edward Jacobson wrote in a Dutch scientific journal of his encounter with one of the creatures. Since Jacobson’s sighting, there have been many accounts of people seeing the orang pendek, including that of a Mr. van Herwaarden, who spotted one while scouting the forests for good lumber in 1923. Most witnesses describe the creature as standing about five feet tall and as being covered with short dark hair. It is definitely bipedal, and its arms are proportioned more like that of a human, rather than the extended arms of an ape. Remarkably, the orang pendeks have been heard conversing with one another in some unintelligible language.

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THE *orang pendek* may be the most likely of the Bigfoot-type creatures to be proved to be real.

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Debbie Martyr, former editor of a London newspaper, went in search of the elusive Sumatran apeman and returned in March 1995 with numerous consistent eyewitness accounts of the orang pendek and plaster casts of its footprints. She stated that she even saw the creature for herself on three occasions. The first time that she sighted the orang pendek, she admitted that she was so shocked that she didn’t snap a picture. She hadn’t really expected to see an actual bipedal erect primate. She remarked that the orang pendek is wonderfully camouflaged because its colors correspond to those of the forest floor—beige, tawny, rust red, yellow tan, and chocolate brown. If the creature remains immobile, she said, it is impossible to see.

The orang pendek may be the most likely of the Bigfoot-type creatures to be proved to be real. Too many scientists have heard its calls, followed its trails through the jungle, and caught glimpses of the creature. On October 29, 2001, the London *Times* reported that

In April 2001, British zoologist Rob McCall presented a hair sample allegedly taken from a Himalayan **Yeti** to Bryan Sykes, professor of human genetics at the Oxford Institute of Molecular Medicine, one of the world's leading experts on DNA analysis.

Sykes said that laboratory analysis of the mysterious hairs yielded some DNA, but the experts were not able to identify it.

The **Orang Pendek** of Sumatra is much less familiar. After Marco Polo visited the island in 1292, he mentioned an encounter with an apelike animal that has come to be known as the Sumatran Yeti. Since 1818, various English and European explorers of the thick jungle growth of Sumatra have told of sighting an apeman that the native people call Orang Pendek, "little man of the forest."

Witnesses describe the Orang Pendek as standing about five feet tall and covered with short brown or orange hair. It walks upright without the assistance of its front fists, and its arms are of humanlike proportions. Many have asserted that they heard the Orang Pendeks conversing with one another in some unintelligible language. In 1918 L. C. Westenek, the Sumatran governor, wrote of several sightings, including one in which he claimed to have seen an Orang Pendek attempting to light a fire.

In September 2002 Hans Brunner, an associate of Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia, acknowledged to be one of the world's most renowned hair experts, released his findings that alleged Orang Pendek hair samples that had been provided by a three-man team of British explorers were different from any species against which he had tested them.

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## THE REAL MANIMAL?

[http://www.thisisthenortheast.co.uk/the\\_north\\_east/archive/2002/09/04/abom.re.html](http://www.thisisthenortheast.co.uk/the_north_east/archive/2002/09/04/abom.re.html).

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an early analysis of hair samples taken by a British expedition to the mountain rainforest near Gunung Kerinci in western Sumatra did not appear to have come from any known primate in the area. Adam Davies, the leader of the expedition, stated that he had no doubt that orang pendek truly exists.

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#### SKUNK APE

With the rash of media reports about Bigfoot sightings beginning in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Floridians began coming forward to make their encounters with their "Skunk Ape" known. As with Bigfoot in the Northwestern United States and Sasquatch in Canada, legends of an apelike monster that haunts the more remote areas of Florida have been in circulation since the early days of that state's history. And as with the legends of the hairy giants of the North, members of Native American tribes insisted the centuries-old tales were true.

On December 5, 1966, *Orlando Sentinel* staff writer Elvis Lane wrote about two hunters who claimed to have wounded the monster. Although it left a trail of blood, the creature—at that time dubbed the "Florida Sandman," in contrast to the "Abominable Snowman"—seemed relatively unscathed by their volley, and the two men fled in the opposite direction. In another report, Lane described how the son of a ranch hand had gone to investigate the sounds of someone opening their garage and had surprised the hairy giant raising the door. When the young man shouted his alarm, the monster threw a heavy tire at him.

Area residents also complained about the Sandman or Skunk Ape peeping in their windows at night. Others said that they had had garbage cans upset by a huge creature that retreated into the night when they clicked on yardlights. The more observant eyewitnesses described the nocturnal marauder as standing between six and seven feet tall and weighing somewhere between 300 and 400 pounds. Nearly every witness mentioned the terrible stench that accompanied the giant intruder.

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THE *Skunk Apes' hair absorbs the stench of rotting animal carcasses left behind by alligators.*

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According to some of its pursuers, the creature lives in muddy and abandoned alligator caves deep in the steamy Everglades swamp. The alligators leave the rotting remains of their kills behind to putrefy in the heat of their hideaways, and the Skunk Apes absorb the stench into their hair, thus accounting for their awful smell. Although the Skunk Ape is said to be primarily a vegetarian and often steals produce from area gardens, Everglades hunters claim to have seen the giant kill a deer and split open its belly to get at the liver and entrails.

In 1980, large footprints, complete with the impression of toes, were found in the Ocala National Forest. The sheriff's department estimated that the unknown creature that had made the prints was about 10 feet tall and weighed around 1,000 pounds.

On Monday evening, July 21, 1997, Vince Doerr, chief of the Ochopee Fire Central District, told the *Miami Herald* that he had seen "a brown-looking tall thing" run across the road ahead of him. He was certain that the thing was not a bear. Ochopee borders the Everglades, and a few days after Doerr's sighting, a group of six British tourists and their guide, Dan Rowland, saw a Skunk Ape on Turner River Road, just north of the town. According to Rowland's statement in the *Miami Herald* (July 28, 1997), the unknown apelike creature was between six and seven feet tall, "flat-faced, broad-shouldered, cov-

ered with long brown hair or fur and reeking of skunk.” The seven witnesses observed the Skunk Ape “in a slough covered with bald cypress trees.” Rowland added that “...it loped along like a big monkey or gorilla, then it disappeared into the woods.”

In February 2001, the Sarasota Sheriff's Department received an anonymous letter containing some photographs of an apelike creature that had been taken by a woman who feared that an orangutan was running loose in the area of Myakka State Park and might harm members of her family. Cryptozoologist Loren Coleman, who examined the pictures along with animal welfare specialist David Barkasy, said that they appeared to be good graphic evidence for the unknown anthropoid known as the Florida Skunk Ape. According to Coleman, “The photographs clearly show a large, upright dark orangutan-like animal among the palmettos, showing eye-shine and typical anthropoid behavior of fright due to the woman's flash camera.”

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#### YETI

Tales of hairy monsters existing in the Asian wilderness can be found in the writings of several venerable Chinese scholars who linked these creatures to the “time of the dragon,” the presumed genesis of Asian civilization. Despite an occasional report by a European visitor to the region, the apelike creatures did not receive any sort of widespread notoriety until the beginning of the twentieth century.

During an expedition into the Himalayas in 1906, botanist H. J. Elwes was astonished to glimpse a hairy figure racing across a field of snow below him. The scientific establishment

dismissed his report until several scholars discovered the journals of Major Lawrence Waddell, who, during his 1887 expedition, reported having found humanlike tracks in the snow.

The First Everest Expedition was launched in 1921, led by Colonel C. K. Howard-Bury. The climbing party of six British men and 26 native porters was crawling slowly up the north face of Everest, near the Lhakpa La Pass, when Howard-Bury spotted tracks in the morning snow. Most of them were easily recognizable as those of rabbits or foxes, but one set of indentations was peculiar, appearing as if a man walking barefoot had made them. A Sherpa guide identified the tracks as belonging to the Yeti or the “mehteh kangmi,” the man-beast of the mountains who lived in the snow.

Later, when Howard-Bury telegraphed his reports to Calcutta, he mentioned the incident briefly. Unfortunately, the telegraphic facilities were very primitive and the words “mehteh kangmi” were garbled into “metch kangmi.” The expedition's assistants in Calcutta were confused by the term and asked a Calcutta newspaper columnist to translate the term. The columnist told them that “metch” was a term of extreme disgust, so it might be translated as the “horrible snowman” or the “abominable snowman.”

A reporter for one of England's most sensational newspapers was in the office when the telegram was translated. He raced for the cable office in Calcutta, wiring his paper that the First Everest Expedition had encountered a frightening creature known as the “abominable snowman.” Thus the hairy wild men of the Himalayas were named in error and the term has persisted to this day. When Howard-Bury and his unsuccessful mountain climbers admitted defeat on Mt. Everest, they returned to civilization and discovered that newspaper reporters were eager for more information about the abominable snowmen.

In the 1930s scientists studied the reports of explorer Frank Smythe's discovery of Yeti tracks in the snow at 14,000 feet. The footprints measured 13 inches in length and were five inches wide. Famed mountaineer Eric E. Shipton claimed that he saw similar tracks on his expedition to Everest in 1936.

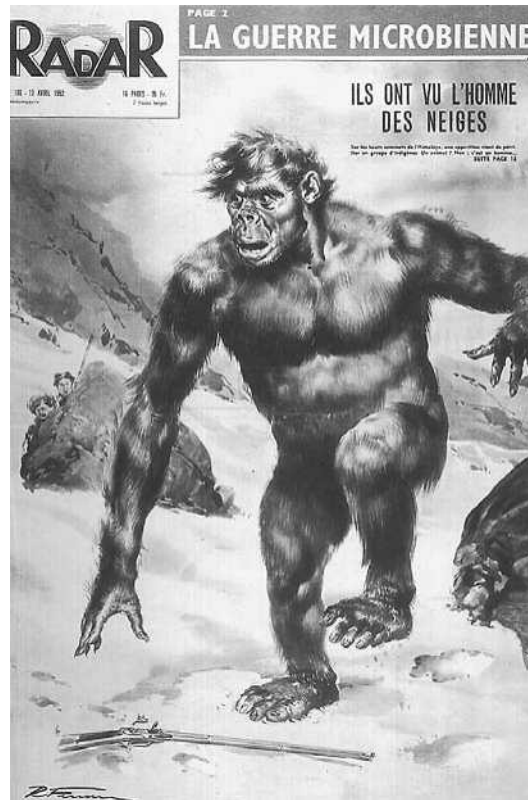
World War II (1939–45) stopped mountaineering and scientific exploration of the formidable Himalayas, but in 1942, Slavomir Rawicz and four other men escaped from a Communist prison camp in Siberia and struck out on a “long walk” toward India. They reported meeting two Yeti during their incredible journey.

Sightings of Yeti mushroomed in the 1950s as several scientists seriously investigated the snowmen. In 1950, natives reported Yeti in three different locations, including a sighting by a large group of monks near Thyangboche. A Yeti also ventured out of the forest and hung around the Thyangboche Monastery until it was finally chased away by monks who blew bugles, struck gongs, and shrieked at it. The following year, Eric Shipton discovered tracks and photographed them while on his way to Everest with an expedition.

In 1952, Sir Edmund Hillary and George Lowe found “snowman” hair in a high mountain pass, and tracks were reported by a Swiss expedition. In 1954, an expedition financed by the *London Daily Mail* set out to capture a Yeti. They found tracks in several different locations, but returned without their prize. Three other scientific groups also reported finding tracks.

In 1957, the first expedition sponsored by the American millionaire Tom Slick found hair and footprints at several locations. Two porters said Yeti had been sighted in those regions earlier that year. Peter and Bryan Bryne said they had seen a snowman when the Slick Expedition was in the Arun Valley. In 1958, Gerald Russell and two porters with the Second Slick Expedition encountered a small snowman near a river, and in the following year, tracks were reported by the Third Slick Expedition, as well as by members of a Japanese expedition.

Sir Edmund Hillary, the man who conquered Mt. Everest, created a sensation when he returned with the alleged scalp of a Yeti. Hillary later proved that the so-called scalp was actually goat skin, and he declared that snowman tracks were made by foxes, bears, and other animals that became enlarged when the snow is melted by the sun.



An alleged Yeti, or abominable snowman, on the 1952 issue of *Radar* magazine. (MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY)

In August 1981, Soviet mountain climber Igor Tatsl told the *Moscow News Weekly* that he and his fellow climbers had seen a Yeti and that they had attempted a friendly, spontaneous contact with the creature. Tatsl went on to state that his team had made a plaster cast of an imprint of a Yeti's footprint that they had found on a tributary of the Varzog River. This particular river rushes through the Gissar Mountains in the Pamiro-Alai range of Tadjik in Central Asia. In Tatsl's considered opinion the Yeti may quite likely be humankind's closest evolutionary relative. He further believed that their senses were more highly developed than those of the human species.

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THE Yetis have been linked to the “time of the dragon,” the presumed genesis of Asian civilization.

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Russian scientists have sponsored serious efforts to track down the Yeti for more than a quarter of a century. Although each Russian province may have its own name for the mys-

terious giants of the mountain—in Dagestan, “kaptar”; in Azerbaijan, “mesheadam”; in Georgia, “tkys-katsi”; while the Chechens, Ingushes, Kabardins, and Balkars call it the “almasti”—each startled eyewitness seems to describe the same strange beast.

The Chinese call the snowman “yeren,” and in 1977, 1980, and 1982, expeditions searching for the manbeast set out to track down their quarry in the Shennongjia Forest Park in western Hubei province. In September 1993, a group of Chinese engineers claimed to have seen three yeren walking on trails in the Shennongjia Forest Park.

In October 1994, the Chinese government established the Committee for the Search of Strange and Rare Creatures, including among its members specialists in vertebrate paleontology and palaeanthropology. A loose consensus among interested members from the Chinese Academy of Sciences maintains that the yeren are some species of unknown primates. The largest cast of an alleged wildman footprint is 16 inches long, encouraging estimates that the yeren itself would stand more than seven feet tall and weigh as much as 660 pounds. The scientific committee has also studied and examined eight hair specimens said to have come from yeren ranging through China and Tibet. The analyses of the hairs, varying in color from the black collected in Yunnan province and the white collected in Tibet to the reddish brown from Hubei, indicate a nonhuman source, but no known animal.

In April 1995, a yeren expedition of 30 members led by Professor Yuan Zhengxin set out for the Hubei mountains. Although the enthusiastic Professor Zhengxin expressed confidence that the well-equipped group would capture a yeren within three years, by July most of the expedition members had returned to Beijing with little more than some possible hair samples to show for their three-month safari.

In January 1999, Feng Zuoguan, a zoologist for the Chinese Academy of Sciences, announced through the state-run *China Daily* newspaper that China was officially proclaiming its firm opposition to any outsiders who attempted to organize expeditions to capture the Yeti or the yeren. According to the official

proclamation, after much debate in December 1998 the members of the Chinese scientific community had decreed once and for all that the creatures do not exist.

However, in spite of the official pronouncement from the Chinese Academy of Sciences that neither the Yeti nor the yeren exist, anthropologist Zhou Guoxing reminded his colleagues that unidentifiable hair specimens and 16-inch casts of footprints had been found during scientific expeditions to the Shennongjia region. In his opinion, even if 95 percent of the reports on the existence of the wild man are not credible, it remains necessary for scientists to study the remaining five percent.

In April 2001, British scientists on the trail of the Yeti announced the best evidence yet for the existence of the mysterious creature of the Himalayas—a sample of hair that proved impossible to classify genetically. Dr. Rob McCall, a zoologist, removed strands of the Yeti hair from the hollow of a tree and brought them back to Britain to be analyzed. Dr. Bryan Sykes, Professor of Human Genetics at the Oxford Institute of Molecular Medicine, one of the world’s leading authorities on DNA analysis, stated that they could not identify the DNA that they had discovered in the hair and that they had never before encountered DNA that they couldn’t recognize.

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## CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

There is no known culture on this planet that has not at one time or another cowered in fear because of the savage



attacks of a nocturnal predator known as a therianthrope, a human-animal hybrid such as a werewolf, “werebear,” “werelion,” or a “were-something.” Such creatures were painted by Stone Age artists more than 10,000 years ago and represent some of the world’s oldest cave art—and they probably precipitated some of the world’s first nightmares.

Some time in those fierce and frightening prehistoric years when every day was a struggle for survival for the primitive hunter-gatherers there came the realization that the flowing of a victim’s vital fluid after a fatal attack from a cave bear’s claws and jaws was connected with the release of the life force itself. Blood became sacred. Once the association was made between blood and the life force, a large number of magical and religious rituals became centered around the shedding of blood, and thousands of members of ancient priesthoods have raised chalices filled with the dark, holy elixir of life over thousands of altars stained with both animal and human blood.

As respect for the spiritual quality of human life evolved, the sacrifice of men, women, and children was considered forbidden. And while in less civilized times the drinking of an animal’s vital fluid had been deemed an appropriate way in which to absorb the strength or virility of the lion, the bear, or the boar, religious law now admonished against both the drinking of animal blood and the eating of meat from which the blood had not been thoroughly drained.

The Old Testament book of Leviticus (17:14) acknowledges that blood is “the life of all flesh, the blood of it is the life thereof,” but the children of Israel are instructed that they “shall not eat of the blood of no manner of flesh; for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.” Again, in Deuteronomy 12:20–24, the Lord warns, “...thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after...Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat [blood]; thou shalt pourest it upon the earth as water.”

Similar warnings against the ingesting of blood for religious or health reasons were

soon a part of the teachings of all major faiths and cultures. But while culture, magic, and religion had amassed thousands of years of prohibitions concerning the shedding of blood, what could be more repulsive to the human psyche than the hybrid half-human, half-animal monsters bite the throats and drink the blood of men, women, and children? Vampires rose from their dank graves by night to sustain their spark of life through the drinking of blood. Werewolves devoured the flesh and blood of their victims by night or day. How could people defend themselves against these blood-hungry creatures when they also had the ability to shapeshift into bats, wolves, and luminous fogs? And then there were the supernatural beings, such as the **incubus** and the **succubus**, who were more interested in seizing human souls than in sucking human blood.

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**THERIANTHROPE**, *a human-animal hybrid, were painted by Stone Age artists more than 10,000 years ago.*

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It is difficult for those living in the modern world to imagine the night terrors of our ancestors as they prepared to face the demon- and monster-riddled world after sundown. Today, vampires, werewolves, and creatures of the dark have become the subjects of entertainment, scary movies, and thrilling television programs that bring relief from the tensions of the real world of homework, peer acceptance, work-related stress, taxes, and providing for one’s children. Yet there seems within each human being a desire to be frightened—safely frightened, that is—by those dormant memories of those demon-infested nights when the creatures waited in the shadows to seize their victims. As one watches the late-night creature feature on television and hears that strange sound outside the window, the thought pops uneasily into the mind that all things are possible—even those things that everyone knows cannot possibly exist.

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#### CHUPACABRA

Named for its seeming penchant for attacking goats and sucking their blood, the Chupacabra (“goat sucker”) both terrified and fascinated the public at large when it first burst upon the scene in Puerto Rico in the summer of 1995. From August of 1995 to the present, the monster has been credited with the vampirelike deaths of thousands of animals, ranging from goats, rabbits, and birds to horses, cattle, and deer. While some argue that the creature is a new monster, others point out that such entities have always existed and been reported by farmers and villagers in Puerto Rico and Central and South America.

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FROM August of 1995 to the present, the Chupacabra has been credited with the vampirelike deaths of thousands of animals.

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The beast has been observed by numerous eyewitnesses as it attacked their livestock, and they have described it as nightmarish in appearance. Standing erect on powerful goatlike legs with three-clawed feet, the monster is generally described as slightly over five feet in height, though some reports list it as over six and a half feet. Its head is oval in shape and it has an elongated jaw with a small, slit mouth and fangs that protrude both upward and downward. A few witnesses have claimed to have seen small,

pointed ears on its reptilianlike head, but all who have seen the Chupacabra after dark state that they will never forget its red eyes that glow menacingly in the shadows. Although its arms are thin, they are extremely powerful, ending in three-clawed paws.

A most unusual attribute of the Chupacabra is its chameleonlike ability to change colors even though it appears to have a strong, coarse black hair that covers its torso. Somehow, the creature is able to alter its coloration from green to grayish and from light brown to black, depending upon the vegetation that surrounds it. Another peculiarity of the beast is the row of quill-like appendages that runs down its spine and the fleshy membrane that extends between these projections, which can flare or contract and also change color from blue to green or from red to purple.

Some witnesses have claimed that the Chupacabra can fly, but others state that it is the beast’s powerful hindlegs that merely catapult it over walls, small trees, and one-story barns or outbuildings. It is those same strong legs that enable the creature to run at extremely fast speeds to escape its pursuers.

It wasn’t long after the night terrors began in Puerto Rico before reports of Chupacabra began appearing in Florida, Texas, Mexico, and among the ranchers in Brazil’s southern states of Sao Paulo and Parana. In Brazil, the ranchers called the monster “O Bicho,” the Beast, but there was no mistaking the brutal signature of the Chupacabra on the mutilated corpses of sheep and other livestock. And the description provided by frightened eyewitnesses was also the same—a reptilian creature with thin arms, long claws, powerful hind legs, and dark gray in color.

On May 11, 1997, the newspaper *Folha de Londrina* in Parana State, Brazil, published the account of a slaughter that had occurred at a ranch near Campina Grande do Sul when in a single corral 12 sheep were found dead and another 11 were horribly mutilated. While some authorities attributed the attacks to wild dogs or cougars, those who had been eyewitnesses to the appearance of the beast argued that the creature that they had seen walking on its hind legs and seizing livestock by the

throat had most certainly not been any kind of known canine or cat.

Rumors concerning Chupacabra's origin began to circulate at a furious pace. From April to September 2000, the bloodsucker in Chile slaughtered more than 800 animals, and both the people and the authorities were becoming concerned about what kind of monster was running amuck in their country. Some witnesses to the bloody rampages of the creature described it as a large rodent, others as a mutant kangaroo; still others perceived it as a winged, apelike vampire. A number of authorities began to speculate that the Chupacabra-type creatures had been manufactured by some secret government agency, a bizarre hybrid of various animals, created for whom knew what purpose. A number of clergymen issued pronouncements stating that the creatures were heralding the end of the world. UFO enthusiasts theorized that aliens brought the monsters to test the planet's atmosphere, in order to prepare a mass invasion of Earth. Anthropologists reminded people that tales of such mysterious, vampirelike monsters that sucked the blood out of livestock had been common in Central America for centuries.

A widely popular story spread throughout Chile that Chilean soldiers had captured a Chupacabra male, female, and cub that had been living in a mine north of Calama. Then, according to the account, a team of NASA scientists arrived in a black helicopter and reclaimed the Chupacabra family. The creatures, so the story claimed, had escaped from a secret NASA facility in the Atacama Desert of northern Chile where the U.S. space agency was attempting to create some kind of hybrid beings that could survive on Mars.

On August 30, 2000, Jorge Luis Talavera, a farmer in the jurisdiction of Malpaisillo, Nicaragua, had enough of the nocturnal depredations of Chupacabra. The beast had sucked the life from 25 of his sheep and 35 of his neighbor's flock, and he lay in wait with rifle in hand for its return. That night it seemed that Talavera accomplished what no other irate farmer or rancher had been able to do. He shot and killed a Chupacabra.



**Chupacabra.** (JOHN SIBBICK/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Scott Corrales, Institute of Hispanic Ufology, reported that a specialist of veterinary medicine examined the carcass and acknowledged that it was an uncommon creature with great eye cavities, smooth batlike skin, big claws, large teeth, and a crest sticking out from the main vertebra. The specialist said that the specimen could have been a hybrid animal made up of several species, created through genetic engineering.

However, on September 5, 2000, the official analysis of the corpse by the university medical college was that Talavera had shot a dog. A furious Luis Talavera declared that the officials had switched carcasses. "This isn't my goatsucker," he grouched as the college returned the skeleton of a dog for his disposal.

Today, Chupacabra reports continued unabated from nearly all the South American countries. While the creature remains controversial and arguments ensue whether it is

some kind of vampire, extraterrestrial alien, or a creation of some secret branch of the U.S. government, frightened and angry people complain that whatever Chupacabra is, it continues to suck the blood from their livestock.

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#### GHOUL

The ghoul is linked with both the vampire and the werewolf in traditional folklore, but there are a number of obvious reasons why the entity has never attained the popularity achieved by the Frankenstein monsters, Draculas, and Wolfmen of the horror films. The category of ghoul encompasses a number of different entities. One type of ghoul, like the vampire, is a member of the family of the undead, continually on the nocturnal prowl for new victims. Unlike the vampire, however, this ghoul feasts upon the flesh of the deceased, taking the corpses from cemeteries and morgues. The ghoul more common to the waking world is that of the mentally unbalanced individual who engages in eating or otherwise desecrating the flesh of deceased humans. Yet a third type of ghoul would be those native of Arabic folklore, the ghul (male) and ghulah (female), demonic jinns that haunt burial grounds and sustain themselves on human flesh stolen from graves.

It is easy to envision how the legend of the ghoul began in ancient times when graves were shallow and often subject to the distur-

bances of wild animals seeking carrion. Later, as funeral customs became more elaborate and men and women were buried with their jewelry and other personal treasures, the lure of easy wealth superseded any superstitious or ecclesiastical admonitions that might have otherwise kept grave robbers away from cemeteries and from desecrating a corpse's final rest.

Then, in the late 1820s, surgeons and doctors began to discover the value of dissection. The infant science of surgery was progressing rapidly, but advancement required cadavers—and the more cadavers that were supplied, the more the doctors realized how little they actually knew about the anatomy and interior workings of the human body, and thus the more cadavers they needed. As a result, societies of grave robbers were formed called the "resurrectionists." These men made certain that the corpses finding their way to the dissecting tables were as fresh as possible. And, of course, digging was easier in unsettled dirt. The great irony was that advancement in medical science helped to perpetuate the legend of the ghoul.

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#### GOLEM

The Golem is the Frankenstein monster of Jewish tradition, but it is created from virgin soil and pure spring water, rather than the body parts of cadavers. It is also fashioned by those who purify themselves spiritually and physically, rather than heretical scientists in foreboding castle laboratories who bring down electricity from the sky to animate their patchwork human. Once the Golem has been formed, it is given life by the Kabbalist placing under its



"The Golem of Prague" (1920) was directed by Paul Wegener. (GETTY IMAGES)

Boris Karloff in the 1931  
production of  
"Frankenstein."  
(CORBIS CORPORATION)



tongue a piece of paper with the Tetragrammaton (the four-letter name of God) written on it.

According to certain traditions, the creation of a Golem is one of the advanced stages of development for serious practitioners of **Kabbalah** and **alchemy**. Instructions for fashioning a Golem according to the Talmudic tradition was set down sometime in the tenth century by Rabbi Eliezar Rokeach in *The Book*

*of Formation*, and in his modern adaptation of the ancient text, Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan stressed that the initiate should never attempt to make a Golem alone, but should always be accompanied by one or two learned colleagues for it can become a monster and wreak havoc. When such a mistake occurs, the divine name must somehow be removed from the creature's tongue and it be allowed to revert to dust.

The novel *Frankenstein: A Modern Prometheus* (1818) with its story of the daring scientist Dr. Victor Frankenstein and the monster made of human parts that he brought to life is one of the most famous works of fiction. Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (1797–1851) was 16 when she met the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822). Mary ran off to Europe with Shelley in 1816, and they spent the summer with Lord George Gordon Byron (1788–1824) and his friend and personal physician Dr. John Polidori (1795–1821) in Geneva. To pass the time during a dreary summer, Lord Byron suggested that each of them should write a ghost story. Eighteen-year-old Mary was the only one of the four who actually fulfilled the assignment, publishing her novel two years after she married Shelley in December 1816.

While the novel has been hailed as a masterpiece and a work of genius, scholars have long debated the source of Mary Shelley's inspiration. What—or who—suggested the character of Dr. Victor Frankenstein, who became the prototype of the mad or obsessed scientist?

In 2002, while researching the influence of science upon the poetry of Percy Shelley, Chris Goulding, a Ph.D. student at Newcastle University, found historical documents that indicated that the model for Victor Frankenstein was Dr. James Lind (1736–1812), Shelley's scientific mentor at Eton in 1809–10. Lind had become fascinated with the ability of electrical impulses to provoke muscle movement in the legs of dead frogs, and he was quite likely the first scientist in England to conduct experiments similar to those that enabled Dr. Frankenstein to focus electricity from lightning and bring his monster to life. Percy Shelley was interested in science, and Goulding points out passages in Mary Shelley's unfinished biography of her husband wherein she commented that Percy often spoke of the great intellectual debt that he owed to Dr. Lind.

## WHO WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR DR. FRANKENSTEIN?

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The most famous Golem is “Yossele,” the creature said to be created by Judah Loew Ben Bezalel (1525–1609) to help protect the Jews of Prague from the libel that the blood of a Christian child was used during the Passover Seder. There are many accounts of how Yossele saved Jews from reprisals directed against them by those citizens who had been incited by the anti-Semitic libel. Once the Golem had served its purpose, the rabbi locked it in the attic of Prague’s Old-New Synagogue, where it is widely believed that the creature rests to this day. The synagogue survived the widespread destruction directed against Jewish places of worship by the Nazis in the 1930s and early 1940s, and it is said that the Gestapo did not even enter the attic. A statue of Yossele, the Golem of Prague, still stands at the entrance to the city’s Jewish sector.

other animal and serve as a **witch’s familiar**. In many of the transcripts of the European **witchcraft trials**, the demonic spirit given by the Devil to a witch to do his or her bidding was referred to as an imp.

In most of the descriptions of imps given by witches or those theologians who claimed to have exorcised the entities, their appearance apart from the animals they possessed was always a solid black in color. Since they were creatures without souls sired by the Devil, imps were condemned to be dark shadow beings, forever denied the light of God.

Over the centuries, the meaning of the word has lost its satanic implications. When one speaks of someone having an impish smile, one is likely to mean that that individual has wry sense of humor. To refer to children as “little imps” suggests that they are mischievous, rather than malignant.

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#### IMP

In Old English *impe* means a young plant shoot or a tree sapling. Over the years, the word came to refer to smallish entities that were direct offspring of the Devil and sent from hell to do evil deeds to humans on Earth. Imps might well be called junior demons, and one of their principal assignments, according to Christian authorities, was to disguise themselves as black cats, owls, ravens, or some

#### INCUBUS

According to ancient tradition, there are two main classifications of demons that sexually molest humans—the incubi that assault women and the succubi that seduce men. Both sexual predators are said to have been born as a result of Adam’s sexual intercourse with Lilith, a beautiful demonic entity, often said to have been his first wife, or in other traditions, a fantasy wife created to alleviate his loneliness before the advent of Eve. The incubi were said to seduce unsuspecting women by appearing to them in the guise of their husbands or lovers, and as one might suspect, the incubi played an important role in the history of the **Inquisition**. Even pious nuns appeared before the tribunals, attesting to their affliction by persistent incubi that tried to persuade them to break their vows of chastity. Epidemics of demon possession and erotomania swept such convents as Loudon, Louviers, Auxonne, and Aixen-Provence.



David J. Skal, author of *The Monster Show: A Cultural History of Horror* (1997), has made the observation that the history of horror entertainment closely parallels the great social traumas of the twentieth century.

Monsters became popular at the box office during World War II (1939–45), particularly during the second half of the conflict, and Hollywood film studios responded to the demand by creating horror tales featuring vampires, werewolves, and mummies. In 1944 alone, 21 horror films were released.

After the war ended in 1945, audiences no longer were attracted to such classic monsters. Science fiction tales of **UFOs** and aliens replaced Earth-based supernatural monstrosities.

During the Vietnam conflict, monsters and madmen returned with a vengeance, and a remarkable 54 horror films were released in 1972. Then, after the United States Armed Forces pulled out of Vietnam, the movie monsters retreated again. In 1975, only 17 horror films were released by major studios.

In 2001, the Media Psychology Lab at California State in Los Angeles polled people across the United States from ages 6 to 90 in all ethnic groups to determine which movie monsters ranked as the favorites. According to the survey, the most frightening motion picture of all time for all groups was *The Exorcist* (1973). The favorite top ten monsters were the following:

1. Dracula, the aristocratic vampire, in the 1931 version, *Dracula*, with Bela Lugosi as the blood-sucking count.
2. Freddy Krueger, the slayer of teenagers with the razor-sharp metal talons on his fingers, from *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984).
3. The Frankenstein monster, the original version with Boris Karloff, *Frankenstein* (1931).
4. Godzilla, the prehistoric giant reptile that spews radioactive rays and stomps cities to rubble, from the original Japanese film, *Godzilla of the Monsters* (1954).

## THE TOP TEN MOVIE MONSTERS

5. King Kong, the giant ape, from the original *King Kong* (1933).
6. Chucky, the possessed, murderous doll, from *Child's Play* (1988).
7. Michael Myers, the masked murderer, who is described in the film *Halloween* (1978).
8. Hannibal Lecter, the erudite, cannibalistic serial killer from *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991).
9. Jason, the unstoppable monster in the hockey mask, from *Friday the 13th* (1980).
10. The Alien, the multi-jawed, many-fanged creature in *Alien* (1979).

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In his book *Eros and Evil*, R. E. L. Masters remarked on the scant amount of records from the Inquisition concerning the experiences of men who succumbed to seductive succubi in contrast to the enormous number of recorded instances in which women yielded to the sexual attentions of the incubi. Such lack of reports did not imply that succubi were less seductive than incubi, but rested on the belief of the inquisitors and clergy of the day that women were “naturally inclined to vice...and would always put up defenses more feeble than those offered by males.”

**INCUBI** *fashion temporary bodies out of water vapor or gases.*

The incubus could prove to be a jealous lover. In April 1533, according to old church records, an incubus became enraged when he discovered his human mistress in the arms of the son of the tavernkeeper at Schilttach, near Freiburg. In his furious state of mind, the incubus not only set the tavern ablaze, but he burned the entire village to the ground.

Church authorities dealt with the problem of how a spirit could develop a corporeal body by advancing such theories as these: incubi fashion temporary bodies out of water vapor or gases; they have no actual physical bodies, but they possess the power to create an illusion of corporeality; they inhabit recently deceased corpses and animate them for the purpose of sexual intercourse with the living; they actually have material bodies that they can manipulate into any shape they desire.

Father Montague Summers theorized that such demons as the incubi might be composed of that same substance known as ectoplasm from which the spirits of the dead draw their temporary body during materialization seances with **mediums**. He reasoned that such psychic drainage could occur if a frustrated young person encouraged the attentions of an evil entity by fantasizing about erotic materials.

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#### JERSEY DEVIL

Some witnesses say that the Jersey Devil that haunts the Pine Barrens in southeastern New Jersey is a cross between a goat and a dog with cloven hoofs and the head of a collie. Others swear that it has a horse's head with the body of a kangaroo. Most of the people who have sighted the creature mention a long tail, and nearly all of the witnesses agree that the thing has wings. But it doesn't really fly as much as it hops and glides.

Whatever the Jersey Devil is, people have been sighting it in the rural area in South Jersey since 1735, which, according to local legend, is the year that it was born. Rather than some monstrous animal that was somehow spawned in the one million acres of pines that still remain some distance from the state's cities and refineries, the Jersey Devil has at least a semi-human origin. It seems that there was a prominent family in South Jersey whose patriarch demanded a large number of heirs to carry on the Leeds name to future generations. While that might have been well and good for Mr. Leeds, when she learned that she was about to bear her thirteenth child, Mrs. Leeds decided that she had enough. She had grown tired of being continually pregnant to satisfy her husband's ego. In a fit of rage, it is said that she cursed the unborn child within her and cried out that she would rather bear the devil's child than give birth to another Leeds for posterity.

Visualizing the image of Satan, Mrs. Leeds decreed that she wished the child to be born with claws and fangs, fierce and wild as some vicious beast. The old legend said that Mrs.

Leeds was granted her angry wish of revenge. The baby was born a monster with devilish fangs, claws, tail, and cloven hoofs, but the extremes of its viciousness soon eclipsed the borders of Leeds's curse. The little monster ate every one of the other Leeds children and escaped out of the chimney to begin its reign of terror among the farmers and villagers of the region.

For well over 200 years, terrified witnesses have claimed to encounter the Jersey Devil. The most famous series of sightings occurred in January 1909 when hundreds of men and women reporting seeing or hearing the frightening creature. So many people refused to leave the safety of their homes that local mills were forced to shut down for lack of workers.

As with so many of its kind, local folklore has it that the Jersey Devil serves as an omen of tragedy and war. According to some witnesses, the being was sighted just prior to the onset of the Civil War (1861–65) and again before the start of the Spanish-American conflict (1898) and World War I (1914–18).

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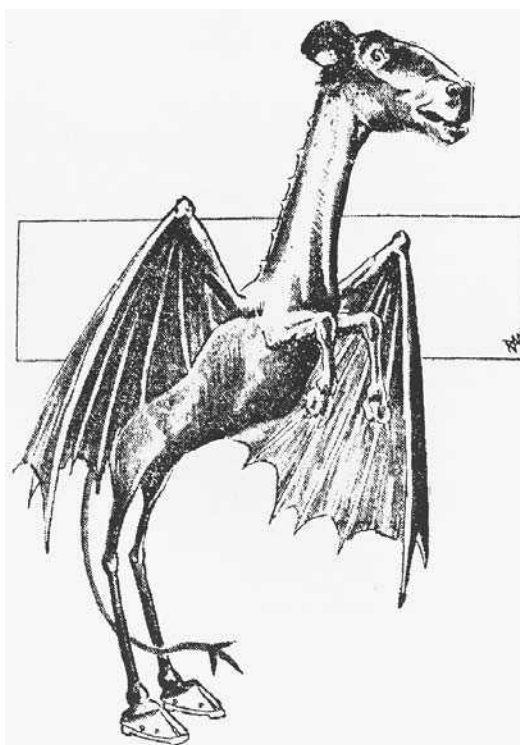
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#### SUCCUBUS

According to certain mystical traditions, the demonic sexual molesters known as the incubi and the succubi were the children of Father Adam's consorting with a beautiful fallen angel named Lilith, who in the view of certain Jewish mystics, was Adam's wife before the creation of Eve. Succubi appear to men as beautiful, sensual women, tempting and promising, but they also may be vampires thirsting for human blood. While those males who consort with a succubus often meet an untimely end, on occasion their interaction with the entity brings about a horde of demonic children, who will one day gather at his deathbed and hail him as their father.



Jersey Devil, 1901  
illustration. (FORTEAN  
PICTURE LIBRARY)

Lilith, according to the Midrash, preys not only on males as they lie sleeping, but also upon mothers who have just given birth, as well as their newborn babes. **Amulets** of protection against the approach of Lilith may be found in many traditional Jewish bookstores.

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**SUCCUBI** appear to men as beautiful, sensual women, but they also may be vampires thirsting for human blood.

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The plural form of "Lilith" in Hebrew is "lilim," which is found in Talmudic and Kabbalistic literature as a term for spirits of the night. Sometimes the word lilith is translated as "night-owl," which would seem to refer to Lilith, the succubus, having wings and being capable of flight. Sometimes, according to Hebrew scholars, the term lilith represents "wind-spirit," and in Hebrew the word for "spirit" (ruach) also means wind. Lilith is often depicted as a beautiful woman with long, unkempt hair and large batlike wings.

In the summer of 2002, Romanian Tourism Minister Dan Agathon announced plans to build a Dracula theme park on a hilltop near the medieval town of Sighisoara, the birthplace of the fifteenth-century Romanian count Vlad Tepes (1431?–1476?), said to have been the inspiration for Bram Stoker's (1847–1912) famous vampire novel, *Dracula* (1897).

Critics immediately opposed the idea of such an enterprise, stating that the park would undermine more dignified projects to restore the medieval spirit of Sighisoara.

Tourism Minister Agathon denied any rumors suggesting that the concept of a Dracula theme park was being abandoned due to the efforts of opposing critics, and he requested that all groups support the effort to attract more tourists to the medieval town.

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#### VAMPIRE

Contrary to the glamorous image popularized by motion pictures depicting handsome vampires and their beautiful "brides," the appearance of a true vampire in folklore is grotesque,

a nightmarish creature of the undead with twisted fangs and grasping talons. After Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* (1897) became a popular stage play, and, in 1931, a classic horror film, the image of the vampire as a hideous demon was transformed into an attractive stranger who possesses a bite that, while fatal, also promises eternal life. The vampire of legend, a demonic presence, wrapped in a rotting burial shroud, intent only on sating its bloodlust, was forgotten and replaced by the beguilingly romantic figures that have appeared ever since in films and popular novels.

The cinematic depiction of the vampire in F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922) presented a much more accurate characterization of the traditional vampire. In this film actor Max Schreck's loathsome bloodsucker creeps about in the shadows with dark-ringed, hollowed eyes, pointed devil ears, and hideous fangs.

With his long, blood-stained talons, his egg-shaped head, and his pasty white complexion, Schreck's Nosferatu looks more like the creature of the undead as seen in the collective nightmares of humankind throughout the centuries. E. Elias Merhige's *Shadow of the Vampire*, released on December 29, 2000, teased audiences with the unsettling suggestion that the monstrous Nosferatu (Willem Dafoe) who assumed the title role in the classic film by F. W. Murnau (John Malkovich) was actually portrayed by a real vampire, rather than an actor.

The vampire legend is universal, and every culture has its own name for the monster. The word itself rises from the slavonic Magyar—*vam*, meaning blood; *pir*, meaning monster. To cite only a few other appellations for the vampire from different languages, there is the older English variation, *vampyr*; the Latin, *sanguisuga*; Serbian, *vampir*; Russian, *упыр*; Polish, *Upirs*; and the Greek, *Brucolacas*. From the villages of Uganda, Haiti, to the Upper Amazon, all indigenous people know the vampire in its many guises. Traditional Native American medicine priests, Arctic Eskimo shamen, and Polynesian Kahuna all know the vampire and take precautions against those who were once human who are now undead and seek blood by night to sustain their dark energies.

With each succeeding generation, the dark powers of the vampire have grown. His hypnotic powers have become irresistible, and his strength is that of a dozen men. He can transform himself into the form of a bat, a rat, an owl, a fox, and a wolf. He is able to see in the dark and to travel on moonbeams and mist. Sometimes, he has the power to vanish in a puff of smoke.

Over the centuries certain precautions have been determined, such as liberally applying wolfbane and sprigs of wild garlic at every door and window. A crucifix can be worn about one's neck and placed prominently on several walls. And if people are truly serious about putting a stop to the nocturnal predator, they can hunt down his grave or coffin and place thereon a branch of the wild rose to keep him locked within. If that doesn't work,



The 1922 silent German film "Nosferatu" was the first film which introduced vampires into the cinema. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

then the only courses of action remaining are to pry open his coffin during the daylight hours while the vampire lies slumbering and pound a wooden stake through his heart—or, perhaps a bit safer, destroy the coffin while he is away and allow the rays of the early morning sun to scorch him into ashes.

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THE *vampire legend is universal, and every culture has its own name for the monster.*

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In 1982, parapsychologist Stephen Kaplan, director of the Vampire Research Center in Elmhurst, New York, discovered a vampire subculture living among the general population. Kaplan estimated that there were approximately 21 "real" vampires living secretly in the United States and Canada. He spoke to many of these self-professed creatures of the night, some of whom claimed to be as old as 300 years, and he established the demographics of vampires, placing Massachusetts in the lead with three; followed by Arizona, California, and New Jersey, with two each; and the remaining 15 vampires scattered throughout the other states and provinces.

Today, with the ever-growing popularity of the Gothic movements, the various vampire

role-playing games, the continuing bestselling status of the Anne Rice vampire novels, and the high ratings of television series based on vampires and the occult, it would be an impossible task to estimate the current population of those who define themselves as some facet of the term “vampire,” or to establish any but the most approximate demographics. Millions of readers and viewers have agreed with Rice that the vampire is a romantic, enthralling figure. The author’s major vampire character, Lestat de Lioncourt, and her series of books in the “Vampire Chronicles” series, portray the undead as far from grotesque, shroud-wrapped monsters. Rice has stated that she perceives the vampire as an individual who never dies, who exerts a charm over people, then accepts their blood as a sacrifice that he might live. In her opinion, the image of the vampire is alluring, attractive, seductive, and the idea of being sacrificed to keep such an entity alive becomes rather romantic.

In the November 24, 2000, issue of *The New York Times*, Margaret Mittelbach and Michael Crewdson reported on the city’s vampire scene that has been going strong since the mid-1990s and the many nightclubs that cater to the “daylight-challenged” in their article, “Vampires: Painting the Town Red.” The journalists describe the activities in “dens” where as many as 300 “undead heads” dance, drink, and make merry late into the night. The dress code in such establishments is “gothic,” “dark-fetish,” “faerie,” “Wiccan,” or “Celtic” and the overwhelmingly predominant color of the clothing is black. On the “rare occasion” when a patron of these vampire havens smiles, Mittelbach and Crewdson noted, one can make out “the glint of white fangs.”

Other researchers have discovered that these “Human Living Vampires” believe that they require blood in order to function at their highest level of proficiency. They realize that they are not really immortal beings, but they may feel that they have **extrasensory** abilities that border on the supernatural that are accentuated with the ingestion of human blood. Most often the vital fluid is obtained from willing donors who permit the vampires to make small cuts or punctures in their flesh and lick or suck the blood.

The vast majority of those enthralled by the vampire lifestyle are those young people who find dressing the part of an attractive and seductive member of the undead appeals to their romantic sensibilities. For them it is like being able to dress up for Halloween at least one night per week all year long.

While role-playing as vampires and victims may be considered quite harmless as long as the participants know when to draw the line between fantasy and reality, those who cross the boundaries of mental abnormality into blood fetishism and obsessive blood-drinking may gradually develop a psychosis that can force them to mutilate or even kill others. On February 1, 2002, a 23-year-old woman who said that she became a vampire in London, then murdered a man in Germany and drank his blood, was jailed for the crime.

According to psychologists, the true lair of the vampire must be sought in the hidden recesses of the human mind, rather than in secluded burial vaults. The desire to assume the guise of a vampire, is highly suggestive of pathologically immature, dependent personalities, who cannot fend for themselves in normal everyday living, but who must attach themselves to a more productive personality, just as the vampire attaches itself to those hosts on whose blood it feeds. Such individuals almost always subconsciously desire to return to the state of complete dependence characteristic of the prenatal state. Psychoanalysts often discover that in those pathological cases in which subjects believe themselves to be vampires the grave or coffin comes to symbolize the womb. The vampire’s dependence upon the grave or coffin as a place of safety seems again to betray a deep longing for the prenatal security of the womb. The act of sucking a victim’s blood is in itself significant, for many psychologists state that such an act would be a sign of mother-fixation.

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#### WEREWOLF

Unlike the vampire, werewolves are not members of the undead who promise everlasting life in exchange for a little bite on the neck. When werewolves are in their human form, they can walk about tranquil forest paths or bustling city streets appearing as ordinary as anyone on his or her way to work or shopping. They needn't fear the scorching rays of the rising sun. They have no use for a coffin in which to sleep during the daylight hours. They have no dread of mirrors that may not show their reflection. Crucifixes don't distress them in the least, and they themselves would probably use garlic for seasoning.

Contrary to the legend popularized by Hollywood horror films, one does not undergo a painful transformation into a wolf after being bitten or scratched by a werewolf. According to the ancient traditions, those who became werewolves were generally of two types: 1) Power-hungry sorcerers who deliberately sought the ability to shapeshift into the form of a wolf through an application of black magic so that they might more effectively rob or attack their victims. Those who became werewolves through incantations, potions, or spells took evil delight in their savage strength and their ability to strike fear into the hearts of all those whom they encountered. 2) Innocent men or women who ran afoul of a sorcerer who had vengefully placed a curse of lupine transformation upon them. Those innocents who had become werewolves against their will may have been filled with disgust at their acts of slashing, ripping, and often ingesting the flesh of their human victims, but they were powerless to resist such gruesome and murderous desires while they remained under the spell that had been placed upon them.

According to a number of ancient magical texts, one of the methods by which one might willingly become a werewolf was to disrobe and to rub completely over one's naked body an ointment made of the fat of a freshly killed animal and a special mixture of herbs. The person who wished to accomplish the lupine transformation should also wear a belt made of human or wolf skin around the waist, then cover his or her body with the pelt of a wolf. To accelerate the process of shapeshifting, the apprentice werewolf should drink beer mixed with blood and recite an ancient magical incantation.

The prefix *were* in Old English means "man," so coupled with wolf, it designates a creature that can alter its appearance from human to beast and become a "man wolf." In French, the werewolf is known *asloup garou*; in Spanish, *hombre lobo*; Italian, *lupo manaro*; Portuguese, *lobizon* or *lobo home*; Polish, *wilkolak*; Russian, *olkolka* or *volkulaku*; and in Greek, *brukolakas*.

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STORIES of women who gave birth to werereatures are common among the North American tribal myths.

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Native American tribes tell of bear-people, wolf-people, fox-people, and so forth, and state that in the beginning of things, humans were as animals and animals as humans. Stories of women who gave birth to werereatures are common among the North American tribal myths. Early cultures throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa formed totem clans and often worshipped minor deities that were half-human, half-animal. Norse legends tell about hairy, humanlike beings that live in the underworld caves and come out at night to feast on the flesh of unfortunate surface dwellers. To the people of the Middle Ages, there was little question that such creatures as werewolves truly existed, and the **Inquisition** was certain to include these demonic entities in their arrests.

Switzerland can lay claim to the first official execution of werewolves, when in 1407,



A werewolf from the 1980 film "The Howling." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

several individuals so accused were tortured and burned in Basel; but the inquisitors in France have the dubious distinction of recording the most cases of werewolfism in all of Europe—30,000 between 1520 and 1630. The werewolf trials began at Poligny in 1521 when, after enduring the torture chamber, three men admitted to consorting with she-wolves and demons in order to gain the power to transform themselves into wolves—then they confessed to having killed and devoured many small children over a 19-year period. They were summarily burned at the stake.

The famous case of Gilles Garnier, who was executed as a werewolf at Dole, France, in 1573, provides grim details of attacks on numerous children, in which Garnier used his hands and teeth to kill and to cannibalize his young victims. In view of the heinous crimes and Garnier's confession that he was a were-

wolf, the court was quick to decree that he should be executed and his body burned and reduced to ashes.

The infamous werewolf Peter Stubbe of Cologne revealed that he possessed a magic belt that could instantly transform him into a wolf. To return to human form, he had but to remove the belt. Although the authorities never found his magical werewolf belt, they beheaded him for his crimes in 1589.

According to testimony in the case against Jacques Roulet in 1598, a group of hunters came upon two wolves devouring the body of a 15-year-old boy. Since they were well-armed, the men pursued the wolves and were astonished to see the pawprints slowly becoming more humanlike. At last, they tracked down and apprehended a tall, gaunt man with long matted hair and beard, barely clothed in filthy rags, his hands red with blood and his long nails clotted with human flesh. The loathsome creature identified himself as a vagabond named Jacques Roulet, who with his brother and a cousin possessed a salve that enabled them to assume the form of wolves. Together, the three werewolves claimed to have attacked, killed, and eaten many children in various parts of the countryside.

Sometimes it becomes difficult to establish the line of demarcation that separates legendary accounts of werewolves and other wereanimals devouring human victims from the early historical records of savage human predators ambushing their victims by night. In the Middle Ages, large bands of beggars and brigands roamed the European countryside after dark, often dressed in wolfskins and howling like a pack of wolves on the hunt. In the rural areas of France, Germany, Lower Hungary, Estonia, and other countries, these nocturnal marauders were called "werewolves." The old Norwegian counterpart to werewolf is *vargulf*, literally translated as "rogue wolf," referring to an outlaw who separates himself from society. In addition to these human wolf packs that preyed upon isolated farmers and small villages, historical records are replete with illustrations of ancient warriors who went into battle wearing the skins of wild animals, hoping that the ferocity and



strength of the beasts would magically rub off on them. Most often, in the Northern European tribes, the fierce animal of choice was the wolf or the bear.

In ancient Scandinavia, the Norse words *ulfhednar* (“wolf-clothed”) and *berwerker* refer to the wolf or bear skins worn by the fierce Viking warriors when they went “berserk,” war-mad, and fought with the fury of vicious animals against opponents. In the Slavonic languages, the werewolf is called *vlukodlak*, which translates to “wolf-haired” or “wolf-skinned,” once again suggesting the magical transference desired from wearing the skin of a brave animal into battle.

Interestingly, the popular conception that one becomes a werewolf after having been bitten or scratched by such a creature of the night originated not in ancient tradition but in the motion picture *The Wolf Man* (1941). Such werewolf deterrents as sprigs of garlic, wolf bane, and the deadly silver bullet were also created for classic werewolf stories from *Frankenstein Meets the Werewolf* (1943) to *An American Werewolf in Paris* (1997). Even the ancient “gypsy folklore” repeated by Ankers, the heroine in *The Wolf Man*, was created by Siodmak: “Even a man who’s pure in heart and says his prayers at night, may become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms and the autumn moon is bright.”

Just as certain humans imagine themselves to be vampires, others believe themselves to shapeshift into wolves. Psychologists recognize a werewolf psychosis (lycanthropy or lupinomanis) in which persons so afflicted may believe that they change into a wolf at the full moon. Those who are so disturbed may actually “feel” their fur growing, their fingernails becoming claws, their jaw lengthening, their canine teeth elongating. In their paper “A Case of Lycanthropy,” published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* in 1977, psychiatrist Harvey Rosenstock and psychologist Kenneth Vincent discussed the case history of a 49-year-old woman who received daily psychotherapy and antipsychotic drugs and who still perceived herself as a wolfwoman with claws, teeth, and fangs. Medical personnel would manage to get the woman under

control until the next full moon—when she would snarl, howl, and resume her wolflike behavior. Rosenstock and Vincent stated that the woman was eventually discharged and provided with antipsychotic medication, but she declared that she would haunt graveyards until she had found the male werewolf of her dreams.

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## MONSTERS OF LAND, SEA, AND AIR

While so many of the mysterious creatures that are frightening and disturbing may belong completely to the realm of the supernatural and fanciful, judgment must be reserved concerning some of the monsters reported roaming the forests and jungles. In recent decades a large number of animals previously unrecognized by the experts, although well-known to the aboriginal inhabitants of the locales that were the creatures’ natural habitat, have been officially “discovered.”

Although hunters in Kamchatka, Manchuria, and Sakhalin had long been telling excited stories of the giant carnivorous brown bear they had encountered, European scientists did not accept the existence of the bear until 1898. The largest land animal next to the African elephant is the white rhinoceros, which remained officially unacknowledged

until 1900. The largest of the apes, the mountain gorilla, was considered a native superstition until 1901. The dragons of Komodo Island, Indonesia, were considered the creations of a strange myth conjured up by the islanders until 1912. And the British zoologist who described the bizarre “royal hepard”—a half-leopard and half-hyena beast long claimed by the natives of Rhodesia to be an actual beast of prey—wondered how such a large animal, and one so distinct from other species, could have remained “unknown” for so long.

In June 1994, the first living specimen of the Vu Quang ox was caught in a rugged area on the Vietnamese-Laotian border, and its verified existence was hailed as the zoological find of the half-century. This horned mammal, weighing more than 200 pounds with cinnamon, black, and white coloration, is a hemibovid, a species ancestral to both oxen and antelope that was thought to have become extinct four million years ago. Zoologists estimated their present population to be in the hundreds.

In July 1999, zoologists saw the first photographic evidence that the Javan rhinoceros, thought completely wiped out on the Asian mainland in the 1960s, still thrived 130 kilometers north of Ho Chi Minh City in the Lam Dong province of Vietnam. These huge animals, which can weigh more than 3,000 pounds, have somehow been misplaced or missed for nearly 40 years.

In December 2000, scientists set out to search the northern jungles of Thailand for conclusive proof of the sightings of large, hairy elephants that witnesses claim strongly resemble the long-extinct woolly mammoth. What these scientists and forestry officials may discover is either a new species of elephant or long-lost descendants of the great-tusked mammoth of the Ice Age.

For at least 200 years now, stories have emerged from the swamps, rivers, and lakes of African jungles that there exists a brownish-gray, elephant-sized creature with a reptilian tail and a long, flexible neck. The native people call it “mokele-mbembe” (“the one who stops the flow of rivers”) or “emela-ntuka” (“the one who eats the tops of trees”). In 1980, Dr. Roy Mackal led an expedition into

African swamps that are “Mokey’s” hangouts and stated later that the descriptions of the beast would fit that of a sauropod, the giant plant-eating reptile that supposedly became extinct about 60 million years ago.

J. Richard Greenwell, an expedition member from Tucson, Arizona, told of having discovered huge tracks that led into the Likouala River. In his opinion, no animal smaller than an elephant could have left such a path through the thickets near the river, and, Greenwell noted, elephants always leave an exit trail when they leave a river. Whatever left these massive prints made no such sign of an exit, which may indicate that Mokey is a marine, as well as land, creature.

Tracking even dinosaur-sized creatures is not that simple in the Likouala swampland, which is twice the size of Scotland, and thick with venomous snakes and disease-bearing insects. On November 28, 1981, Herman Regusters, an aerospace engineer from South Pasadena, California, and his wife, Kia, claimed to have seen and to have photographed a dinosaurlike animal in a remote African lake. Kia Regusters said that the gigantic reptile was dark red with a long, thick neck, and longer than two hippopotamuses. Unfortunately, the photograph taken by the Regusters was rather fuzzy, and their tape recording of the “roaring trumpeting noise” heard frequently around Lake Tele was impossible to identify.

Dr. Bill Gibbons, a zoologist who specializes in attempting to track down new species, told the (London) *Sunday Times* (June 3, 1999) that he is certain that mokele-mbembe exists. According to Gibbons, cryptozoologists had heard reports that hunters from the Kabonga tribe had killed a mokele-mbembe and had tried to eat it. Its flesh proved inedible and the carcass was left to rot and be gnawed and pecked at by scavengers.

If there are monsters from the Age of Reptiles surviving in the remote jungles of the world, what giant creatures might be thriving in the vast depths of the seas and a number of the larger lakes throughout the world? What prehistoric monsters might be surviving unchanged, unscathed by the Earth changes

that annihilated their cousins more than 60 million years ago? Supporting such speculations were the discoveries of numerous coelacanths (crossoptergian fish) off the coast of southeast Africa in 1938. The coelacanths that were dragged from the ocean by the nets of fishermen had survived almost unchanged for 70 million years—from a time even before the Age of Reptiles. Then, after nearly 200 of the supposedly extinct “living fossils” had been discovered on the southeast African coast, the fourth coelacanth, a female almost five and a half feet long, was caught off the coast of Madagascar in March 2001. If a number of coelacanth, whose species preceded the dinosaurs, have survived, why not some aquatic descendants of the giant reptiles?

A popular theory to explain the existence of sea monsters is that they may be survivors of one of the giant reptiles of the Mesozoic Age. Philip Gosse, the famous nineteenth-century naturalist, was an avid exponent of the possibility that plesiosaurs could still be thriving in the Earth's oceans. While the Mesozoic Age ended tens of millions of years ago, he argued, there was no a priori reason why some of the descendants of the great sea reptiles could not have survived. Other marine zoologists favor the unverified existence of an aquatic mammal related to the whales as their candidate for the mantle of sea monster. They maintain that the horselike mane often reported on the so-called sea “serpents” would be an unlikely appendage for a reptile—and, they argue that only a warm-blooded mammal would be able to survive in the cold water of the North Atlantic where so many sea monster stories originate.

Still other marine researchers have expanded the theory of the monstrous sea mammal and combined it with another candidate for survival from prehistory. They hypothesize the survival of an ancient species of whale known as *Zeuglodon* or *Basilosaurus*, whose fossil remains are well-known. Well-equipped for the role of a sea monster, *Basilosaurus* was a huge beast with a slim, elongated body measuring over 70 feet in length. Its skull was long and low, and the creature propelled itself by means of a single pair of fins at its forward end. This massive

marine monster is known to have survived into the Miocene Epoch, just over 30 million years ago. If the coelacanth has survived for 70 million years, it seems possible that the relatively young *Basilosaurus* could still be inhabiting the seas.

After years of researching Nessie in Loch Ness and similar long-necked lake creatures all around the Northern Hemisphere, Dr. Roy Mackal has come to believe that rather than beholding “monsters” in the waters, people are witnessing small, remnant bands of *Zeuglodon*s. In Mackal's theory, the creatures migrate from oceans to lakes, following such prey as spawning salmon. Lake Champlain is linked to the Atlantic Ocean by the Richelieu and St. Lawrence Rivers of Quebec. Loch Ness is connected to the sea, and so is Lake Okanagan in British Columbia, where *Ogopogo* is frequently sighted.

Smaller than the *Basilosaurus*, a later development on the evolutionary ladder, *Zeuglodon*s bear little resemblance to modern whales. Mackal said that the fossil remnants of the creature at the Smithsonian Institute “looks like a big anaconda [a large semiaquatic boa constrictor] with a ridge down its back.”

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#### DRAGONS

One of the most universal monster myths is that of the dragon. The awesome, reptilelike beasts appear in the folklore of nearly every country. And the fact that the creature was truly regarded as an actual monster rather than a myth can be demonstrated in several

Lynne Cherry's  
illustration from *The  
Dragon and the Unicorn*.  
(HARCOURT, INC.)



writings of the day. Edward Topsell, writing in his *Historie of Serpents* (1608), commented that among all the kinds of serpents, there is none comparable to the Dragon, or that afforded and yielded “so much plentiful matter in history for the ample discovery of the nature thereof.”

*A few scientists hold the theory that a number of dinosaurs might have survived into the Age of Man.*

While examining the “true accounts” of dragons in the folklore and records of several cultures, one cannot help wondering if there really were dragonlike monsters prowling the earth, devouring hapless villagers, receiving periodic sacrifices of young maidens, spreading terror into the hearts of all, and being thwarted only by courageous knights. For years, children have been read tales, seen motion pictures, and heard songs of reluctant dragons, kindly dragons, affectionate dragons, magic dragons, and timid dragons.

Behind every myth smolders some spark of truth and reality. A few scientists hold the theory that a number of dinosaurs might have

survived into the Age of Man. Pick up any book on dinosaurs and it is apparent that a Tyrannosaurus Rex would have made a terrific dragon in anyone’s legend. Such a huge reptile thudding about the countryside of early Europe or Asia could certainly fit even the most dramatic descriptions of a dragon.

No theorist favoring the surviving dinosaur solution to dragons claims that the great reptiles existed in anything approaching abundance. But even a handful of such ancient monsters existing in isolated lakes and forested valleys would not have gone unnoticed, even in the sparsely populated Europe of the Dark Ages. The discovery of even just a few of these great reptiles would have given rise to a far-reaching legend.

A more palatable theory is that the ancient historians were actually describing huge snakes such as the python, which often reaches a length of more than 30 feet. A number of dragon stories from the Middle Ages tell how the dragon wound itself about its prey and slowly crushed it.

The giant snake theory does not account for descriptions of the dragon’s feet or its ability to walk on all fours, but some species of giant lizard, such as the Komodo dragon, attains a length of 10–12 feet. The Komodo presently resides in the East Indies, but in ancient times, it is possible that St. George and his fellow dragon-killers might have fought some unknown species of monster lizard in Europe and Asia.

A third, more believable theory has an adventurer of the Middle Ages coming upon a cave filled with the bones of a giant cave bear and mistaking them for the skeletal remains of a dragon. Workmen excavating earth for a cathedral might even have unearthed the fossil remains of a dinosaur. It was not until the nineteenth century that scientists realized that the age of fossil bones often ran into millions of years. Previously, the skeletons were considered to have been the remains of some giant creature only recently dead. If, at the time the dragon legend was flourishing in Europe, a discovery of fossil remains was unearthed or sighted in a cave, the find would seem to offer conclusive proof for the existence of dragons. It is



**Dennis Quaid (right) in the 1996 movie "Dragonheart." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)**

likely that the bones of the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and the giant cave bear were not that uncommon in early Europe. The tusk of the mammoth was often called for in the recipes of medieval love potions.

In the marketplace of the Austrian city of Klagenfurt, there is a statue of a giant killing a dragon. The dragon's head has quite obviously been modeled on the skull of a woolly rhinoceros. The connection can be proven by the fact that old records note the discovery of a "dragon's skull" in Klagenfurt in the sixteenth century, 30 years before the statue was constructed. The skull has been preserved all these years by the city fathers and can be identified today as that of the Ice Age rhinoceros.

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#### LOCH NESS AND OTHER LAKE MONSTERS

In 1936, Glasgow filmmaker Malcolm Irvine filmed a dark blob, approximately 30 feet in length, moving slowly across Loch Ness and offered what he believed to be proof that the most famous monster in the world actually exist-

ed in the Scottish lake where it had been sighted since the fifteenth century. With that brief film-strip, Nessie mania had been brought into the twentieth century and has never subsided, seemingly growing stronger each year. And in spite of Irvine's intentions, his cinematic record of the Loch Ness Monster did not put an end to the controversy over the creature's existence.

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**N**EARLY two million tourists visit Scotland to see if they might obtain a glimpse and a photograph of the Loch Ness Monster.

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Sightings of Nessie, most often described as a long-necked monster resembling a prehistoric brontosaurus, have been seen in and near Loch Ness since St. Columba made the first recorded sighting in 565, and nearly two million tourists each year come to Scotland to see if they might obtain a glimpse and a photograph of the elusive water beast. For the past several decades, volunteer Nessie spotters work in relays from mid-May to mid-October. Each volunteer is equipped with log pads, field glasses, and video cameras with telephoto lenses.

Could a prehistoric creature actually be living in a lake in Scotland? Loch Ness is cer-

A picture of the alleged  
Loch Ness Monster  
taken from Urquhart  
Castle on May 21, 1977.  
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)



tainly large enough and deep enough. It is 24 miles long by about a mile across. It has a mean depth of 433 feet, twice that of the North Sea into which it flows through the River Ness at its eastern end. Five rivers and 50 mountain streams feed Loch Ness. The loch never freezes, and snow rarely lies near its shores. Its temperature remains fairly constant at about a chilling 42 degrees Fahrenheit, summer or winter.

One of the more verifiable of the sightings of a large creature in Loch Ness was made in the mid-1960s by Tim Dinsdale, a member of the Defense Ministry's Joint Air Reconnaissance Center (JARIC), who said that the 12-to-16-foot-long thing that he photographed traveling at a speed of 10 knots was "almost certainly animate."

On January 24, 1966, the Royal Air Force issued its analysis of the Dinsdale filmstrip, stating that the movement in the water of the "hump" of the creature indicated that the object was moving at a speed of about 10 miles per hour. After much technical discussion about the relative size and perspective of the "solid black, approximately triangular shape"

(the hump) and a comparison of the unidentified creature with a motorboat moving in the same area (filmed immediately after the creature had swum past), the RAF conceded that the object was "not a surface vessel." And: "One can presumably rule out the idea that it is any sort of submarine vessel for various reasons, which leaves the conclusion that it probably is an animate object."

In the spring of 1968, David James, a former member of the British Parliament and head of the Loch Ness Phenomena Investigation Bureau, stated that in the studied opinion of the bureau, it should be made clear that there was no single monster that had lived in Loch Ness for a few thousand years. What the bureau was investigating was the possibility of an unidentified creature, "breeding, evolving like any other species...cut off from the sea, for 5,000 to 7,000 years." The Loch Ness Phenomena Investigation Bureau also wished to make one assertion clear: "There is something there. Too many reliable persons have seen too much, with too little possibility for coincidence, connivance, or conjuration to pass the entire matter off as only a figment of someone's imagination."

In 1968, Dr. Roy P. Mackal, University of Chicago biologist and head of the U.S. branch of the bureau, received a three-year grant from Field Enterprises Educational Corporation of Chicago that incorporated the services and the submarine of Dan Taylor. Although the expedition had sophisticated photographic equipment, biopsy darts, and other advanced research materials the murky brown waters of Loch Ness rendered all the underwater devices relatively useless. Mackal has theorized that the type of creature that most neatly fits the mass of descriptive evidence and photos compiled by researchers and witnesses has to be some kind of large aquatic mammal that would be capable of thriving above 50-degree north latitude.

Dan Taylor of Hardeeville, South Carolina, accompanied Mackal on the 1969 quest for Nessie that was sponsored by Field Enterprises, publishers of the World Book Encyclopedia. He had been selected to become a part of the expedition because of his expertise with submarines, and he brought with him a small fiberglass sub-

No monster in history has been pursued as actively as the creature that is said to inhabit the depths of Loch Ness in Scotland. Since 1936, there have been 27 recorded films taken of "Nessie" and hundreds of officially recorded sightings.

Although hundreds of photographs of the Loch Ness Monster have been taken and alleged to be authentic, all but a very few have been easily explained by scientists as ripples in the lake's surface, floating debris, or deliberate hoaxes.

A new controversy regarding the authenticity of a series of photographs of Nessie arose in September 2002 when Roy Johnston, a retired printer, released four photographs to the media that showed a large snakelike creature arching out of the water and withdrawing beneath the surface of the lake with a splash. While some photographic experts declared the pictures to be genuine, others scoffed and argued that the images were not taken in sequence, as Johnston had said they were.

In 2001 Janet McBain, curator of the Scottish Screen Archive, found the original 16mm film that first launched the Nessie craze. Made on September 22, 1936, by Glasgow filmmaker Malcolm Irvine for the Scottish Film Productions Company, the film had become nearly as legendary as the lake monster that it depicted. McBain said that while the existence of the Irvine newsreel was well documented, it was thought to have been destroyed and lost.

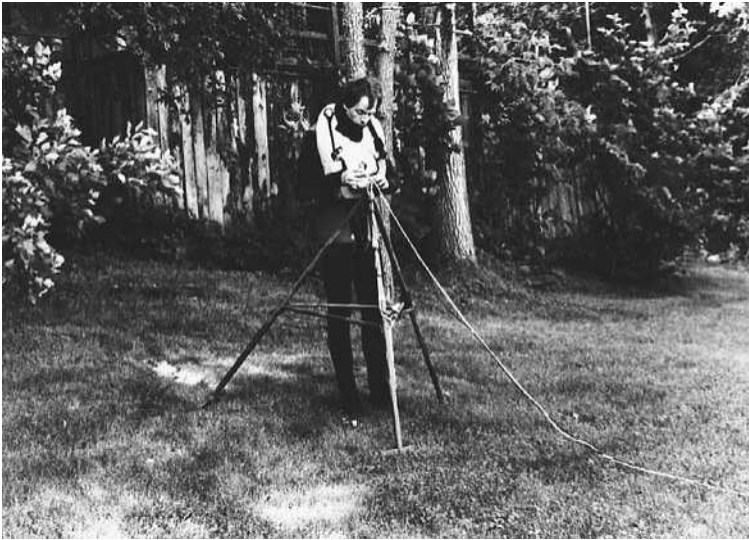
According to eyewitness accounts, Irvine had first sighted the creature in 1933, but his camera jammed. Three years later, Irvine and his film crew spent three weeks at the lakeside before he got the footage he wanted. On the footage, which lasts about one minute, the creature's head and neck appear above the surface of the water, then its two humps, one behind the other, and finally what appears to be a tail, thrashing behind from side to side.

The area near the ruins of Urquhart Castle at Drumnadrochit is still the most common vantage point for Nessie sightings and is said to attract more than 200,000 visitors per year.

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Film crew preparing to film a lake monster. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

marine that he had built to explore the murky depths of Loch Ness. It was on one of his last runs around the loch that Taylor encountered Nessie. The submarine was hovering around a depth of 250 feet when he said that he felt the craft beginning to turn, unnaturally, “like the secondhand of a clock being pushed backward by a finger,” he told J. R. Moehringer of the *Los Angeles Times* (August 16, 1998). Taylor knew that *something* had pushed up against the submarine and turned it around, but he said that it didn’t dawn on him that it had been Nessie until he surfaced.

D. Gordon Tucker, head of the electronic engineering department at Birmingham University, and a team of sonar experts did have better luck finding evidence of Nessie in the peat-stained loch waters with the special equipment that he had developed. During a number of expeditions to the lake (1968–70) and probing Loch Ness with sonar, Tucker’s study appeared to provide evidence that a family of monsters does indeed inhabit the loch. In one 13-minute period, Tucker stated, sonar echoes defined large objects moving underwater. A massive object was recorded swimming at a speed as high as 17 miles per hour and diving at a rate of 450 feet a minute. “From the evidence we have,” he concluded, “there is some animal life in the loch whose behavior is difficult to reconcile with that of fish.”

In 1971, Bob Rines, a world-renowned patent attorney, physicist, and engineer, saw

Nessie for himself. In the middle of the lake, his binoculars focused clearly on the creature for 10 minutes, he saw what looked like the back of an elephant. He shrugs off the skeptics who say that he merely saw a school of fish or a trick of the light. He is familiar with the dwellers of the deep. It was his groundbreaking research on sonar that was used to locate the *Titanic*.

In 1972, Rines set up an underwater sound stage at the lake, designed to trigger lights and start a camera whenever a large object passed the station. In 1975, the camera, rigged to roll at one frame every 45 seconds, captured the image of a creature that he believes resembles a plesiosaur, an aquatic, air-breathing dinosaur that should have been extinct 65 million years ago.

In March 1998, Scottish pet food salesman Richard White won a prize award of \$825.00 for the best photograph of the Loch Ness Monster of the year. White had been on his way to the village of Foyers above the loch when he noticed an unusual disturbance in the water halfway across the loch toward Urquhart Castle on the opposite bank. He stopped to take a look, grabbed his camera, and began snapping photos of the monster in the water.

Gary Campbell, president of the Official Loch Ness Monster Fan Club, declared White’s photos of “Nessie” to be among the best that he had ever seen. The fact that scientists using computer enhancement techniques had been unable to assess exactly what the pictures showed, Campbell said, only added to the mystery of Loch Ness. Although Nessie is far and away the most famous of all monsters inhabiting inland bodies of water, there are reports of equally large, equally strange aquatic creatures in lakes all over the world.

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#### SEA SERPENTS

"Any fool can disbelieve in sea serpents," commented Victoria, British Columbia, newspaper editor Archie Willis in 1933. Willis's pronouncement came as a sharp rejoinder to the skeptics who laughed at the hundreds of witnesses who swore that they had seen a large snakelike creature swimming in the waters off the coast of the Pacific Northwest. Willis christened the sea monster "Cadborosaurus," and the nickname stuck.

The creature with its long serpentine body, its horselike head, humps on its back, and its remarkable surface swimming speed of up to 40 knots, has been a part of coastal lore from Alaska to Oregon for hundreds of years. While the waters of the Pacific Northwest border one of the deepest underwater trenches on the planet—where almost any massive seabest could reside—the greatest number of sightings of Cadborosaurus have occurred in the inland waters around Vancouver Island and the northern Olympic Peninsula.

In *Cadborosaurus: Survivor of the Deep* (2000), Vancouver biologist Dr. Edward L. Bousfield and Dr. Paul H. Leblond, professor of oceanography at the University of British Columbia, describe the creature as a classic sea monster with a flexible, serpentine body, an elongated neck topped by a head resembling that of a horse or giraffe, the presence of anterior flippers, and a dorsally toothed or spiky tail.

When the crew of the yacht *Valhalla* sighted a sea monster off Parahiba, Brazil, on December 7, 1905, it was fortunate to have among its passengers E. G. B. Meade-Waldo and Michael J. Nicoll, two expert naturalists, Fellows of the Zoological Society of Britain, who were taking part in a scientific expedition to the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean.

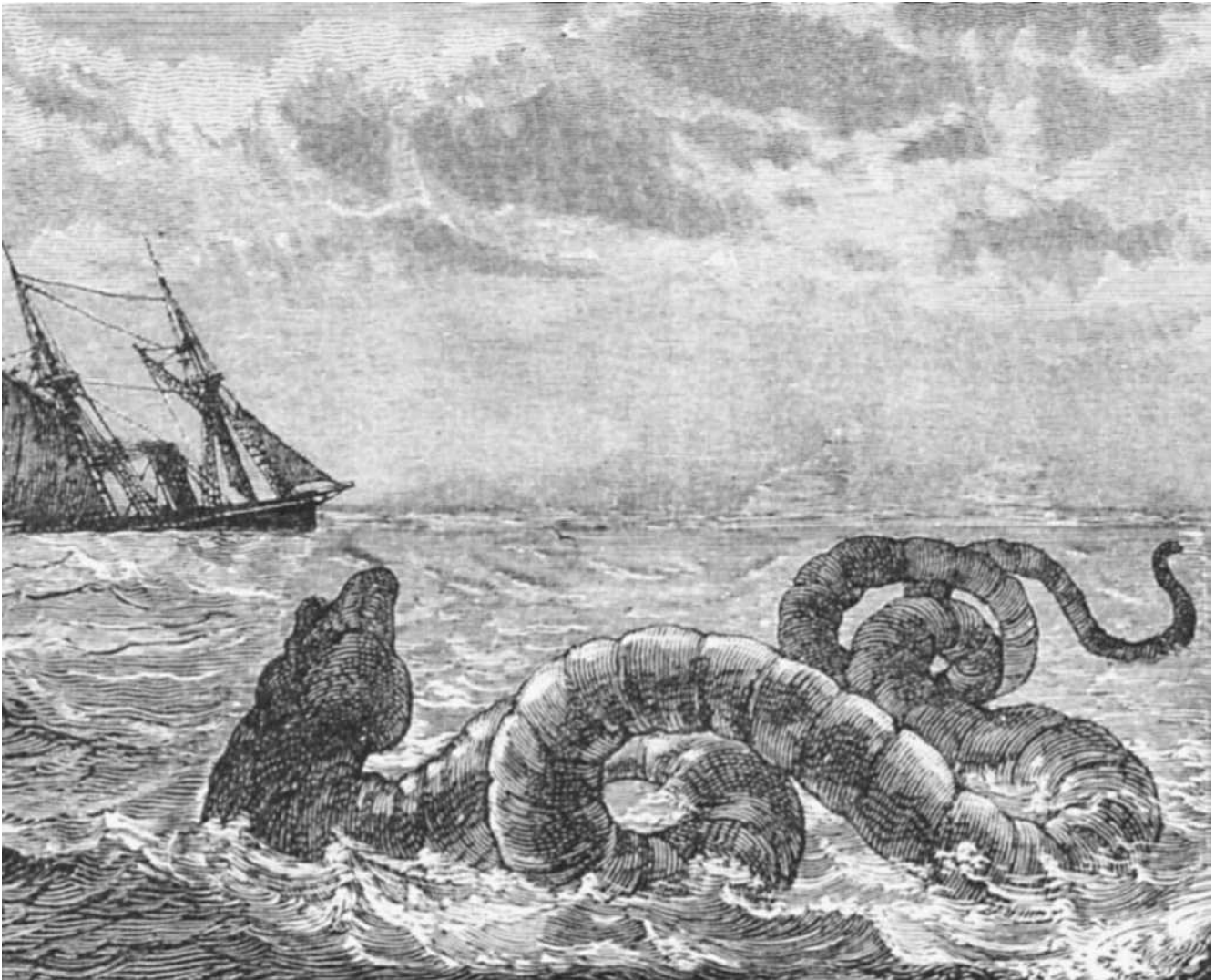
Meade-Waldo prepared a paper on the sighting, which he presented to the society at its meeting on June 19, 1906. In his report, he told how his attention was first drawn to a "large brown fin...sticking out of the water, dark seaweed-brown in color, somewhat crinkled at the edge." The creature's fin was an astonishing six feet in length "and projected from 18 inches to two feet from the water." Under the water and to the rear of the fin, the zoologist said that he could perceive "the shape of a considerable body. A great head and neck did not touch the [fin] in the water, but came out of the water in front of it, at a distance of certainly not less than 18 inches, probably more. The neck appeared to be the thickness of a slight man's body, and from seven to eight feet was out of the water."

The head, according to Meade-Waldo's expert observation, had a "very turtlelike appearance, as had also the eye...it moved its neck from side to side in a peculiar manner; the color of the head and neck was dark brown above and whitish below." Meade-Waldo also stated that since he saw the creature, he has reflected on its actual size and concluded that it "was probably considerably larger than it appeared at first."

Nicoll discussed the incident of the *Valhalla* sea monster sighting two years later in his book *Three Voyages of a Naturalist*: "I feel certain that [the creature] was not a reptile...but a mammal. The general appearance of the creature, especially the soft, almost rubberlike fin, gives one this impression."

Off shore on the Atlantic seacoast of North America, there is a sea serpent that has been paying periodic visits to the Cape Ann area and Gloucester, Massachusetts, for more than 340 years. An Englishman named John Josselyn, who was returning to London, made the first sighting of the creature as it lay "coiled like a cable" on a rock at Cape Ann. Seamen would have killed the serpent, but two Native American crew members protested such an act, stating that all on board would be in danger of terrible retribution if the sea creature was harmed.

On August 6, 1817, Amos Lawrence, founder of the mills which bore his name,



**Sea serpent.** (MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY)

sighted the sea monster and issued a proclamation to that effect. Col. Thomas H. Perkins, one of Boston's wealthiest citizens, also testified to the reality of the great serpent, stating that it was about 40 feet in length with a single horn nine to 12 inches long on its head.

On that same August day, a group of fishermen spotted the marine giant near Eastern Point and shouted that it was making its way between Ten Pound Island and the shore. They said later that they could clearly see the thing's backbone moving vertically as it appeared to be chasing schools of herring around the harbor. Shipmaster Solomon Allen judged the serpent to be between 80 and 90 feet in length.

Generations of Gloucester residents and tourists have sighted the Cape Ann sea ser-

pent, often as they sailed the harbor and nearly always stating that they were frightened by the appearance of a huge snakelike creature at least 70 feet in length.

In April 1975, some fishermen saw the monster up close and personal and were able to provide one of the more complete descriptions of the monster.

According to Captain John Favazza, they had sighted a large, dark object on their starboard side, about 80 feet away, that they had at first thought was a whale. Then a serpent-like creature lifted its head from the surface, saw the fishing boat, and began to swim directly toward them. Favazza later told reporters that the sea serpent was black, smooth rather than scaly, with a pointed head, small eyes, and a white line around its mouth.

The giant squid, one of the most terrifying monsters of the sea, has never been seen alive. A member of the class Cephalopoda, which includes the octopus and the nautilus, the giant squid is the largest invertebrate in the world.

The statement that the monster has never been seen alive should be amended to read that no marine zoologist or other scientist has been able to observe the giant squid in its natural habitat. The huge creature, commonly known as the kraken, has been reported throughout nautical history. There have been frightening reports of people snatched from their boats or the seashore by the tentacles of the kraken, numerous sightings of whales being attacked by the giant squid, and stories of entire ships being pulled beneath the surface by a beast with tentacles more than 200 feet long. Some scholars of marine lore insist that the great giant squid fight scene in Jules Verne's (1828–1905) *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1870) was based on an actual encounter with a kraken that involved the French battleship *Alecton* in 1861.

On a weekend in July 2002, early morning joggers discovered the remains of a giant squid almost completely intact, stretching nearly 50 feet in length and weighing over 500 pounds. Observers said the beast had eyes the size of small dinner plates and a parrot-like central beak. Dr. David Pemberton, Senior Curator of Zoology at Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, rushed to the scene in time to save the fragile corpse from the incoming tide.

Six months earlier, another nearly complete specimen of giant squid had been washed ashore near Aberdeen, Scotland. In December 2001, scientists from the United States, Japan, Spain, and France reported eight separate sightings in various oceans of an unknown species of squid that if not giant squids were certainly very large creatures. Underwater video cameras recorded footage of what may be a new species of squid 13 to 23 feet long gliding through ocean depths of 11,000 feet.

## ARE GIANT SQUIDS THE TRUE SEA MONSTERS?

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It swam sideways in the water, like a snake. It was longer than his 66-foot boat, and he estimated its girth as about 15 feet around.

Some cryptozoologists, individuals who study the possibility of such creatures as sea and lake monsters truly existing, have theorized that plesiosaurs, one of the giant reptiles of the Mesozoic Age, which ended about 70 million years ago, could have survived in the depths of the relatively unchanged environment of Earth's oceans. Because some sea monster sightings occur in cold waters, other researchers favor the survival of an ancient species of mammals, such as the ancestor of the whale known as *Zeuglodon* or *Basilosaurus*. The *Basilosaurus* had a slim, elongated, snake-like body measuring more than 70 feet in length which the huge creature propelled by means of a single pair of fins at its forward end.

The debate over what monstrous creatures best wear the mantle of "sea monster" could have been solved for all time back in 1852 when two New Bedford whaling vessels, the *Monongahela* and the *Rebecca Sims*, were drifting slowly in the Pacific doldrums, their sails limp from lack of wind. When the lookout's shout of "something big in the water" caused Captain Seabury of the *Monongahela* to use his telescope to view the object; he could distinguish only a huge living creature, thrashing about in the water as if in great agony. The captain's immediate deduction was that they had come upon a whale that had been wounded by the harpoons of another whaler's longboats and was now dying.

Seabury ordered three longboats over the side to end the beast's pain, and he was in the first boat as it pulled alongside the massive thing that he still believed was a wounded whale. The instant a harpoon struck the beast, a nightmarish head 10 feet long rose out of the water and lunged at the boats. Two of the longboats were capsized in seconds. Before the monster submerged, the terrified whalers realized at once that they were dealing with a sea creature the likes of which they had never seen.

Unfurling her sails to catch what little wind there was, the *Monongahela* managed to come alongside the capsized longboats and began to pick up the seamen who were bobbing in the

water, fearing that the hideous beast might at any moment resurface and eat them. The *Rebecca Sims*, under the command of Captain Gavitt, pulled alongside her sister ship, and the crews of the two ships began discussing the strange monster that they had encountered.

The next morning, the crewmen had pulled in only about half of the line when the massive carcass suddenly popped to the surface. It was much greater in length than the ship, which measured 100 feet from stem to stern, and it had a thick body that was about 50 feet in diameter. Its color was a brownish gray with a light stripe about three feet wide running its full length. Its neck was 10 feet around, and it supported a grotesque head that was 10 feet long and shaped like that of a gigantic alligator. The astounded crewmen counted 94 teeth in its ghastly jaws—and each of the three-inch, saberlike teeth were hooked backward, like those of a snake.

Seabury was fully aware of the ridicule accorded to sailing masters and their crews who claimed to have encountered "sea serpents," so he gave orders that the hideous head be chopped off and placed in a huge pickling vat in order to preserve it until they returned to New Bedford. In addition, he wrote a detailed report of their harpooning the sea monster and he provided a complete description of the thing. Since Gavitt and his crew were homeward bound, Seabury gave him the report in order to prepare New Bedford for the astonishing exhibit that he and his men would bring with them upon their own return.

If only Seabury would have transferred the grisly head to Gavitt's vessel along with his report of the monster, the doubting world would have had its first mounted sea serpent's head more than 150 years ago. Captain Seabury's account of the incredible sea serpent arrived safely in New Bedford and was entered into the records along with the personal oath of Captain Gavitt. But the *Monongahela* never returned to port with its incredible cargo. Years later her nameboard was found on the shore of Umnak Island in the Aleutians.

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#### THUNDERBIRDS

The Thunderbird figures prominently in the traditions of many Native American tribes. For some, it is the flapping of the Thunderbird's wings that one hears during rainstorms rumbling in the skies and it is the Thunderbird's eyes and beak that flash the lightning. To the Lakota of the prairie, the Thunderbird is an embodiment of the Great Mystery, the Supreme Being, which created all things on Earth. For the tribes of the Iroquois Confederacy of the northeast, Hino, the Thunderbird, guardian of the skies and the spirit of thunder, could assume the form of a human when it suited its purpose. The cosmology of many of the western tribes establish a Thunderbird in each of the four corners of the world as guardians and protectors, fighting always to keep away evil spirits.

Many scholars over the centuries have attributed the Native American myths of the Thunderbird to their reverence for the eagle, the largest of indigenous birds in North America. Interestingly, however, many people have claimed to have seen for themselves a great bird, far larger than the eagle, flying overhead. In fact, even in the nineteenth century, some witnesses were claiming to have seen flying monsters that resembled pterodactyls, the winged reptiles that should have been extinct 60 million years ago.

On April 9, 1948, a farm family outside of Caledonia, Illinois, saw a monster bird that they all said was bigger than an airplane. In different parts of the state on the same day, a Freeport truck driver said that he, too, had seen the creature. A former army colonel admitted that he had seen a bird of tremendous size while he stood talking with the head of Western Military Academy and a farmer near Alton. On April 10, several witnesses

saw the gigantic bird. One man said that he had at first believed it to be a type of plane that he had never before seen. On April 24, back at Alton, a man described it as an enormous, incredible thing, flying at about 500 feet and casting a shadow the same size as that of a Piper Cub at the same height. Two policemen said that the monster bird was as big as a small airplane.

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THE *Thunderbird is an embodiment of the Great Mystery, the Supreme Being, which created all things on Earth.*

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Giant Thunderbird-type creatures have continued to be sighted in various parts of the United States, from the northeast to the northwest and many points in between. On September 25, 2001, a witness sighted a giant bird flying over South Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Researchers soon found other witnesses who claimed to have had sightings of Thunderbirds in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. On November 5, a resident of Bristol, Connecticut, who was out walking his dog at dawn, said that he had sighted a giant birdlike creature the size of an ultralight plane flying over a community center.

In addition to the ancient Native American legends of the Thunderbird, there are certain old pioneer records that support the existence of giant birdlike creatures in the skies of North America. From the mouth of the Illinois River at Grafton to Alton (Illinois), a distance of 20 miles, the Mississippi River runs from west to east, and its north bank (the Illinois side) is a high bluff. When the first white men explored the area, they found that some unknown muralist from some forgotten tribal culture had engraved and painted hideous depictions of two gigantic, winged monsters. The petroglyphs were each about 30 feet in length and 12 feet in height.

Father Jacques Marquette (1637–1675), the celebrated Jesuit priest-explorer, mentioned the strange petroglyphs in his journals of the Mis-

issippi, published in Paris in 1681. In a small volume published in 1698, Father Louis Hennepin (1626–after 1701), another early explorer of the wilds of the west, had also described the two enormously large petroglyphs. In his 48-page booklet *The Piasa or the Devil Among the Indians* (Morris, Ill., 1887), P. A. Armstrong described the creatures as having “the wings of a bat, but of the shape of an eagle’s... They also had four legs, each supplied with eagle-shaped talons. The combination and blending together of the master species of the earth, sea, and air... so as to present the leading and most terrific characteristics of the various species thus graphically arranged, is an absolute wonder and seems to show a vastly superior knowledge of animal, fowl, reptile, and fish nature than has been accorded to the Indian.”

Whatever the petroglyphs truly represented, all the native tribes of what then constituted the Northwest Territory had a terrible tradition associated with the creatures they called the Piasa (or Piusa). Sometime in the 1840s, Professor John Russell of Jersey County, Illinois, explored the caves that the Piasa were said to have inhabited and reported that the roof of the cavern was nearly 20 feet high and vaulted. The shape of the cave was irregular, but so far as Professor Russell and his guide could judge, the bottom averaged 20 by 30 feet. According to Russell: “The floor of the cave throughout its whole extent was one mass of human bones. Skulls and other bones were mingled together in the utmost confusion... we dug to the depth of three or four feet in every quarter of the cavern and still found only bones. The remains of thousands must have been deposited there.”

Some of the traditions of the native people state that the Piasa was fond of bathing in the Mississippi and was a rapid swimmer. When it was splashing about in the Father of Waters, it raised such a commotion as to force great waves over the banks. Other ancient traditions state that when the Piasa was angry it thrashed the ground with its tail until the whole earth shook and trembled. The Piasa was generally feared because of its propensity for snatching tribespeople and making off with them. John Russell published an account of the Piasa’s insatiable appetite for human flesh in the 1848 July issue

of *The Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*: “[the Piasa] was artful as he was powerful, and would dart suddenly and unexpectedly upon an Indian, bear him off into one of the caves of the bluff and devour him. Hundreds of warriors attempted for years to destroy him, but without success. Whole villages were nearly depopulated, and consternation spread through all the tribes of the Illini.”

In the legends of the Miami tribe, the Miamis were fighting their traditional enemies, the Mestchegamies, at the upper end of the lower canyon near the cave of the Piasa. As the fighting was reaching its climax, the war whoops apparently disturbed the Piasa, and two fierce, winged creatures emerged from their caves, “uttering bellowings and shrieks, while the flapping of their wings upon the air roared out like so many thunderclaps.” The awful winged beasts swooped low over the heads of the combatants, and each snatched a Miami chieftain in its massive talons. The Miamis became instantly demoralized, believing that the Great Spirit had sent the Piasa to aid and assist their enemies.

The Miamis were so crippled as a nation that the survivors fled toward the Wabash River and did not feel safe until they had crossed its waters. Here they remained for generations before returning to Illinois territory. If these stories are true, then the seeming assistance by the Piasa to the Mestchegamies in their desperate battle with the Miamis near Alton, Illinois, proved to be a terrible curse instead of a sudden blessing. Soon after the Piasa had flown off with the screaming and struggling Miami chieftains in their talons, the monsters apparently developed a taste for human flesh. Consequently, the Mestchegami came to pay for their victory over the Miamis through an unending sacrifice of their people to feed the ever-hungry Piasa, which now seemed insatiable in their forays for human flesh.

According to Armstrong’s little book and his recounting of the Miami tradition, the Piasa existed “several thousand winters before the palefaces came.” Armstrong goes on to suggest the Piasa could have been surviving pterodactyl from the age of the great reptiles. “The fossil remains of some 25 species of this mon-

ster have been found [c. 1887], and it is sometimes called the pterosaur or flying lizard," he writes. "But the most singular monster of the age yet discovered [and its shape and component parts analyzed] is the ramphorhynchus, which seems to be a connective link between birds, beasts, and reptiles. Its body and neck resemble that of the Piasa, while its tail is identical with it, except it is pictured as dragging behind instead of being carried around the body or over its back and head. The shape of the head is drawn to resemble that of a duck, with the long bill of a snipe or bittern, but it is full of sharp, round teeth, like those of the crocodile. It had four legs, with eagle's talons, and a pair of bat-like wings...its entire length from head to tip of tail was probably 30 feet or more. In many respects the Piasa is a faithful copy of the ramphorhynchus. The form, shape, and description of the Piasa, according to the Indian tradition, were painted from actual sight of the living subject... Thus may the traditions of these Indians be true..."

Numerous sightings of birds the size of small airplanes were reported in southwest Pennsylvania in the summer and early fall of 2001. On June 13, a resident in Greensville, who said that he was familiar with the wildlife in the area, at first mistook the huge bird for an ultralight aircraft. He estimated the wingspan to be about 15 feet and the body to be nearly five feet in length. In July, a witness in Erie County claimed to have seen a large, black-colored bird with a wingspan of about 17 feet. On September 25, a witness who said that he had a strong interest in ornithology, encountered a massive bird with a head about three feet long and a wingspan of 10 to 15 feet.

In October 2002, Alaskan villagers in Togiak and Manokotak reported seeing a huge bird larger than anything they had seen before. Pilot John Bouker, owner of Bristol Bay Air Service, said that while flying to Manokotak he and his passengers sighted a large "raptorlike" bird with a wingspan that matched the length of his Cessna 207, about 14 feet. When Moses Coupchiak, a heavy equipment operator from Togiak, spotted the monster bird flying toward him, he said that he thought it was a small airplane until it banked to the left and flew away.

Biologists in the region said that they believed the witnesses sighted a bird known as the Steller's sea eagle, a species native to northeast Asia, that occasionally shows up on the Aleutian islands and on Kodiak, Alaska. The Steller's sea eagle can have a wingspan of eight feet and is about three times as large as a bald eagle.

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## WEE FOLK AND THEIR FRIENDS

All cultures have their stories of the wee folk, the nature entities, that appear so often to be a mirror-image of humankind and somehow indicate that humans are part of a larger community of intelligences—both physical and nonphysical. Since the beginning of time, the human race and the wee folk have shared this planet, experiencing a strange, symbiotic relationship. In such cultures as ancient Rome, the household spirits were called "Lares," and the tradition of each home having its own guardian of the hearth survived throughout most of Europe. Although the great majority of modern people stereotypically envision fairies, elves, brownies, and so forth gamboling about only in the woodlands, there are long traditions of friendly spirits who guard the home and look after the barn, stables, and farm animals.

In many traditions, especially in the British Isles and Scandinavia, the fairy folk were supernatural entities who inhabited a magical kingdom beneath the surface of the earth. In all traditions, the wee people are

depicted as possessing many more powers and abilities than humans, but somehow they are strongly dependent on human beings and from time to time they seek to reinforce their own kind by kidnapping both human children and adults.

While the wee people and their associated entities—elves, gnomes, and leprechauns—are most often depicted as sweet, little winged “Tinkerbells” and jolly forest creatures in bright costumes and pointed hats, each of the fairy folk and their kin have a dark side. Some of the nursery tales throughout the centuries have depicted a certain mischievous nature to the wee people, but the creatures can become downright nasty—even dangerous—if provoked.

Medieval theologians seemed to favor three possibilities to explain the origin of these beings:

1. they are a special class of demoted angels,
2. they are spirits of the dead or a special class of the dead, or
3. they are fallen angels.

Most of the ancient texts declare that these entities are of a middle nature, “between humans and angels.” Although they are of a nature between spirits and humans, they can intermarry with humans and bear half-human children. One factor has been consistent in all traditions: the “middle folk” continually meddle in affairs of humans, sometimes to do them good, sometimes to do them ill.

C. S. Lewis (1898–1963), author of many books on spiritual matters, once suggested that the wee folk are a third rational species. The angels are the highest, having perfect goodness and whatever knowledge is necessary for them to do God’s will; humans, somewhat less perfect, are the second; fairies, having certain powers of the angels but no souls, are the third.

Because the folklore of the wee people is so multicultural and worldwide, some theorists have suggested that the fairy folk may actually have been the surviving remnants of a past civilization populated by a species of early humans or humanoids that were of diminutive stature compared to evolving *Homo sapiens*. These little people may have been quite

advanced and possessed a technology that seemed to be magical compared to the primitive tools of the primitive hunter-gatherer humans who later became the established residents of the area. The little people may have died out, they may have been assimilated into the encroaching culture by interbreeding, or they may largely have gone underground, emerging topside often enough to be perpetuated in folklore and legend.

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#### ELVES

In old Germany, “elf” was a name applied to any kind of supernatural spirit, especially one that inhabited fields or forests. The Germans also blamed elves for sitting on their chests while they slept and causing them to have a nightmare.

In Scotland, England, and Scandinavia, “elf” was another name for a member of the fairy folk. Then, as fairy lore developed and became more intricate and complex, with levels and classes within their supernatural ranks, the English designated elves as smaller members of the fairy population and the Scots gave the title of elf to those beings who were generally of human size. Things changed a bit in Scandinavia, as well, when the people there began to distinguish two categories of elves—the benign light ones and the dastardly dark ones. Scottish lore developed to perceive the



kindly elves as the “seelie court” and the nasty spirits as the “unseelie court.”

Scandinavians also called the elves the “huldre folk” and envisioned two principle divisions of the beings. There were the lovely, charming elves, who easily passed for humans and who loved to join in folk dances and in village parties. These elves, especially the females of the bunch, could easily seduce any human male into obeying their will. The male elves, though appearing handsome and dashing in the firelight of a village festival, would usually be exposed as ugly when moonlight struck them in the forests. The Danes also noticed that even the attractive elves occasionally betrayed themselves with a long cowl-like tail that popped out of their dress or trousers.

In contemporary presentations, elves are usually portrayed as jolly creatures, humanlike in appearance, but extremely diminutive in size, who love teasing humans and playing pranks on them.

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#### FAIRIES

According to those who speak the Gaelic tongue of Scotland and Ireland, the wee folk prefer to be known as “sidhe” (also spelled sidh, sith, sithche) and pronounced “shee.” There is disagreement as to the exact meaning



Fairies—magical winged beings.

(CORBIS CORPORATION)

of *sidhe*. Some say that it refers to the mounds or hills in which the supernatural folk abide. Others say that it means “the people of peace,” and that is how the *sidhe* generally behave toward humans unless the topside dwellers offend them in some way.

Traditionally, the fairies are a race of beings who are the counterparts of humankind in physical appearance but, at the same time, are nonphysical or multidimensional. They are mortal, but lead longer lives than their human cousins. Fairies have always been considered very much akin to humans, but also as something other than mortal.

The fairies are said to be able to enchant humans, to take advantage of them in numerous ways, and even cast a spell on likely young men or women and marry them. They often seem intent upon kidnapping children and adults and whisking them off to their underground kingdom. Those who return from the magical kingdom have experienced missing hours, days, weeks—even years.

On the plus side, fairies have also been reported to help farmers harvest their crops or assist housemaids in cleaning a kitchen. There



**"Fairy Tale: A True Story." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)**

are accounts of fairy folk guiding humans to achieve material successes, and stories are told of fairy midwives who stand by to assist at the births of favored human children and who remain to guide and tutor them for the rest of their lives.

Some scholars and researchers of the considerable body of worldwide fairylore maintain that fairies are entities who belong solely to the realm of spirit. Many of the ancient texts declare that the fairies are somehow of a "middle nature betwixt Man and Angel." Some biblically inspired authorities have sought to cast fairies as an earthly incarnation assumed by the rebellious angels who were driven out of heaven during the celestial uprising led by Lucifer. These fallen angels, cast from their heavenly abode, took up new residences in the forests, mountains, and lakes of Earth. As fallen angels, they now existed in a much-diminished capacity, but still possessed more than enough power to be deemed supernatural by the human inhabitants of the planet.

In a variation of that account of the fairies' origin, other scholars contend that after the

war in heaven, the dispossessed angels materialized on Earth and assumed physical bodies similar to those of humans—those beings declared "a little lower than the angels." Eventually, these parapsychical beings took humans as mates, thereby breeding a hybrid species of entities "betwixt Man and Angel."

William Shakespeare (1564–1616) made fairies famous in a number of his masterworks. He is largely responsible for the concept of the wee folk as mostly benign—mischievous, perhaps, but never evil. Alexander Pope (1688–1744) wrote lovely passages idealizing fairies, but once satirically remarked that he believed many of the woodland sprites were possessed by the souls of deceased socialites who even after death refused to give up earthly amusements. Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) emphasized the beauty of the fairy realm and the struggle of the fairies to achieve humanlike souls. The famed poet William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) had a nearly obsessive interest in the supernatural and strongly believed in fairies.

It was the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930), who came

to the defense of Elsie Wright and Frances Griffiths, the two little girls who allegedly photographed fairies in the famous Case of the Cottingley Fairies in 1917. Doyle became convinced that fairies are genuine psychic phenomena and that just as some people can act as **mediums** and others have unusual powers of **extrasensory perception**, so do others—especially certain children—have the ability to see fairies. Concerning fairies themselves, Doyle theorized that they are constructed of material that emits vibrations either shorter or longer than the normal spectrum visible to the human eye.

Although in the 1980s it was revealed that the two girls had quite likely faked the photographs of the fairies, in 1997 a motion picture entitled *Fairy Tale: A True Story* chose to emphasize the magical qualities of the Cottingley incident. Charles Sturridge, the director, was quoted in *Premiere*, November 1997, as saying that he didn't want to make a film about whether or not the two young girls had faked the fairy photographs. Sturridge emphasized that his film was really all about, "The need to believe beyond what you can see." Interestingly, yet another film about the Cottingley fairies, *Photographing Fairies*, appeared in 1998, and director Nick Willing chose to depict the elemental beings primarily as spirits.

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#### GNOMES

Traditionally, gnomes are most often represented as gnarled, wrinkled, hunched old men who have been assigned to guard some ancient treasure. Over the years, the entities have been confused with images of mischievous elves, fun-loving fairies, or dwarves working in diamond mines, but classically, the role of the gnome is that of a supernatural guardian who can release the treasures of the earth to the earnest **alchemist** or magician. The gnome, according to the alchemists of the Renaissance, had the ability to move through the earth in a manner similar to a human moving through air or a fish through water. The alchemist would seek to invoke the energy of the salamander, a lizardlike entity whose element was fire, and the gnome, whose element was earth, and combine their energies with air and water to create gold from base metals.

The name applied to the guardian of the earth's treasures is thought to be derived from the Greek "genomos," earth-dweller. Popular images of little men and women with pointed hats who inhabit flower gardens and forests have most likely confused gnomes with elves.

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#### GOBLINS

Goblins are closely related to demonic entities. Although some Europeans recognize a gentler variety known as a “hobgoblin,” goblins seem never to be satisfied with creating mischief. Their specialty is wreaking havoc and malicious acts of harm. Usually portrayed as small, grotesque beings, the basic nature of goblins is as foul as their appearance.

The spunkie is a Scottish goblin that particularly has it in for those travelers who venture out after dark. The spunkie is considered so nasty that tradition claims it to be a direct agent of Satan. It hovers about in the darkness, just waiting for a traveler to become lost in the night, perhaps during a rainstorm when visibility is especially bad. The goblin manifests a light that appears to the desperate wayfarer like illumination shining through a windowpane, thus signaling shelter and a dry place to spend the inclement evening. But as the hopeful traveler approaches the light, it keeps moving just a bit farther away. Since the poor, drenched pilgrim has no choice in the darkness but to keep pursuing the light source, the spunkie keeps moving it just a bit farther on—until the evil goblin has lured the unfortunate traveler over a cliff.

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#### GREMLINS

Although gremlins are a recent addition to the folklore of the wee folk, it would seem that their antecedents are the goblins of old. The term “gremlin” was derived from the Old English word *greme*, which means to vex and annoy. And that is certainly what the gremlins did to the pilots and their aircraft in World War II (1939–45) when the pesky entities were routinely blamed for engine troubles, electronic failures, and any other thing that might go wrong with an airplane.

Although the tales of gremlins received their greatest notoriety annoying the pilots of Great Britain’s Royal Air Force (RAF) in the period 1940–45, Dave Stern, an aerospace, aviation, and history writer, says that the legend began in 1923 when a British navy pilot crashed into the sea. Once he was rescued, he blamed the accident on some little people who had jumped out of a beer bottle and had tormented him all night. It was these wee troublemakers who had followed him into the airplane, entered into the engine, messed with the flight controls, and caused him to crash. Not long after this reported gremlin attack, some pilots and mechanics stationed at an overseas RAF aerodrome complained of being bothered by the annoying entities, and by 1925, British pilots were cussing the little monsters and blaming gremlins for almost anything that might possibly go wrong with their aircraft.

According to airmen who swore that they had survived close encounters with the mischief makers, the gremlins dressed in red or green double-breasted frock coats, old-fashioned tricorne hats with a feather (or sometimes stocking caps with tassels at high altitudes), tights, and pointed footwear. Some of the gremlins loved to suck the high octane gas out of the tanks; others messed with the landing gears; and still others specialized in jamming the radio frequencies. Just as the pilots and mechanics were learning to respect the gremlin crowd, it wasn’t long before they also began to be annoyed by the gremlins’ girlfriends, the finellas, nicknamed the widgets.

When the U.S. Army Air Force pilots were stationed in Great Britain after the United States entered World War II in December 1941, they found the gremlins waiting for them. The men may have scoffed at their allies at first, but they were soon suffering unexplained attacks on their instrument panels, their bombing sights, and the de-icer mechanisms. The Yanks found that they had also fallen victims to the annoying antics of the gremlins.

Although the most intense activity of the gremlin throng occurred during World War II, one still hears on occasion a pilot cussing a mechanical failure in his aircraft as having been caused by a gremlin attack.

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#### LEPRECHAUNS

The classic tale of the leprechaun is that of the Irishman catching one of the wee folk and demanding to be given the little fellow's crock of gold. In these stories, the sly leprechaun always manages to trick the greedy lout who has grabbed him by causing the human to glance away from him for even a moment. Once a human takes his or her eyes off the leprechaun he or she has somehow managed to glimpse in the first place, the wee one has the power to vanish in a flash.

The origin of the leprechaun derives from a tale much like the old story of the shoemaker and the elves. The leprechaun, dressed in his bright green clothing with a red cap and a leather apron, was originally known as the cheerful cobbler, a wee person who takes delight in repairing humans' shoes for a reward of a bowl of porridge.

The countryfolk of Ireland take their wee folk seriously, and they know better than to dis-



Model from the film "Gremlin." (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

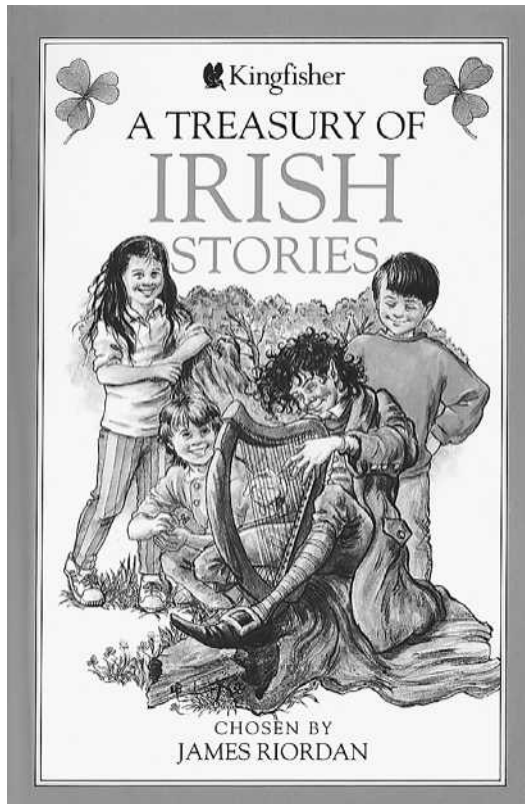
turb the mounds or raths in which the leprechauns dwell. Those who would wantonly violate the wee one's domicile is to invite severe supernatural consequences upon oneself.

The trouble at the rath outside the village of Wexford began on a morning in 1960 when the workmen from the state electricity board began digging a hole for the erection of a light pole within the parameters of a rath. The villagers warned the workmen that the pole would never stay put, because no self-respecting community of wee folk could abide a disturbance on their mound.

The big city electrical workmen had a laugh at the expense of the villagers and said some uncomplimentary things about the level of intelligence of the townsfolk of Wexford. They finished digging the hole to the depth that experience had taught them was adequate; then they placed the post within the freshly dug opening and stamped the black earth firmly around its base. The satisfied foreman pronounced for all within earshot to hear that no fairy folk or leprechaun would move the pole from where it had been anchored.

However, the next morning the pole tilted at a sharp angle in loose earth. The villagers shrugged that the wee folk had done it, but the foreman of the crew voiced his suspicions that the leprechauns had received some help

Illustration of a  
leprechaun from *A  
Treasury of Irish Stories*.  
(ELSIE LENNOX)



from some humans bent on mischief. Glaring his resentment at any villagers who would meet his accusative eyes, the foreman ordered his men to reset the pole.

The next morning that one particular pole was once again conspicuous in the long line of newly placed electrical posts by its weird tilt in the loose soil at its base. While the other poles in the line stood straight and firmly upright, that one woebegone post was tilted askew.

The foreman had endured enough of such rustic humor at his expense. He ordered the crew to dig a hole six feet wide, place the pole precisely in the middle, and pack the earth so firmly around the base that nothing short of a bomb could budge it.

But the next morning the intrusive pole had once again been pushed loose of the little people's rath. The foreman and his crew from the electricity board finally knew when they were licked. Without another word to the grinning villagers, the workmen dug a second hole four feet outside of the mound and dropped the pole in there. And that was where it stood as solid as the Emerald Isle for many years to come.

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#### MENEHUNE

The Menehune are the wee people of the Hawaiian Islands; and just as there are folk legends and beliefs that the fairies of the British Isles were originally an early diminutive people, so do some traditions in Polynesia maintain that the Menehunes were an ancestral pygmy race that averaged about two feet in height. There are ancient sites in the Hawaiian Islands that some inhabitants still believe are the ruins of temples built by the Menehunes.

For most Polynesians, however, the prevailing accounts of the Menehune are told as if the beings have always been members of a spirit race that coexists with humans. The Menehune often serve as guardians and guides for the people, and the help of the "little vanishing ones" is sought in all tasks, from erecting a home to building a canoe. Much like the old European traditions of setting out food for the elves to come at night and assist the farmer or shoemaker, workers in Hawaii will sometimes set out sweets to insure the cooperation of the Menehune in the completion for their work project. The Menehune are highly regarded as engineers, and very often construction workers in Hawaii will ask a traditional priest, a Kahuna, to ask the blessing of the Menehune before any major building has begun. To neglect to do so may bring dire consequences if the work has been scheduled on a site that the Menehune regard as sacred. In this case, the Kahuna must offer prayers and gifts to pacify the spirit beings and win their cooperation.

From time to time, native inhabitants and tourists to the islands claim to have caught a glimpse of the Menehune as they scurry from bush to bush in the forested regions. Most people describe the little people with light or slightly reddish-colored skin and large fuzzy mops of hair.

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#### MERMAIDS

There are few tales of the fairy folks' friends that are as captivating as those that deal with the mermaid, those ocean-dwelling divinities that are half-human and half-fish. Although there are mermen, the greater fascination has always been on the mermaid with her top half a beautiful woman and her bottom half that of a fish. Traditionally, the mermaid is also gifted with a lovely singing voice, which can be used to warn sailors of approaching storms or jagged rocks ahead. Or, in many of the ancient stories, the seductive siren song of the mermaids lure the seamen onto the jagged rocks and to their deaths. As with all of the "middle-folk," mermaids can be agents of good or of destruction.

As in the folklore of the **selkie**, sometimes mermaids fall in love with humans and are able to come ashore in human shape and to live on land for many years. They may even have children with their human husbands. But in all of these tales of mercreatures and human mates, the mermaid longs to return to the sea, and one day she will leave her human family and do so.

The Ceasg is a type of mermaid that haunts the lakes of the Scottish highlands. Her upper body and facial features are those of a beautiful, well-endowed woman, but her lower half is that of a large salmon. Like most supernatural beings, the Ceasg is of a dual nature. If a handsome young man should capture her attention and treat her well, she may

assume human shape and marry him, at the same time granting him three wishes that may make them wealthy. If she feels that she has been disrespected or treated badly, she may use her beauty to lure a fisherman to the deepest part of the lake and drown him.

In Lake Tanganyika in the small East African country of Burundi, the Mambu-mutu is very much the classical mermaid, half attractive woman and half large fish. In her case, however, she does not fancy humans, and her only intention is to drag them under the lake's surface and suck their blood.

In Estonian folklore, the Nakh are shape-shifting water demons who walk freely on land as handsome young men or beautiful women who lure their victims with the sound of their sweet, seductive singing. Once they have enchanted their victims, they lead them to river, lake, or ocean and entice them to watery graves.

The Nix is a particularly nasty shape-shifting entity who, like all the fairy folk, loves to dance. According to German folklore, the Nix are attracted to the sound of music at fairs, carnivals, or outdoor concerts, and they appear as attractive men or women who enthrall the human audience with their skill and grace on the dance floor. Once they have lured a charmed human to join them at water's edge with the promise of romantic dalliance, they reveal themselves to be ugly, green-skinned fairies who drag their victims into the water and death by drowning.

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#### NISSE

In the Scandinavian tradition, the nisse is a household entity that looks after hearth and home, a kind of guardian entity—but with an attitude. Nisse can be extremely volatile if provoked, and they are often mischievous lit-

the pranksters. Naughty children sometimes have their hair pulled and their toys hidden by the nisse, who is always watching with disapproving eyes any sign of misbehavior or disobedience. And a cat that becomes too curious will likely have its tail yanked good and proper by the annoyed nisse.

The nisse is also the farmer's friend, and it often sleeps in the barn to keep watch over the animals. If a hired hand should be slow in feeding the cattle or other livestock, the nisse will be certain to give them their grain—and to mete out punishment to the sluggish hired man who was tardy in his duties. The nisse might trip him as he walks up the stairs to his bedroom or spill his hot soup on his lap at the evening meal. If treated with respect, the nisse remains an effective guardian over hearth and outbuildings. He does demand payment for the performance of his duties, and the wise householder will be certain to leave hot porridge on the step at night and to make it known that the nisse is free to take whatever grain from the bin that he might require for his own needs.

Closely related to the nisse are the hul-drefolk, the hidden people, the fairy folk of Scandinavia, who are generally quite benign if treated with respect. If one should be foolish enough to anger them or violate their territory, they can become extremely malicious. Generally, though, as the following story illustrates, the hidden people are quite reasonable.

In 1962, the new owners of a herring-processing plant in Iceland decided to enlarge their work area. According to Icelandic tradition, no landowner must fail to reserve a small plot of his or her property for the hidden folk, and a number of the rural residents earnestly pointed out to the new proprietors that any extension of the plant would encroach upon the plot of ground that the original owners had set aside for the little people who lived under the ground.

The businessmen laughed. For one thing, they didn't harbor those old folk superstitions. For another, they had employed a top-notch, highly qualified construction crew who possessed modern, unbreakable drill bits and plenty of explosives.

But the bits of the "unbreakable" drills began to shatter one after another. An old farmer came forward to repeat the warning that the crew was trespassing on land that belonged to the hidden folk. At first the workmen laughed at the old man and marveled that such primitive superstitions could still exist in modern Iceland. But the drill bits kept breaking.

Finally, the manager of the plant, although professing disbelief in such superstitions, agreed to the old farmer's recommendation that he consult a local seer to establish contact with the hidden folk and attempt to make peace with them. After going into a brief trance-state, the seer returned to waking consciousness to inform the manager that there was one particularly powerful member of the hidden folk who had selected this plot as his dwelling place. He was not an unreasonable being, however. If the processing plant really needed the plot for its expansion, he would agree to find another place to live. The hidden one asked only for five days without any drilling, so that he could make his arrangements to move.

The manager felt a bit strange bargaining with a being that was invisible—and as far as he had previously been concerned, imaginary. But he looked over at the pile of broken drill bits and told the seer that the hidden one had a deal. Work on the site would be shut down for five days to give him a chance to move.

After five days had passed and the workmen resumed drilling, the work proceeded smoothly and efficiently until the addition to the plant was completed. There were no more shattered bits on the unbreakable drill.

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**SELKIES**

Selkies, the seal people of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, wish to live harmoniously with those humans who love the sea as much as they do. They have sometimes been confused with the sirens of Greek lore that have no interest in creating anything but death and chaos for seafarers. The selkies can shape-shift and appear in human form, resuming their true forms only when they wish to travel through the sea.

The selkies are among a small number of gentle and supernatural beings. They often take human spouses and produce children who occasionally have webbed hands and feet and who are always born with a love for the sea. But one day the selkie's desire for the sea will overwhelm her, and she will reclaim her discarded seal skin and return to the ocean, where she will keep in touch with her human family only by her song and an occasional appearance near the shore. John Sayles wrote and directed an enchanting film about the selkies in *The Secret of Roan Inish* (1994), adapted from Rosalie Frye's novella *The Secret of Ron Mor Skerry*.

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**TROLLS**

Trolls bear no resemblance to the cute little dolls with big bug-eyes, dolphin grins, and bushy red hair. Rather, trolls are nasty monsters who can assume gigantic proportions and wreak havoc wherever they choose. They are fiendish giants, often associated with dark-side sorcerers.

To the old Norse, the term "troll" was applied only to hostile giants. By the time of the high Middle Ages, trolls had become a bit smaller and more fiendish, but they had also become capable of working black magic and sorcery. Regardless of their size, trolls are unre-

lenting enemies of humankind. Those occasional Scandinavian folk heroes who dared to engage them in mortal combat were able to defeat the trolls with their superior intelligence, rather than might of arm or sword. Trolls are most often quite slow-witted, and they become confused and weak if they can be somehow tricked into stepping out of their darkened caves into direct sunlight.

In more contemporary times, the troll is regarded as a denizen of mountain caves, larger than the average human, and exceedingly ugly, who often crouches under bridges waiting for unsuspecting victims.

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**ACTORS WHO FACED (OR BECAME) MOVIE MONSTERS**

Even the most casual fan of Hollywood horror films is familiar with the classic creatures of movie monsterdom and the actors who portrayed them—such as the Frankenstein monster, as enacted by Boris Karloff (1887–1969); the Wolf Man, as played by Lon Chaney, Jr. (1906–1973); and the vampire Count Dracula, as immortalized by Bela Lugosi (1882–1956). However, some of the most well-known actors in motion pictures or television encountered monsters—or impersonated them—before their stars had begun to rise or after their clout at the box office had begun to grow less powerful. Of course there are also the cases in which an established star simply enjoys playing a bona fide monster for a change of pace.

Dana Andrews (1909–1992), a minister's son, starred in such Hollywood classics as *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1943), *Laura* (1944), and *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946). Then, in *Curse of the Demon* (1957), he played an

American psychic investigator in London who was forced to battle a group of devil-worshippers who paid obeisance to a hideous ancient demon.

Before James Arness (1923– ) became television's invincible Matt Dillon in the long-running series *Gunsmoke* (1955–75), he played an alien being, a giant, carnivorous humanoid vegetable who terrified a group of scientists at an isolated Arctic research station in *The Thing* (1951). In *Them!* (1954), he was a government agent trying to subdue giant mutant ants that had taken over the Los Angeles sewer system.

The recipient of a special Academy Award in 1949 for his contribution to motion pictures, actor/dancer Fred Astaire (1899–1987), the master of the Hollywood musical, appeared in *Ghost Story* (1981) as one of a group of elderly men being stalked by a vengeful female shape-shifting spirit.

In the science fiction classic *The War of the Worlds* (1953), Gene Barry, who starred in such television series as *Bat Masterson* (1958–61) and *Burke's Law* (1963–66), was a scientist attempting to thwart a Martian invasion of Earth. He also appeared in *The Devil and Miss Sarah* (1971), an offbeat Western about a satanic outlaw harassing his tormentor's wife.

Raymond Burr (1917–1993), television's masterful attorney in the long-running law and order series *Perry Mason* (1957–66), was not quite so articulate in *Bride of the Gorilla* (1951). Burr portrayed a scheming murderer who was transformed into a human gorilla by a witch, the mother of a native girl he had betrayed. In the movie monster classic *Godzilla* (1956), he was an American journalist in Tokyo covering the story of a radioactive, prehistoric monster's devastation of Japan's capital. Burr's scenes were deftly spliced into the original Japanese footage to ensure the film obtaining a worldwide audience.

In *The Devil Within Her* (1975), Joan Collins (1933– ), the manipulative Alexis of the television series *Dynasty* (1981–89), had the role of a nightclub entertainer whose baby had been cursed by an evil dwarf. She fared little better in *Empire of the Ants* (1977), when Collins portrayed a real estate broker who,

through a bizarre transformation machine, became a slave to intelligent, human-sized ants.

In the science fiction classic *Donovan's Brain* (1953), Nancy Davis (Mrs. Ronald Reagan) (1921– ) played the girlfriend of a scientist who falls under the telepathic control of the rich man's brain that he is keeping alive.

The star of such motion picture masterpieces as *Champion* (1949), *Lust for Life* (1956), and *Spartacus* (1960), Kirk Douglas (1916– ) faced supernatural monsters in two films. In *The Chosen* (1978), he played a nuclear power industrialist whose son (Simon Ward), turned out to be the **Antichrist**, perhaps the ultimate monster. In *The Fury* (1978), Douglas's luck as a father was little better when his son (Andrew Stevens) developed incredible psychokinetic powers that he began to use against others.

Although Clint Eastwood (1930– ) handily dealt with thugs, outlaws, and criminals later in his career as hardened police officers or lawmen, in his cinematic green years, he was put up against bizarre monsters that were much too large to punch out or even to bring down with a .357 Magnum. In *Revenge of the Creature* (1955), he played a laboratory assistant to a scientist who was involved in placing the captured Gill Man from the Black Lagoon on exhibit at a Florida aquarium. That same year, Eastwood was a jet pilot trying to kill a giant tarantula that had been created in a laboratory experiment in *Tarantula*.

Peter Graves (1921– ) became well known as Jim Phelps, the authoritative director in the television series *Mission Impossible* (1967–73; 1988–90). As a scientist in *Red Planet Mars* (1952), Graves established radio contact with Martians. Courageously, Graves attempted to thwart the takeover of Earth by a Venusian creature in *It Conquered the World* (1956), and in *The Beginning of the End* (1957), he battled aliens and their underground menagerie of huge creatures.

In *The Power* (1968), George Hamilton (1939– ) is a man gifted with supernatural powers imparted to him at birth by extraterrestrials who is forced to battle another powerful, but evil, mind similarly endowed. In *Love*



at *First Bite* (1979), Hamilton brought his film career back from limbo with his portrayal of a comedic vampire.

In 1968 Charlton Heston (1924– ), the star of *The Ten Commandments* (1956) and *Ben Hur* (1959), for which he won an Oscar, appeared in *Planet of the Apes* as an astronaut who arrived in Earth's future to discover that intelligent apes were ruling the planet. He continued his role as an astronaut displaced by time in *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* in 1970. In the grimly futuristic *The Omega Man* (1971), Heston is the single human immune to a terrible virus that is decimating Earth's population after the radiation effects of a nuclear war and is turning most of those surviving into murderous mutants. In *The Awakening* (1980), he was an archaeologist faced with the decision of whether or not to kill his daughter, who has been possessed by the spirit of an ancient mummy.

Before he was “Little Joe” on television's venerable Western series *Bonanza* (1959–72), before he was a nearly perfect father on *Little House on the Prairie* (1974–82), and long before he was an angel on *Highway to Heaven* (1984–89), Michael Landon (1936–1991) was a hairy monster in *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* (1957). Landon played a troubled high school youth who was transformed into a werewolf by a misguided scientist who believed that he was conducting experiments to improve the human race.

The winner of the Best Actor Oscar in 1975 for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, as Best Supporting Actor in 1983 for *Terms of Endearment*, and again as Best Actor for *As Good As It Gets* (1997), in his early years as an actor Jack Nicholson (1937– ) squared off against two masters of the supernatural in *The Raven* (1963) with his portrayal of the son of a man transformed into a large raven (Peter

Two characters from the film “How to Make a Monster.” (DEL VALLE GALLERY)

Lorre, 1904–1964) by a nasty wizard (Boris Karloff). In *The Terror* (1963), Nicholson was a Napoleonic officer who encountered a witch, a mad baron (Karloff), and the vengeful spirit of a young woman. Nicholson walked the thin line of madness in *The Shining* (1980) and erupted on the screen in demonic, axe-wielding fury, goaded to violence by the supernatural forces in a mountain resort. In *The Witches of Eastwick* (1987), Nicholson got promoted from the demonically insane to an entity that may have been Satan himself—or at least a high-ranking demon. Nicholson made an excellent werewolf in the film *Wolf* (1994), skillfully achieving the trauma and terror of an ordinary man undergoing supernatural transformation. In *Mars Attacks!* (1996), he was the president of the United States attempting to defeat the bug-eyed invaders from Mars.

Leonard Nimoy (1931– ) was playing aliens long before he became Mr. Spock, the science officer of the *Enterprise* on the original television series *Star Trek* (1966–69). In *In Satan's Satellites* (also known as *Zombies of the Stratosphere*, 1958), he was an alien soldier who was part of a squadron determined to conquer Earth. He also had a small part in *The Brain Eaters* (1958), wherein alien creatures feasted on human gray matter.

Donald Sutherland (1934– ) pounded a stake into the heart of his bride in *Dr. Terror's House of Horrors* (1965) when he learned that she was a vampire. In *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1978), he was a man desperately trying to destroy pods from outer space that grew into human beings, replacing the original persons with look-alike alien creatures. Sutherland returned to fighting vampires with a vengeance as The Chosen One's mentor in the original film version of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1992).

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## MAKING THE CONNECTION

**anthropology** The scientific study of the origins, behavior, physical, social, and cultural aspects of humankind.

**bipedal** Any animal that has two legs or feet. From the Latin stem *biped*, meaning two-footed.

**cadaver** A dead body that is usually intended for dissection. From the Latin *cadere*, meaning to fall or to die.

**cryptozoology** The study of so-called mythical creatures such as Sasquatch or Bigfoot, whose existence has not yet been scientifically substantiated.

**demarcation** The process of setting borders, limits or marking boundaries. From the Spanish *demarcacion*, literally meaning, marking off.

**elixir** Something that is a mysterious, magical substance with curative powers believed to heal all ills or to prolong life and preserve youthfulness. From the Arabic *al-iksir* and the Greek *xerion*, meaning dry powder for treating wounds.

**hoax** An act of deception that is intended to make people think or believe something is real when it is not.

**jinni** In Islamic or Muslim legend, a spirit that is capable of taking on the shape of humans or animals in order to perform mischievous acts or to exercise supernatural power and influence over humans. From the Arabic *jinn*, which is the plural of *jinni*.

**Kabbalist/Kabbalah** Jewish mystical teachings that are based on hidden meanings in the Hebrew Scriptures. Can also be spelled Cabala. From the Hebrew *qabbalah*, meaning tradition, and from *quibbel*, to give, receive or accept, ultimately something that is handed down.

**lupinomanis** Having the excessive characteristics of a wolf, such as being greedy or ravenously hungry.

**lycanthropy** The magical ability in legends and horror stories of a person who is able

to transform into a wolf, and take on all of its characteristics.

**metrology** The scientific system or study of measurements. From the Greek *metrologie*, meaning theory of ratios and *metron*, or measure.

**paleoanthropology** The study of humanlike creatures or early human beings more primitive than *Homo Sapiens*, usually done through fossil evidence.

**paleontology** The study of ancient forms of life in geologic or prehistoric times, using such evidence as fossils, plants, animals, and other organisms.

**putrefy** Causing something to decay, usually indicating a foul odor. From the Latin stem, *putr*, meaning rotten, plus *facere*, to make.

**sauropod** Any of various large semi-aquatic plant-eating dinosaurs that had a long neck and tail and a small head. From the suborder *Sauropoda*, a Latin word meaning lizard foot.

**therianthropic** Used to describe a mythological creature that is half human and half animal. Coined from the Greek *therion*, meaning small wild animal, and *anthropo*, meaning human being.

**Wiccan** Someone who is a witch, a believer or follower of the religion of Wicca.

**zoology** The scientific branch of biology that studies animals in all their characteristics and aspects. From the Greek *zoologia*, literally the study of life and from *zolon*, or life form.

**CHAPTER 12**  
**MYSTERIES OF**  
**THE MIND**

*Throughout the centuries, philosophers, poets, prophets, and scientists wondered who humans really are. Many believe the greatest adventure is available to those who wish to explore the mysteries of the mind—the miracle of consciousness, the enigma of dreams, and the mind beyond the physical bodies.*

CHAPTER EXPLORATION

**DREAMS**

Creative and Lucid Dreaming  
 Nightmares  
 Sleep Paralysis  
 Symbolology of Dreams

**THE MECHANICS OF MEMORY**

False Memories

**PHOBIAS**

**ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS**

Hallucinations  
 Hypnosis  
 Meditation  
 Psychedelics—The Mind-Expanding Drugs  
 Relaxation

**EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION:  
 THE “SIXTH SENSE”**

**ESP RESEARCHERS**

Clairvoyance  
 Out-of-Body Experience (OBE)  
 Precognition  
 Psychokinesis  
 Telepathy

## INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the greatest mystery of the human mind is how the brain gives rise to consciousness. A three-pound mass of spongy tissue somehow makes humans conscious of what they see, hear, touch, taste, smell, think, remember, and dream. This same grey matter allows humans to have subjective experiences of love, friendship, and the appreciation of music, art, and literature. In addition to conscious awareness, mystical states of consciousness appear to permit extrasensory communication with other human beings and even allow prophetic glimpses of the future.

The psychologist **William James** (1842–1910) once wrote that we know what consciousness is—as long as no one asks us to define it. Nobel Laureate Gerald M. Edelman, director of the Neurosciences Institute, has commented that what is most daunting about consciousness is that it doesn't seem to be a matter of behavior—it just is. “Multiple and simultaneous in its modes and objects, ineluctably ours,” Edelman has said, “it is a process and one that is hard to score. We know what it is in ourselves, but can only judge its existence in others by inductive inference.”

While no contemporary scientist would disagree that it is the brain that generates consciousness, there is no consensus regarding which parts of the brain are responsible for conscious experience. By assuming, as many scientists do, that consciousness is generated by neurons with special properties or locations in the brain, they leave unanswered the fundamental question: What is the process by which the brain gives rise to consciousness?

Which raises another question: How does conscious brain activity differ from the brain activity directing all of the unconscious actions that have become as automatic as breathing?

Scientists generally agree about the process involved in the brain responding with thought when, for example, one sees an object. Signals from the retina of the eye travel along nerves as waves of electrically charged ions. When these waves reach the nerve terminus, the signal is transmitted to the next nerve via neurotransmitters. Based

on the totality of impulses that it receives from the upstream nerves, the receiving nerve decides whether or not to fire. In this manner, electrical impulses are processed in the brain before being transmitted to the physical body. However, while this movement of ions and chemicals may trace the process of thinking and reacting, it still does not reveal the region of the brain that specializes in consciousness.

Professor Johnjoe McFadden from the School of Biomedical and Life Sciences at the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom, has remarked that it is consciousness that makes individuals human. Without consciousness, “...language, creativity, emotions, spirituality, logical deduction, mental arithmetic, our sense of fairness, truth, ethics, are all inconceivable,” McFadden told the May 17, 2002, issue of *Science News*.

McFadden theorizes that the mystery of consciousness might be solved by considering the conscious mind as an electromagnetic field. Every time a nerve fires, according to McFadden, the electrical activity sends a signal to the brain's electromagnetic (em) field. However, unlike solitary nerve signals, information that reaches the brain's em field is automatically linked together with all the other signals in the brain, and the brain's em field creates the binding process that is characteristic of consciousness.

While the conscious electromagnetic information field remains a theory, McFadden believes that it explains, among other things, why conscious actions feel so different from unconscious ones, “because they plug into the vast pool of information held in the brain's electromagnetic field.” And the em field of the brain is more than a repository of information. It can influence human activity by pushing some neurons toward firing and others away from firing. If his theory can be demonstrated to be true, McFadden says, it will reveal “many fascinating implications for the concept of free will, the nature of creativity or spirituality, consciousness in animals, and even the significance of life and death.”

This chapter will explore many mysteries of the mind, most of which presently defy scientific elucidation. While science may be able

to define the process by which many of these mysteries manifest, the actual region of the brain that gives rise to these enigmas remains as unknown as the secret of human consciousness itself. Perhaps one must look outside of the brain and begin to search for evidence of the human soul to explain dreams and their symbols, the higher levels of awareness that may be achieved in various altered states of consciousness, and the riddle of ESP (extrasensory perception), the mind expressing itself outside of the traditional boundaries of space and time.

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## DREAMS

Whether in ancient or in contemporary times, dreams are a mystery of the mind that everyone has experienced. Quite likely, most individuals have also pondered the meaning of their dreams. Whether these sleep-time adventures are considered voyages of the soul, messages from the gods, the doorway of the unconscious, or accidental by-products of insufficient oxygen in the brain, down through the ages thoughtful men and women have sought to learn more about this intriguing activity of the sleeping consciousness.

Among the ancients there were the dream incubation temples of Serapis, Egyptian god of dreams; and later, of Aesculapius, the Greek god of healing. Thousands of people made

their pilgrimage to these holy places to seek advice and healing from their dreams. After rigorous periods of fasting, prayer, and sacred ritual, they would attempt to induce revelatory nocturnal visions by spending the night in the temple. This practice was commonly employed by the cultic prophets and the kings of the ancient cities of Lagash in Sumer and Ugarit in Syria.

Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.) saw dreams as a release for passionate inner forces. In the second century, another Greek, Artemidorus of Ephesus, produced the *Oneirocritica*, the encyclopedia that was the forerunner to thousands of dream books throughout the ages.

In Hinduism, it is believed that the immortal soul within the physical body is able to leave the "house of flesh" during sleep and to travel wherever it desires. It is also thought that the passing to the next life after death may be compared to a sleeper awakening from a dream. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states that the soul, the "self-luminous being," may assume many forms, high and low, in the world of dreams. "Some say that dreaming is but another form of waking, for what a man experiences while awake he experiences again in his dreams....As a man passes from dream to wakefulness, so does he pass at death from this life to the next" (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 4.3.11–14, 35).

The Mesopotamian and Egyptian courts employed skilled professionals who sought to interpret dreams and visions. The Israelites, by contrast, believed that interpretation of dreams could be accomplished only with the Lord's guidance. "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet a man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and speaketh their instructions, that he may withdraw man from his purpose and hide pride from man" (KJV: Job 33:14). The Talmud, the Hebrew sacred book of practical wisdom, reveals that the Jews gave great importance both to the dream and to the one whom the Lord gave the knowledge to interpret the dream. Joseph and Daniel were two Israelites who attained high regard for their skill as dream interpreters.





Dreaming of worlds beyond. (ANDREW C. STEWART/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Dreams, or night visions, might be auditory and present a direct message (as in Job 33:15–17, Genesis 20:3,6) or at other times be symbolic, requiring skilled interpretation. Jacob had a dream of a ladder set up on Earth, the top of it reaching to heaven. He beheld in this dream angels of God ascending and descending on the ladder with the Lord standing above it, confirming the covenant of Abraham to Jacob (Genesis 28:12). King Solomon received both wisdom and warning in dreams (I Kings 3:5, 9:2).

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SIGMUND Freud brought dreams into the realm of the scientific community with his publication *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

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The New Testament accounts surrounding the birth of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) record a number of revelatory dreams. Joseph was instructed to wed Mary and was assured of her purity (Matthew 1:20), in spite of the apparent fact that she was already pregnant. Later, Joseph was warned to flee to Egypt (Matthew 2:13), return to Israel, (2:19) and to go to Galilee (2:22). The Magi (the three wise men) were warned in a dream not to return to their native land along the same route as they had come (2:12) because of Herod's evil intentions. Acts 2:17 contains the prophetic verse: "And it shall come to pass in the last days saith

God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy [preach] and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

By the late nineteenth century, dreams were being examined from a physiological perspective. The ancient notion that God spoke directly to men in dreams was pretty much dismissed by a culture that was becoming more scientific and materialistic. Then came the groundbreaking work of Sigmund Freud and Carl G. Jung.

In 1899 Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), a Viennese psychiatrist and the founder of psychoanalysis, brought dreams into the realm of the scientific community with the publication of his monumental work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in which he maintained that the dream is "the guardian of sleep" and "the royal road" to understanding the human unconscious. Freud's theory was basically that the dream was a disguised wish-fulfillment of infantile sexual needs, which were repressed by built-in censors of the waking mind. The apparent content of the dream was only concealing a shockingly latent dream. Through the use of a complex process of "dream work," which Freud developed, the dream could be unraveled backward, penetrating the unconscious memory of the dreamer and thereby setting the person free.

According to Dr. Stanley Krippner (1932– ), former director of the Dream Laboratory at Maimonides Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, contemporary experiments in sleep laboratories have confirmed many of Freud's speculations and cast doubt upon others. Some psychiatrists, including Lester Gelb, argue that the concept of the unconscious should be totally abandoned in explaining human behavior. Gelb feels it would be more useful to recognize several states or types of consciousness—working, sleeping, dreaming, daydreaming, trance, and so forth—each of which can be productively studied by behavioral scientists. Krippner stated that possible confirmation of Freud's emphasis on sexual symbolism does occur occasionally in modern electroencephalographic dream research, but he further observed that human thought processes are too

varied to allow any single, unitary explanation of dreaming to be adequate.

Swiss psychiatrist Carl G. Jung (1875–1961), a student and later dissenter of Freudian techniques, added new dimensions to the understanding of the self through dreams. From Jung's perspective, Freud expressed a contempt for the psyche as a kind of waste bin for inappropriate or immoral thoughts. In Jung's opinion, the unconscious was far more than a depository for the past; it was also full of future psychic situations and ideas. Jung saw the dream as a compensatory mechanism whose function was to restore one's psychological balance. His concept of a collective unconscious linked humans with their ancestors as part of the evolutionary tendency of the human mind. Jung rejected arbitrary interpretations of dreams and dismissed free Freudian association as wandering too far from the dream content. Jung developed an intricate system of "elaborations," in which the dreamer relates all that he or she knows about a symbol—as if he or she were explaining it to a visitor from another planet.

Jung found startling similarities in the unconscious contents and the symbolic processes of both modern and primitive humans, and he recognized what he called "archetypes," mental forces and symbology whose presence cannot be explained by anything in the individual's own life, but seemed to be "aboriginal, innate, and inherited shapes of the human mind." Jung believed that it is crucial to pay attention to the archetypes met in dream life. Of special importance is the "shadow," a figure of the same sex as the dreamer, which contains all the repressed characteristics one has not developed in his or her conscious life. The "anima" is the personification of all the female tendencies, both positive and negative, in the male psyche. Its counterpart in the female psyche is the "animus."

The most mysterious, but most significant, of the Jungian archetypes is the self, which M. L. von Fram describes in *Man and His Symbols* (1964) as the regulating center that brings about a constant expansion and maturing of the personality. The self emerges only when the ego can surrender and merge into it. The



The god Hermes pours sleep into the eyes of mortals. (GETTY IMAGES)

ego is the "I" within each individual. It is the thinking, feeling, and aware aspect of self that enables the individual to distinguish himself or herself from others. In psychoanalytic theory, the ego mediates between the more primitive drives of the "id," the unconscious, instinctual self, and the demands of the social environment in which the individual must function. (Jung saw the self as encompassing the total psyche, of which the ego is only a small part.) Jung called this psychic integration of the personality, this striving toward wholeness, the process of "individuation."

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**M**ANY authorities consider Dr. Nathaniel Kleitman (1895–1999) to be the father of modern scientific dream research.

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Many authorities consider Dr. Nathaniel Kleitman (1895–1999) to be the father of modern scientific dream research, for he pursued the subject when his colleagues dismissed

the area as having no value. As a professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago, Kleitman asked a graduate student, Eugene Aserinsky, to study the relationship of eye movement and sleep; and in 1951, Aserinsky identified rapid eye movement (REM) and demonstrated that the brain is active during sleep, thus establishing the course for other dream researchers to follow. Although discussions of REM are now commonplace in the conversations of informed laypeople, it should be noted that prior to the work of Kleitman and Aserinsky most scientists maintained that the brain “tuned down” during sleep.

Pursuing the REM research, Kleitman and another of his medical students, William C. Dement, found what may be the pattern for a “good night’s sleep.” They discovered a nightly pattern of sleep that begins with about 90 minutes of non-REM rest during which brainwaves gradually lengthen and progress through four distinct stages of sleep, with Stage Four the deepest stage. It is then that the first REM episode of the night begins. Rapid eye movement is now observable, but the body itself remains still. The central nervous system becomes extremely active during REM. It becomes so intensely active that Dr. Frederick Snyder, of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), termed the activity “a third state of earthly existence,” distinct from both non-REM sleep and wakefulness.

The breathing is even in non-REM sleep. During the REM episode breathing may accelerate to a panting pace. The rhythm of the heart may speed up or slow down unaccountably. Blood pressure can dramatically fall. Other physiological changes also occur during REM. The flow of blood to the brain increases about 40 percent. Then the individual stirs and returns to the non-REM sleep cycle. This pattern repeats itself throughout the night.

Dreaming, in Dr. Stanley Krippner’s estimation, is a primary means of brain development and maturation. Newborn infants spend about half of their sleeping time in the rapid eye movement or dream state. Although such dreams probably are concerned with tactile impressions rather than memories, he believes that these dreams probably prepare the

infants’ immature nervous systems for the onslaught of experiences that come with the maturation of vision, hearing, and the other senses. To further support this theory, Krippner cites studies done with older subjects that indicate that young adults spend 25 percent of their time dreaming while the proportion decreases to 20 percent among the elderly. It seems that the brain, once it is functioning well, does not need as much dream time.

Recent experiments demonstrate that simple forms of mental functioning go on at night even when the individual is not dreaming. The brain appears to require constant stimulation even during sleep and may use dream periods to “keep in tune” and to process information that has accumulated during the day.

In the mid-1950s, Drs. William Dement and Charles Fischer, working at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, asked a group of volunteers to spend several nights in the laboratory. When the volunteers fell asleep, they were awakened throughout the night each time the electroencephalographs indicated the start of a dream period. These volunteers got all of their regular sleep except for their dream time. After five nights of dreamlessness, they became nervous, jittery, irritable, and had trouble concentrating. One volunteer quit the project in a panic.

Another group of volunteers in another part of the hospital was awakened the same number of times each night as those in the first group, but they were awakened when they were not dreaming. In other words, they were allowed approximately their usual amount of dream time. These volunteers suffered none of the troubles and upsets that afflicted the first group.

For the first time, the Dement and Fischer experiment presented evidence that regular dream sleep is essential to physical well-being. Some of the volunteers went as long as 15 nights without dream sleep, at which point they tried to dream all of the time, and the researchers had to awaken them constantly. When their dream time was no longer interrupted, the volunteers spent much more time than normal in dream sleep and continued to do so until they had made up their dream loss.

Dement summed up the results of their experiment by concluding that when people are

deprived of REM sleep, a rebound effect occurs. If individuals are not getting their proper share of REM and non-REM rest and are feeling sleepy, they can become a menace. People who have accumulated a large sleep debt are dangerous drivers on the highway, for example.

Krippner believes that dreaming is as necessary to humans as eating and drinking. Not only does dreaming process data to keep the brain “in tune,” but there is also evidence that a biochemical substance that accumulates during the day can only be eliminated from the nervous system during dream periods. Individuals should be just as concerned about receiving adequate dream time at night as they are about receiving adequate food during the day. Any disturbance that interrupts sleep will interfere with dream time, thus leaving the individual less well prepared—physically and psychologically—to face the coming day. Alcohol, amphetamines, and barbiturates depress the amount of dreaming an individual can experience during the night, and users of these drugs should be aware of the fact. Coffee, however, does not seem to depress dream time.

Today there are at least 170 sleep clinics operating in the United States, and their analyses cite more than 50 sleep disorders. A general consensus of the researchers at such clinics expresses the opinion that—second only to the common cold—sleep disorders constitute the most common health complaint. In March 2001, the National Sleep Foundation released the results of a poll that revealed that 51 percent of adults complained of insomnia, the inability to fall into a restful sleep, a few nights per week over the period of a year; 29 percent said that they had experienced insomnia almost every night over a year’s time.

Researchers also have noted a mysterious kinship between mental illness and sleep—and even longevity and sleep. Daniel Kripke, a professor of psychiatry at the University of California at San Diego, led a study that tracked the sleeping habits of 1.1 million Americans for six years and concluded that, contrary to popular belief, people who sleep six or seven hours per night live longer than those who sleep eight or more. The controversial study, the largest of its kind, was published

in the February 15, 2002, issue of *Archives of General Psychiatry* and provoked criticism from other sleep experts who stated that the main problem with America’s sleep habits is deprivation, not oversleeping.

Dr. Patricia Carrington, a Princeton University psychologist, has expressed her hypothesis that humankind would be better served if it followed the natural rhythms, the biological alternation of rest and relaxation that is seen in animals. Only in human beings is there such a thing as 17 hours of constant wakefulness.

Many sleep and dream researchers have theorized that one of the reasons why humans use drugs, alcohol, caffeine, and other means of altering states of consciousness may be to somehow manipulate the body-mind structure into obeying the schedule forced upon it—rather than permitting it to follow the natural cycles and rhythms of life itself. Dr. Jurgen Zulley, psychologist at the Max Planck Institute for Psychiatry in Munich, Germany, has found evidence for a four-hour sleep-wake cycle with nap periods at approximately 9:00 A.M., 1:00 P.M., and 5:00 P.M. Zulley feels that individuals shouldn’t try to combat their natural drowsiness at these times with coffee breaks or with exercise. In his opinion individuals should seek to be biologically correct. It would be better for human health, Zulley advises, if individuals took a short nap or just leaned back in a chair for a bit of relaxation rather than reaching for a soft drink or a cup of coffee to keep the mental motors running.

Dream researchers also have learned that environment appears to have a marked effect on dreams. One may have unusual dreams when spending the night in a friend’s home or in a motel room. In their series of studies at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory, the research team found that the subjects’ dreams often contained references to the electroencephalograph and to the electrodes on their heads, especially during the first night in which they participated in the study. Charles Tart, one of the nation’s most eminent sleep and dream researchers, suggests that dream content also will differ with the demands placed upon the dreamer; dreams that are written down at

home and given to a researcher will differ from dreams given to a psychotherapist, because in the latter instance the emphasis is on the person's inner life and his or her attempts to change his or her behavior.

It has been noted that patients who go to Freudian psychotherapists eventually begin to incorporate Freudian symbols into their dreams while patients who see Jungian analysts do the same with Jungian symbols.

Opinions on the degree to which external events influence dreams vary widely. Some dream researchers contend that all dreams are the result of presleep experiences, while Freudian psychoanalysts emphasize the internal determinants of dream content (i.e., one's unconscious drives and defenses). Others argue that the presleep experiences of one's daily activities may be used by the unconscious, but they are not of major significance in dream interpretation.

In 1967, Tart presented a list of the various items that influence dreams. Tart's list included the dreamer's actual life history; the dreamer's memories of what has happened to him or her, especially during the past week; the "day residue," which includes immediate presleep experiences; and currently poorly understood factors such as atmospheric concentration, barometric pressure, and paranormal stimuli such as telepathic messages.

Dream researchers are not sure how the visual dimensions in dreams compare with the visual dimensions in everyday life. Dream reports indicate that most often the dream is on a "cinemascope screen" rather than on a small "television screen." People usually are seen full-length and in about the same dimensions as they appear during waking hours.

One reason REMs (rapid eye movements) are associated with dreams may be that the eyes scan the visual scene just as they do during the waking state. On the other hand, eye movements also occur when subjects report no movement in their dreams, suggesting that the relationship between rapid eye movements and dreams is highly complex.

There is not a one-to-one relationship between waking time and dream time. However, extreme time distortion rarely occurs in

dreams despite the fact that many psychologists used to believe that dreams lasted only a second or two.

The subjects at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory recalled the visual elements in their dreams most clearly, but auditory (sound) and tactile (touch) impressions also were common. While subjects in the dream laboratories report auditory and tactile impressions in addition to vivid visual dreams, some individuals stubbornly insist that they "never dream." Since researchers have established that dreaming is as necessary to mental and physical health as eating and drinking, it becomes apparent that individuals who claim that they never dream simply are not remembering their dreams, or are having dreams they wish to forget—the nightmares.

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#### CREATIVE AND LUCID DREAMING

Data currently being researched indicates that dreams provide a fertile field for the examina-



One myth about the human brain is the claim that humans use only about 10 percent of their brain capacity. Medical doctors and psychologists insist that the statement is not supported by any scientific evidence.

It is likely the myth that humans use only about 10 percent of their brains arose during 1930s research when scientists were uncertain regarding the functions of large areas of the cortex. In recent years, researchers have been able to “map” the functions of different areas of the brain.

The neocortex, by which higher thinking is performed, consists of a sheet of cells about 2.5 millimeters in thickness. Without the neocortex, consciousness, would not exist.

Although the neocortex is a large part of human evolution, it does contain cavities without any brain cells, as well as considerable amounts of cerebrospinal fluid, white matter, blood vessels, blood, and “non-thinking cells.” However, scientists say these areas should not be constituted as the mythical unused 90 percent of the brain.

## THE UNUSED BRAIN

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tion of creative processes. The act of dreaming, that most personal and subjective experience, may well be a key to humankind’s hidden powers. Many artists, writers, inventors, musicians, and other creative people have received inspiration in their dreams or have used their dreams as problem-solving catalysts.

All through Easter Day in 1920, Dr. Otto Loewi, research pharmacologist at the New York University College of Medicine, pondered a strange dream that revisited the details of an experiment that he had discarded 17 years before. Acetylcholine, the chemical that he had used in the experiment, had first been isolated by Dr. H. H. Dale, Loewi’s close friend, in 1914, but the new test inspired by Loewi’s dream brought about an abrupt change in the theory of muscle stimulation. Loewi and Dale shared the Nobel Prize for physiology and medicine in 1936.

Although the experiment itself had a striking effect on the academic world of physiology, the manner in which the idea came to Loewi is perhaps even more astounding. It is conceivable that ideas can be transferred from one mind to another during sleep, but when such ideas are not in the mind of another person, from where could they possibly arise? Before his death in 1961, Loewi stated that he could not possibly answer this question. Perhaps no one can, but it is certain that Loewi’s dream provided the key to subsequent research that eventually gained him the Nobel Prize.

Solving problems via the dream state is as old as humankind itself. Thomas Edison (1847–1931), the “Genius of Menlo Park,” it is said, had the habit of curling up in his roll-top desk to catch brief naps that sometimes constituted his entire sleep schedule. After such a nap he would emerge with the answers

to problems that had plagued him during his waking state.

Elias Howe (1819–1867) failed at the conscious level to perfect a workable sewing machine. Then one night he dreamed that a savage king ordered him to invent a sewing machine, and when he was unable to comply, the spear-armed natives raised their weapons to kill him. At that exact moment, he noticed that each spear had a hole in it just above the point. This vision gave him the much-needed clue to the commercial perfection of the sewing machine.

Another famous scientist who used his dreams to solve problems was Niels Bohr (1885–1962), who one night dreamed of a sun composed of burning gas with planets spinning around it, attached by thin threads. He realized that this explained the structure of the atom, which eventually led to the field of atomic physics and, ultimately, atomic energy.

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**SOLVING** *problems via the dream state is as old as humankind itself.*

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William Wordsworth (1770–1850) credited dreams for the many poems he wrote. “Kubla Khan” was the result of a dream by Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834). The classic novel *Jane Eyre* (1847) was spun from the dreams of Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855).

Some of the world’s most successful business executives never make a decision until they have a chance to allow it to pass through their minds during the hours of sleep, permitting solutions to come during dreams. Once this practice of “sleeping on a problem” becomes habit, these successful individuals find that there is really nothing magical about the process of dreaming solutions. Creative dreaming simply appears to be a matter of training the mind to do certain things. The subconscious level of the mind does the work, rather than the intellectual level. The subconscious understands symbols far better than words, and, in general, can be likened to an electronic com-

puter. Material must be fed into it or it cannot produce effective answers. To the intellect, a particular plan may sound silly, but to the subconscious it may make a lot of sense.

The concept of the dream as a creative tool may be somewhat alien to Western thought, but numerous Eastern writings, including the ancient Hindu Upanishads, speak of this aspect of the dream. One of the Upanishads says that “...Man in his dreams becomes a creator. There are no real chariots in that state...no blessings...no joys, but he himself creates blessings, happiness and joys.” Psychologists Montague Ullman, Joseph Adelson, Howard Shevrin, and Frederick Weiss have done much to advance the thesis that dreams basically are creative.

Psychoanalyst Ullman cites four creative aspects of dreaming:

1. the element of originality;
2. the joining together of elements into new patterns;
3. the concern with accuracy;
4. the felt reaction of participating in an involuntary experience.

Ullman concedes that the final product of a dream’s creativity may be either dull or ecstatic, but he insists that it is an act of creation to have the dream in the first place.

Lucid dreaming is simply the technique of dreaming while knowing that one is still dreaming. The word “lucid” is used to indicate a sense of mental clarity. A lucid dream usually occurs while one is in the midst of a dream and suddenly realizes that the experience that he or she is undergoing is not happening in physical reality, but in the framework of a dream scenario. Often the dreamer notices some impossible occurrence in the dream, such as having a conversation with a deceased relative or having the ability to fly, which prompts this awareness. While experiencing lucid dreaming is not quite the same thing as exercising control over one’s dreams, the dreamer who realizes that he or she is dreaming may greatly influence the course of the events in the dream scenario. Some practitioners of lucid dreaming promise extended creativity, the ability to overcome nightmares

and other sleep problems, the healing of mind and body—and even spiritual transcendence.

Those who teach lucid dreaming state that the two essentials are motivation and effort. Lucid dreaming techniques allow the individual dreamer to focus intention and to prepare a critical mind. The exercises taught by those conducting lucid dreaming workshops range from ancient Tibetan techniques to modern programs developed by dream researchers.

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#### NIGHTMARES

A nightmare differs considerably from a frightening dream. The terror of a nightmare is more intense and does not present an image or a dream sequence. Dreamers in the throes of a nightmare cry out while in deep sleep. They sweat, have difficulty in breathing, and often appear as if paralyzed.

In 1968 Dr. R. J. Broughton compiled considerable evidence that indicates that bed-wetting, sleepwalking, and nightmares occur during periods of deep sleep rather than during periods of dreaming, as the layperson often assumes. Bed-wetting is common among unstable individuals, and the sleepwalker, in about 25 percent of the cases, is also a bed-wetter. Dream researcher Dr. Stanley Krippner agrees that nightmares, bed-wetting, and sleepwalking rarely coincide with dream periods.

Psychiatrist Ernest Hartmann of Tufts University believes that the nightmares of people who seem physically healthy but who regularly suffer from “bad dreams” are reflecting their personalities rather than a traumatic past or a present struggle with health problems. Hartmann found evidence of “thin boundaries” in people prone to recurrent nightmares. In his assessment they were men and women who tended to be more open and sensitive than the average. They were, he discovered, people with a tendency to become quickly and deeply involved in relationships with other individuals. At the same time, paradoxically, they also tended to be “loners,” people who did not identify strongly with groups of any kind.

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NIGHTMARES *might be the price that some otherwise healthy and untroubled people pay for their sensitivity and creativity.*

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Hartmann developed a 138-item “Boundary Questionnaire” that he administered to more than a thousand people, including a wide range of students, nightmare sufferers, and naval officers. The findings supported earlier studies that suggested that many of the men and women who endure nightmares are artistic or otherwise creative people. Naval officers, not surprisingly, most often turned up on the opposite end of the scale with rather “thick boundaries.” Hartmann speculates that “boundary thickness” may reflect a basic organizational pattern of the brain—one that is genetically determined or established early in life. The general openness of “thin-boundaried” people may predispose them to creativity, but it also binds them to a childlike vulnerability that leaves them at the mercy of the night creatures that go “bump” in the darkness.

Nightmares, then, just might be the price that some otherwise healthy and untroubled people pay for their sensitivity and creativity. The nightmare may work out the vulnerability, Hartmann states, especially if the sufferer learns to maneuver the frightening dream from a place of vulnerability to a place of control.





"The Nightmare"  
engraving by Henry  
Fuseli. (FORTEAN  
PICTURE LIBRARY)

On October 2, 2001, clinical psychologist Alan Siegel, editor of *Dream Time* magazine, told Mike Conklin, reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, that the people of the United States had entered a "national epidemic of nightmares" brought on by the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11. "Nightmares are a cardinal symptom of something traumatic in [One's] life," Siegel said. "In this case, we've lost our sense of security, and this is something more traumatic than most Americans have really experienced before."

Dr. Michael Friedman, a sleep specialist at Rush-Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago, agreed that there was no question that they had begun treating many patients with sleep problems and nightmares related to the incidents of that terrible event. Deirdre Barrett, a psychology professor at Harvard Medical Center who supervised counselors at

Boston's Logan Airport following the hijackings of the jets that crashed into the Twin Towers, cautioned that in some cases it might be six months or a year before certain people would begin having traumatic dreams of the series of events that occurred on September 11, 2001.

Siegel went on to explain that such nightmares should be considered the brain's natural means of dealing with the trauma, dispelling it through the subconscious while people are sleeping. Although people tend to think of nightmares as a kind of mental poison, Siegel said that, in reality, "they are a form of vaccine."

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### SLEEP PARALYSIS

Sleep paralysis is a condition that occurs in that state just before falling to sleep (hypnagogic state) or just before fully awakening from sleep (hypnopompic state). Although the condition may last for only a few seconds, during that time a person undergoing sleep paralysis is unable to move or speak and often experiences a sense of fear that there is some unknown presence in the room. Along with such hallucinations as seeing ghosts, angels, devils, and extraterrestrial beings, many individuals undergoing sleep paralysis also report the sensation of being touched, pulled, or feeling a great pressure on the chest.

A general consensus among researchers links sleep paralysis with rapid eye movement (REM), the dream state. While in the normal state of dreaming, the muscles relax and the brain blocks signals that would permit the limbs to move, thus preventing the body from acting out its dreams. In the case of sleep paralysis, the usual barrier between sleeping and wakefulness temporarily drops and certain sleep phenomena, of which immobility is one, enter into wakefulness. Some individuals, momentarily paralyzed, suffer feelings of dread, helplessness, and become convinced that they have been visited by some supernatural presence.

The 1990 International Classification of Sleep Disorders reports that sleep paralysis may occur to 40 to 60 percent of the population once or twice in a lifetime, but happens quite frequently to people who suffer from

narcolepsy, a sleep disorder. Research has also determined that instances of sleep paralysis usually begin around the ages of 16 and 17, increases through the teen years, and generally declines during the 20s. Although the condition is comparatively rare during the 30s, roughly 3 to 6 percent of the general population may continue on occasion to experience sleep paralysis throughout their lives, especially if they undergo sleep deprivation or experience frequent sleep disruption.

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**RESEARCHERS** *links sleep paralysis with rapid eye movement (REM), the dream state.*

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Because the experience is extremely frightening for many who suffer from sleep paralysis, they may be reluctant to discuss the problem because they have become convinced that they have witnessed a supernatural visitation or because they fear they are going insane. Researchers insist that while the condition of sleep paralysis may be unpleasant and unsettling, it is not indicative of any serious long-term psychological problem. Those enduring severe sleep paralysis have been successfully treated with certain antidepressants that inhibit REM sleep. Even more effective, many sleep researchers maintain, is to understand more about what the condition is and learn not to fear it.

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Dr. Carl Jung (1875–1961).  
(THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)



#### SYMBOLY OF DREAMS

Fritz Perls (1893–1970), the founder of Gestalt therapy, believed that dreams were “the royal road to integration.” In his view the various parts of a dream should be thoroughly examined and even role-played to gain self-awareness and to integrate fragmented aspects of the personality into wholeness. According to Perls, the different parts of a dream are fragments of the human personality. To become a unified person without conflicts, one must put the different fragments of the dream together.

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*In order to learn from dreams, it is not essential to work out the entire dream structure.*

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The Gestalt approach to learning about oneself through dreams lies in a concerted attempt to integrate one’s dreams, rather than seeking to analyze them. This can be accomplished by consciously reliving the dreams, by taking responsibility for being the people and

the objects in the dream, and by becoming aware of the messages contained in the dream.

Perls found that in order to learn from dreams, it is not essential to work out the entire dream structure. To work even with small bits of the dream is to learn more about the dreamer. In order to “relive” a dream one must first refresh one’s memory of it by writing it down or by telling it to another person as a story that is happening now, in the present tense.

Perls used the present tense in all of Gestalt dream work. In his view, dreams are the most spontaneous expression of the existence of the human being. One might perceive dreams being much like a stage production, but the action and the direction are not under the same control as in waking life. Therefore, Perls advised, it is helpful to visualize a dream as a script from one’s own internal stage production.

Each part of the dream is likely to be disguised or to bear a hidden message about the dreamer. When the message comes through, the individual will feel that shock of recognition that Gestalt called the “Ah-ha!”

Perls concluded that every dream has a message to reveal to the dreamer. Like most dream researchers, he recommends that one keep a paper and pencil at bedside in order to record the important points of one’s dreams as they are remembered.

Dr. Stanley Krippner (1932– ), formerly of the Maimonides Dream Laboratory in New York City, said if one were to lie quietly in bed for a few moments each morning the final dream of the night would often be remembered. In Krippner’s opinion, no dream symbols carry the same meaning for every person. Despite certain mass-produced “dream interpretation guides,” the research in the dream laboratories indicates that only a skilled therapist, working closely with an individual over a long period of time, can hope to interpret dream symbolism with any degree of correctness. Even then the therapist’s interpretations would hold true for only that one subject.

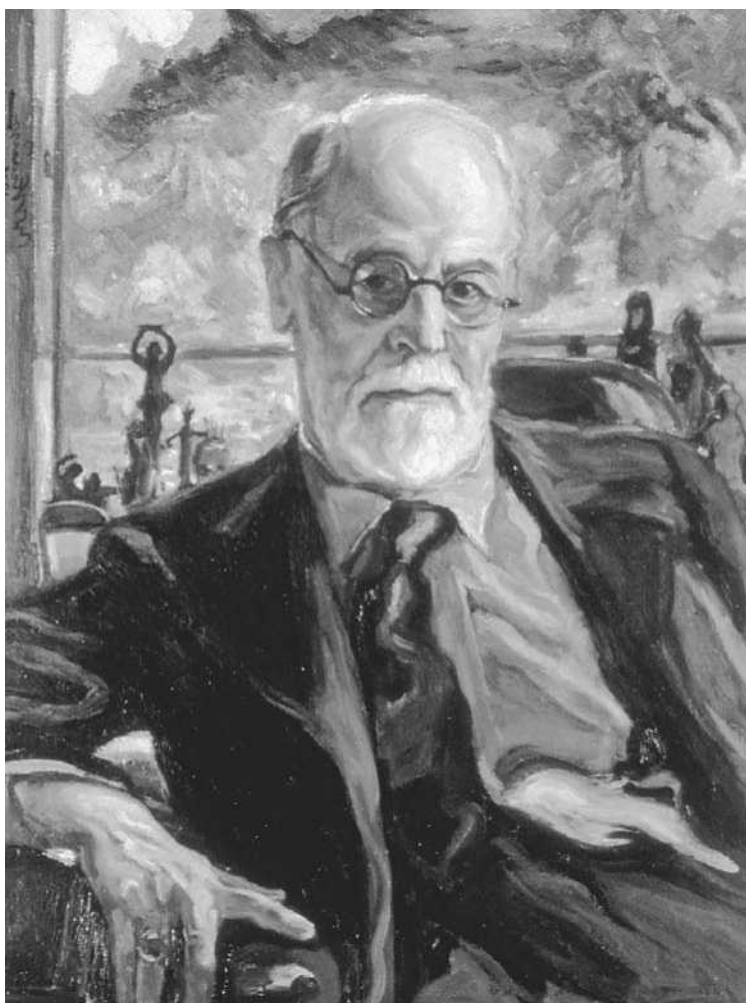
Krippner points out, however, that certain dreams do occur with great frequency among peoples all over the world. Dr. Carl G. Jung

(1875–1961) spoke of “archetypal images” in humankind’s “collective unconscious.” In this part of the mind, Jung believed, were images common to all people everywhere. People living in different times and different places have dreamed of “wise old men,” “earth mothers,” “mandalas” (circles within a square), and other “archetypes.”

Jung’s theories are rejected by many psychologists and psychiatrists as being too mystical, but Krippner believes Jung’s hypotheses really are not in conflict with what the dream researchers call “scientific common sense.” There must be something structural in the brain comparable to the structural form of other body parts. If so, this structure would develop along certain general lines even though an individual were isolated from other human beings.

According to a general consensus among dream researchers, the number one rule in understanding one’s dreams is to understand oneself. It is only by knowing oneself as completely as possible that any individual will be able to identify and fully comprehend the dream symbols that are uniquely his or her own. Here are a number of symbols commonly seen in dreams and general meanings that have been applied to them by certain researchers:

- *Angel*. Contact with Higher Self or super-consciousness. Guidance. Wisdom. Truth.
- *Bathing*. Spiritual cleansing. Need to “clean up” one’s life.
- *Cat*. Universal symbol for woman. May refer to gossip; beware of gossip. The mysterious. Independence.
- *Church*. The realm of Inner Awareness. Higher Self. Spiritual need.
- *Desert*. Spiritual thirst. Emotional barrenness. Sterility.
- *Devil*. Unpleasant person. Authoritarian figure of negative emotions. Parent figure for unhappy childhood. Search for forbidden knowledge.
- *Earthquake*. Inner turmoil. Old ideas and problems coming forth. Literal or prophetic. Changes.



**Dr. Sigmund Freud**  
(1856–1939). (THE LIBRARY  
OF CONGRESS)

- *Falling*. A natural fear and common to children. Falling from grace or higher spiritual realms. Defeat.
- *Hair*. If soft and clean: spiritual beauty; if matted and dirty: spiritually unclean; if thinning or bald: a man may feel consciousness of his age, or of aging. Gray or white represents wisdom. A haircut may represent loss of vitality.
- *Island*. Seclusion. Desire to get away from it all. Security. A place of inhibitions.
- *Judge*. Authority figure. One who views objectively and fairly. Need for Self-discipline. Hidden guilt.
- *Key*. The answer to a problem. Opening new doorways of opportunity. Gaining of new knowledge or wisdom.
- *Lake*. Water symbol for spirit. Peace if placid or smooth.

- *Mirror*. Reveals one's true Self, good, bad, or indifferent. A reflection of the truth. Can also represent illusion, that which is not real, only a reflection.
- *Needle*. Sewing indicates repairing errors of the past or may be someone giving someone the "needle."
- *Ocean*. Spirit, God, Higher Self. Peace, unless a rough sea, then turmoil, strife, etc.
- *Pig*. Selfishness.
- *Relatives*. Relatives often represent parts of the dreamer's Self playing various roles of his or her life.
- *Suitcase*. Prosperity. Desire to travel. Prestige. Subconscious desire for someone else to go away.
- *Sun*. Spiritual light and awareness.
- *Teeth*. The loss of a tooth or teeth may foretell the loss of something of value.
- *Water*. Source of Life. Spirit, God, Universal.

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## THE MECHANICS OF MEMORY

Memory is the ability to retain and to recall personal experiences, information, and various skills and habits.

While memory is easy to define, there is no agreement among researchers to explain how it works, and scientists have not yet established a model for the actual mechanics of memory that is consistent with the subjective nature of consciousness.

Dr. Daniel L. Schacter, a Harvard professor of psychology and an expert on memory, states that subjectivity in the process of remembering involves at least three important aspects: Memories are mental constructs fashioned in accordance with the present needs, desires, and influences of the individual; memories are often accompanied by emotions and feelings; and the actual act of remembering something usually involves a conscious awareness of the memory.

In the twenty-first century, some scientists favor the comparison of the brain to a computer and memories as programs that have been encoded into the system. Behaviorists argue that memories, and the thinking process in general, are products of learned behavior.

Many researchers have long observed that the more traumatic an experience, the more likely an individual is to recall it later. Neuroscientists point to numerous current studies that indicate that memory involves a set of encoded neural connections that can occur in several parts of the brain. The more powerful the images accompanying an event, the more the brain is stimulated and likely to make it a part of long-term memory.

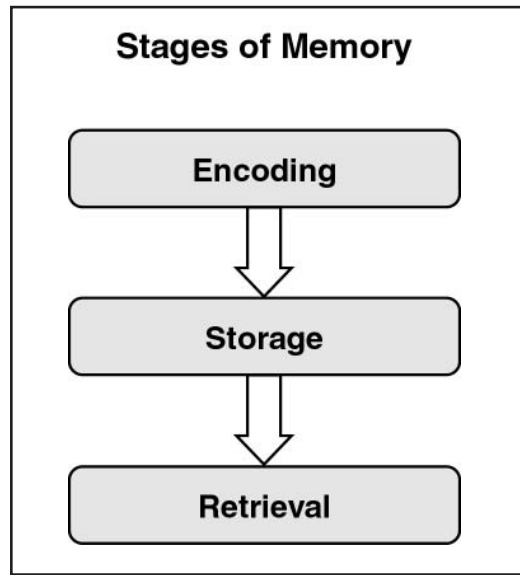
Although scientists have yet to understand how memory really works, a survey of psychologists conducted in 1996 revealed that 84 percent of them believed that every experience a person undergoes throughout his or her life is stored in the mind. However, a great many current studies suggest that such is not the case. An increasing amount of research on memory indicates that every moment of every bit of sensory data experienced by individuals throughout the course of their normal day-to-day life process is not retained by the brain and is not able to be recalled at some future time. Rather than the brain serving as a kind of repository for a complete audio or video recording of everything that has ever happened to a person, the only memories that are stored are bits and fragments of one's more

meaningful experiences that are somehow encoded in engrams within the neural network of the brain. The process of memory involves an act of consciousness that withdraws a significant or emotional event in an episodic montage or collage of images, rather than a complete recall of sensory data.

Scientists believe that long-term memory requires an extensive encoding in the inner part of the temporal lobes of the brain. Most memories are lost, because they were never successfully encoded. Strong encoding of a memory may depend upon the individual's interests, perception, and needs. Thinking and talking about an experience at the time it occurred will also assist in an encoding that may be recalled at a later time.

Scientists believe that they may have discovered a biological reason why two people who witnessed the same event may, several years later, have different memories of what really occurred. According to research conducted at the Center for Neural Science at New York University by Drs. Karim Nader and Glenn Shafe, every time an older memory is recalled and is brought into consciousness by an individual, the brain reassembles it, updates it, and makes new proteins before placing the memory back in long-term storage. Dr. Daniel L. Schacter commented that the research of Nader and Shafe had offered the first good neurobiological explanation of the method in which memories may be updated. Schacter added that it is a mistake to believe that once the brain has recorded a memory it remains forever fixed.

Some scientists have theorized that existing older memories may eventually be erased in the brain by a process that involves the generation of new neurons. The clearing out of certain memories to make more room for newer ones may be important in order to store more recent memories and information. Joe Tsien and his colleagues at the Department of Molecular Biology at Princeton University reported their discovery that the generation of new neurons is important for the memory-clearance process and suggested that chronic abnormalities in the clearance process may contribute to the memory disorder associated with Alzheimer's disease.



A chart showing the stages of memory, encoding, and storage. (STANDLEY PUBLICATIONS)

Although numerous anecdotal accounts claim that dreams are a vital element in the process of encoding information absorbed during the waking hours as memories, Dr. Jerome Siegel, a neuroscientist at the University of California, Los Angeles, released his findings to the contrary in 2002. He argued that there is no solid evidence to indicate that dreams are needed to consolidate memories. In addition, Siegel contested the hypothesis that the prevention of rapid-eye-movement sleep blocked memory formation.

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**M**EMORY is the ability to retain and to recall personal experiences, information, and various skills and habits.

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Certain studies on memory show that people often construct their memories after the fact and that they may be susceptible to suggestions from others as to the "truth" of what actually occurred. Therefore, it is possible to create **false memories** in some people's minds by suggesting that certain events have happened to them when, in fact, such circumstances never occurred.

Closely related to false memories, which may be instilled within certain individuals' minds, is source amnesia in which people accu-

Professor Nathaniel Kleitman (1895–1999), a University of Chicago physiologist and co-conductor of the Kleitman-Dement dream research findings, is known as the father of modern sleep research. Kleitman said that dreams are hard to remember because the higher centers of the brain are deactivated during sleep—or are operating at a much slower pace than during hours of consciousness.

The cerebral cortex is that portion of the brain that selects, abstracts, sorts, and memorizes when it is fully activated; but when the rest of the body sleeps, it, too, takes a nap, and that makes the memory of dreams a bit difficult at best.

The memory of dreaming, then, must in some way awaken the cerebral cortex, on cue, so that individuals can better remember what they dream. The habit of writing a dream down immediately upon awakening will, to a degree, help set the cortex on the alert so it can go into action on a moment's notice.

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rately recall an event, but forget the source of the memory. People may remember the details of a terrible blizzard that their grandparents recounted so vividly to them when they were children that they later incorporate their grandparents' experience as a part of their own memories and tell the story to others as if it had happened to them. Likewise, children seeing dramatic portrayals of hardships or disasters in the theaters or on their television screens may in their adult years remember those depictions as their own memories of enduring difficult times. Scientific studies indicate that such memories of a memory that happened to someone else is common—and suggest that one's memory of an event is not the most reliable record of what actually occurred.

Memory researchers, such as Schacter, list several types of memory systems. *Semantic memory* reveals conceptual and factual infor-

mation stored by the brain. *Procedural memory* is the facility of recollection that permits one to learn new skills and retain habits. *Episodic memory* is the ability to remember those personal experiences that define one's life and individuality.

In addition, scientists recognize *field memory*, a process of recollection wherein one, as if in a dream, sees oneself in the scene. *Observer memories* are those memories in which the remembrance is perceived through one's own eyes.

Researchers as early as Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) have theorized that the fact that so many memories appear to be field memories is additional evidence that for many people the process of recalling a particular memory may be largely reconstructive. Freud also is famous for his theory of memory repression, in which he asserted that unpleasant memories,

Dr. John Lorber (1915–1996), neurology professor at the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom, recalled the time in the 1970s when the campus doctor asked him to examine a student whose head was a bit larger than normal. Instead of the normal 4.5-centimeter thickness of brain tissue between the ventricles and the cortical surface, Lorber discovered that the student had only a thin layer of mantle measuring about a millimeter and his cranium was filled mainly with cerebrospinal fluid.

The man had hydrocephalus, a condition in which the cerebrospinal fluid, instead of circulating around the brain, becomes dammed up inside the cranium and leaves no space for the brain to develop normally. Such a condition is usually fatal within the first few months of life. If individuals should survive beyond infancy, they are often severely retarded. In the case of the math major from the University of Sheffield, he had an IQ of 126 and graduated with honors.

Lorber collected research data concerning several hundred people who functioned quite well with practically no brains at all. Upon careful examination, he described some of the subjects as having no “detectable brains.”

Dr. Patrick Wall, professor of anatomy at University College, London, stated that there existed “scores” of accounts of people existing without discernable brains. The importance of Lorber’s work, Wall said, was that he had conducted a long series of systematic scanning, rather than simply collecting anecdotal material.

Lorber and other scientists theorized there may be such a high level of redundancy in normal brain function that the minute bits of brain that these people have may be able to assume the essential activities of a normal-sized brain.

David Bower, professor of neurophysiology at Liverpool University, England, stated that although Lorber’s research did not indicate that the brain was unnecessary, it did demonstrate that the brain could work in conditions that conventional medical science would have thought impossible.

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especially those involving sexual abuse or misbehavior, were pushed back or repressed by the psyche of the individual. Such repression could in later years lead to phobias or neuroses that could be healed by psychoanalysis.

In 2001 Michael Anderson, a psychologist at the University of Oregon, conducted a memory repression experiment with college students. The study supported Freud's theory about the mind's ability to repress thoughts, especially painful or disturbing ones, according to Martin Conway, a psychologist at the University of Bristol in England. Additional findings at the University of Oregon revealed the results of a study of children that disclosed that they were less likely to recall abuse at the hands of their parents or guardians than a stranger, quite likely because the children had to forget in order to cope with their daily lives.

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#### FALSE MEMORIES

The ease with which a false memory could be created was demonstrated by an experiment conducted in 2001 by University of Washington memory researchers Jacquie E. Pickrell and Dr. Elizabeth F. Loftus. About one-third of the 120 subjects in the experiment who were exposed to a fake advertisement showing Bugs Bunny at Disneyland later said that they had also met the cartoon character when they visited Disneyland and had even shaken his hand. Such a scenario could never have occurred in real life, because Bugs Bunny is a cartoon character owned by Warner Brothers and would not be seen walking around Dis-

neyland with such cartoon creations as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck.

Pickrell, a doctoral student in psychology, stated that the study suggested how easily a false memory can be created and just how vulnerable and malleable memory is. The experiment also demonstrated how people might create many of their autobiographical references and memories. Even the nostalgic advertising employed by many commercial companies can lead individuals to remember experiences that they never really had.

Loftus, professor of psychology and adjunct professor of law at the University of Washington, began her research into memory distortion in the 1970s. When she wrote an article on creating false memories for the September 1997 issue of *Scientific American*, Loftus and her students had conducted more than 200 experiments documenting how exposure to misinformation may induce memory distortion. Loftus and her colleagues found that memories are more easily modified when a significant amount of time has passed between the event and the recollection. The researchers also found that individuals who have witnessed a particular event, such as an automobile accident, may have their recollections distorted when they are later exposed to new and misleading information concerning the event.

While it is understandable that details of a particular memory might change over time, Loftus and her research associate, Pickrell, decided to undertake the challenge of determining how false memories could be implanted in an individual's mind. Over the course of a series of interviews, 29 percent of the 24 subjects claimed to remember a fictitious event that had been constructed for them by the researchers. In two follow-up interviews, 25 percent continued to insist that the event had actually occurred to them. "The study provides evidence that people can be led to remember their past in different ways," Loftus said, "and they can be coaxed into 'remembering' entire events that never happened."

Loftus's more than 30 years of research into the various processes of memory have led her to suggest that false memories are often created

by three common methods: yielding to social or professional demands to recall particular events; imagining events when experiencing difficulty remembering; and being encouraged to abandon critical thinking regarding the truth of their memory constructions.

False memories, according to Loftus and her research colleagues, are most often constructed “by combining actual memories with the content of suggestions received from others.” During such a process, individuals may experience source confusion and forget how much of the memory is valid and how much came from external sources.

In March 1998, a report commissioned by the Royal College of Psychiatrists in England accused its own members of having destroyed innocent lives by implanting false memories by using irresponsible techniques of delving into patients’ childhood events. According to the report, nearly 1,000 parents stated that they had been falsely accused of sexual abuse after their adult children allegedly recovered such memories of the attacks during psychotherapy.

Dr. Sydney Brandon, emeritus professor of psychiatry at Leicester University, warned his colleagues that such incidents of alleged recovered memories could bring the whole of psychiatry into disrepute. When such memories of abuse are brought forth after long periods, sometimes decades of amnesia, Brandon said, there is a high probability that they are false.

In the November 1998 issue of the journal *Psychological Science*, Dr. C. J. Brainerd and Dr. V. F. Reyna of the University of Arizona in Tucson published their findings that many individuals often believed more strongly in suggested, false memories than in actual recollections of events. Police interviews and psychotherapy sessions are structured around a theme that is designed to help a witness or a patient remember scenes of the past. Psychoanalysis is motivated by the task of uncovering a past trauma and may involve a series of questions that may lead a patient to accept a suggested, rather than an actual, truth. When strong themes are operative in such explorations of memory, the researchers state, things that were not really experienced can seem more real to the individual than his or her actual experiences.

MEMORIES are more easily modified when a significant amount of time has passed between the event and the recollection.

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## PHOBIAS

A phobia is a persistent irrational fear that causes a person to feel extreme anxiety. When people have a phobic reaction to

a situation, a condition, or a thing, they may experience sweating, increased heart rate, difficulty in breathing, and an overwhelming desire to run away. Sometimes they even fear that they are in imminent danger of dying.

Phobias are the most common of anxiety disorders, and they affect men and women of all ages, income levels, and ethnic groups. A phobia may develop from an unpleasant childhood memory. For example, an individual may feel uneasy around cats because of being bitten or scratched as an infant. If over the years such an uneasiness develops into an unreasoning fear of cats that causes the person to scream, run, or faint at the very presence of a cat, that person has ailurophobia (from the Greek words *ailuro* for cat, *phobia* for fear). Those individuals who have this phobia may take some comfort in knowing that a fear of cats also troubled such military conquerors as Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

Psychologists have categorized as many as 500 phobias, and according to the estimates of some health professionals, as many as 50 million individuals in the United States suffer from some kind of phobia. While the causes of phobias remain unknown and open to much speculation, some of the most frequent theories name biological, chemical, cultural, and psychological origins—or a mix of the four. Health care professionals stress that the most important thing for people with phobias to remember is that phobic disorders respond well to treatment and a phobia is not something that they must continue to endure.

Among the most common phobias is a fear of flying, aviophobia (*avio*, Latin for bird; *avion*, French for airplane). In 1980, a study conducted by Boeing Aircraft Corporation found that 25 million Americans readily expressed a fear of getting on board an airplane. Many individuals who suffer from this phobia break out into cold sweat and suffer from difficulty in breathing even while boarding the aircraft. Nearly all are consumed by an overwhelming conviction that the aircraft will crash and they will die in the ensuing disaster. Such a phobia can make life extremely difficult for those professionals who must trav-

el for their work, and many refuse to fly regardless of the consequences to their livelihood. The “First Lady of Soul,” singer Aretha Franklin, refuses to fly, even if it means canceling a concert date. Academy Award-winning screenwriter Billy Bob Thornton refuses to commit to any appearance that requires him to board an airplane. Although science fiction author Ray Bradbury has taken his readers to outer space on numerous occasions, he avoids airplanes. Actors Tony Curtis, Whoopi Goldberg, and Cher are also aviophobes. Prescription tranquilizers and other medications have proven effective for most individuals who suffer from aviophobia.

*Agoraphobia* is considered the most disabling of all the phobias. Treatment is difficult because those who suffer from this phobia fear being someplace outside of their home where they will not be able to escape if they should experience a panic attack—and that can be anywhere from a supermarket, the office, or a crowded street. Usually defined as a fear of open spaces and unfamiliar places, the phobia takes its name from *agora*, the Greek word for marketplace, and literally translates as “fear of the marketplace.” Some people develop this phobia so severely that they choose to leave their home and familiar surroundings as seldom as possible. Interestingly, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), the famous psychotherapist who sought to unravel the phobias of his patients, suffered from agoraphobia. The wealthy and extremely eccentric aviator and investor Howard Hughes numbered agoraphobia among his fears. Academy Award-winning actress Kim Basinger is another agoraphobic. Treatment generally consists of behavioral therapy combined with antianxiety or antidepressant medications.

Psychologists generally agree that it is common for children to have extreme fear reactions before the age of seven and to learn to distinguish between actual dangers and legitimate fears as they mature. Those researchers who delve into the origins of phobic responses have theorized that as many as 40 percent of all those who suffer from specific phobias have inherited those fears from their parents or close relatives. Whether one’s mother jumped up on a chair and screamed at

a spider, one's father went into a frenzy at the sight of a rat, or one's aunt fainted at the sight of blood, the child who perceives such dramatic demonstrations of fear is likely to remember them forever and to enact them in his or her own life experiences.

Other experts state that childhood traumas, such as being bitten by a cat, being stung by a bee, or becoming lost for a time in a dark, wooded area, create more than enough memories of fears to be lodged in the brain as phobic responses to cats, bees, and forests. Individual sensitivity may also play an important role in the development of a trauma. Two individuals may experience a similar trauma as children, but only the more emotionally sensitive person will develop a phobia because of the incident.

Most experts identify phobias as falling into one of three basic kinds of fears: social phobias, in which the individual suffers from a paralyzing dread of social or professional encounters; panic disorders, in which the sufferer is periodically assailed by a sudden overwhelming fear for no apparent reason; and specific phobias, in which the person has a horror of a single thing, such as spiders, snakes, air travel, and so forth. Of the three, psychologists generally agree that specific phobias are the easiest to treat because they are the easiest to comprehend. In addition, there are understandable reasons why individuals might not wish to encounter a poisonous snake or spider or why they might be fearful of flying after the media has publicized a number of airline crashes. Because some phobias have developed out of an appropriate response to a legitimate fear, it is sometimes difficult to draw clear distinctions between phobic reactions and normal responses to danger that may have become exaggerated by imagination.

Many experts believe that it is no coincidence that specific phobias most often fall into one of four categories: fear of insects and animals; fear of the natural environment, such as dreading what lies in the dark; fear of dangerous situations, such as being trapped in a tight place or falling from a high place; and fear of blood or being injured. Each of these categories reflect fears that have enabled the human species to survive.

Because of a keen development of the fear and flight response of humankind's ancient ancestors over many centuries, millions of contemporary men and women have inherited fears that may no longer be as valid and as life-threatening as they once were. The common fear of snakes is an example of survival learning that has been passed on from generation to generation. Although the number of modern people who live in an environment threatened by poisonous reptiles has been vastly reduced, millions of individuals retain an unreasoning fear of snakes.

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*A phobia is a persistent irrational fear that causes a person to feel extreme anxiety.*

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Of those who suffer from a specific phobia, researchers state that as many as 90 percent are women. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, phobias were the most common psychiatric illness among women in all age groups and the second most common illness among men over 25. Perhaps more women than men admit to having a phobia because of hormones, genes, and being reared in a culture in which men are not encouraged to acknowledge mental or physical problems.

Psychologists have made great strides in understanding the nature of phobias and helping those vulnerable to such fears to overcome them. There are depressant or stimulant medications that phobics can take to help overcome their fears, and there are many kinds of treatment programs. There are exposure therapies that habituate phobic individuals to become nonresponsive to the thing that once terrorized them; virtual-reality programs that simulate the thing the phobic person most fears in a safe environment; and various drugs to treat anxiety that have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

There are a number of other phobias that are quite common:

*Acrophobia*, a fear of heights, may have developed in an individual because of a child-

hood fear of falling. Some individuals are unable to ascend to the upper floors of buildings or are even unable to climb up on ladders to hang pictures in their home because of such a dread of falling. The name of this phobia is derived from the Greek word *acro* to denote a great height.

*Arachnophobia*, a fear of spiders, is an extremely common fear that undoubtedly has its basis in the reality that some spiders are poisonous or inflict painful bites. The name for this phobia comes from the Greek word for spider, *arachne*. There is also the Greek myth of Arachne, a woman from the ancient city of Lydia, who had the boldness to challenge the goddess Athena to a weaving contest. As a punishment, Arachne was changed into a spider.

*Claustrophobia*, a fear of being enclosed in a small or tight place, was experienced by the great escape artist Houdini, who often accepted the challenge of freeing himself from very small and tight boxes and trunks. Disciplining himself to conquer his phobia was one of his greatest feats. The name of this phobia comes from the Latin word *claustrum*, to shut or to close. The word is also very close to *cloister*, in which individuals voluntarily shut themselves off from the world. The singer-actor Dean Martin tried to avoid elevators whenever possible because of his claustrophobia. Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), the writer and poet, was a claustrophobic, and he is said to have drawn on such fears when he wrote such stories as “Premature Burial” (1844).

*Glossophobia*, a fear of public speaking, is one of the most common of phobias and one that must be overcome by many individuals who find themselves in the position of having to make a speech to a group of people for business, professional, or educational reasons. From the Greek word for tongue, *glossa*, many people find themselves tongue-tied, feeling faint, their heart pounding when they are placed in the position of speaking in public. Even professional entertainers can experience cold sweat, nausea, vomiting, and light-headedness when they step before an audience. Extreme stage fright kept singer-songwriter Carly Simon from performing live for many years.

*Hemophobia*, a fear of blood, is likely encouraged by the reverence that was placed

upon the shedding of blood in religious sacrifices for thousands of years. Although medical science has added knowledge to the definition of what constitutes a fully functioning human body, on the unconscious level it is likely that many people still regard blood as the physical expression of the life force. Reinforcing such an ancient belief is the importance that is given to samples of blood in diagnosing illnesses and in identifying everything from culpability in a crime to responsibility in parenthood. The word comes from the Greek *haima*, meaning blood.

*Mysophobia*, a fear of germs or dirt, originates from the Greek *myso*, filth. This phobia is an environmental one that causes the sufferers constantly to wash their hands, to cleanse the area around them, and to avoid any type of dirt or any source that might breed bacteria. Many people with this disorder become housebound and often cause dermal harm to themselves by constantly scrubbing and washing their skin. Singer-songwriter Michael Jackson has become well-known for his phobia regarding germs. Millionaire-eccentric Howard Hughes and actress Joan Crawford were among those who shared this fear.

*Necrophobia*, a fear of dead people or animals, is likely one of those phobias that has its roots in humankind’s earliest **taboos** and reflects such commonsense reasoning as the danger of contracting diseases from the deceased. All of the world’s religions have strict rules about how the dead should be handled and how a proper burial should be conducted. And all world cultures have superstitions and legends about **vampires**, zombies, and other members of the undead who seek the blood of the living. Tales of the dead returning to communicate with their relatives or exact revenge on their enemies are known to every society. With such a heritage of fear of the dead lurking in the unconscious, it is to be expected that some individuals would develop such a crippling dread of a deceased person that therapy or medications must be prescribed. The word comes from the Greek *nekros*, meaning dead body or deceased person.

*Scotophobia*, a fear of the dark, is another basic human response to centuries of concern

A placebo is a tablet or a liquid with no medical qualities that physicians will give to calm the anxieties of patients who insist upon receiving drugs when none are deemed necessary. In other instances, pharmacologists who wish to test the effects of a new drug may give placebos to a control group and the real drug to another as a method of gaining a more accurate determination of the effectiveness of the drug under development.

On April 30, 2002, researchers at the University of Texas Health Science Center announced their findings that depressed people given a placebo exhibited changes in their brain that were nearly identical to those produced by a popular antidepressant. The leader of the research group, Dr. Helen Mayberg, University of Toronto Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry, said that patients who responded to the placebo and those who responded to the actual antidepressant showed similar metabolic changes in cortical (thinking) and limbic-paralimbic (emotional) regions of their brains. Of the 15 men who completed the study at the health center, eight had experienced a noticeable improvement in their symptoms. Four had been administered the drug, and four had been given a placebo.

Volunteers in a pain relief experiment conducted by the Neurophysiology Research Group in Stockholm, Sweden, also demonstrated that both placebos and powerful painkilling drugs activate the same areas of the brain. Brain scans indicated that both the true painkilling drug and a salt water placebo activated the same two areas of the brain—the rostral anterior cingulate cortex and the brain stem.

Ingvar said that perhaps the most unexpected finding of the experiment was that those individuals who responded most strongly to the true drug also responded most positively to the placebo injection. Such a discovery may indicate that certain people have “stronger pathways in the brain for pain relief.” According to the researchers, pain relief may often literally be a case of mind over matter.

## MIND OVER MATTER WITH PLACEBOS

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for the dangers in venturing out after nightfall where wild animals or savage people may lie in ambush, waiting to attack the vulnerable. While even in modern times it seems only an exercise of common sense to be cautious while out walking after dark, an unreasoning fear and overwhelming dread of dark places can cause individuals to be confined to their homes after nightfall. The word comes from the Greek *scoto*, darkness.

*Xenophobia*, fear of strangers or foreigners and their customs, can be especially troublesome in modern times when the globe shrinks more every year, and cultures once far removed from one another become closely involved in trade, tourism, or international tension. In primitive times when people encountered individuals from different tribes, a caution or fear of strangers was the most primitive kind of protective device. Although few areas of the world remain isolated from the technology of modern communications and few people are so isolated as to remain ignorant of people outside of their own tribal boundaries, ancient beliefs, superstitions, and fears concerning those different from themselves perpetuate xenophobia (from the Greek *xenos*, for stranger or foreigner) even among certain individuals living in modern society. Education and an encouragement to learn about and to appreciate the similarities, rather than the differences, among all people is the only cure for xenophobia.

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## ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

An altered state of consciousness is a brain state wherein one loses the sense of identity with one's body or with one's normal sense perceptions. A person may enter an altered state of consciousness through such things as sensory deprivation or overload, neurochemical imbalance, fever, or trauma. One may also achieve an altered state by chanting, meditating, entering a trance state, or ingesting psychedelic drugs.

The testimonies of mystics and meditators who claim that their ability to enter altered states of consciousness has brought them enlightenment or transcendence are generally regarded with great skepticism among the majority of scientists in Western society. Other researchers, especially those in the field of parapsychology, maintain that Western science must recognize the value of studying altered states of consciousness and face up to the fact that what scientists consider baseline or normal consciousness is not unitary. In the opinion of many parapsychologists, science must abandon the notion that waking, rational consciousness is the only form of any value and that all other kinds are pathological.

Researchers who study aspects of human consciousness have suggested that within the course of a single day an individual may flicker in and out of several states of consciousness. Some theorize that there are six states of "nonreflective consciousness," characterized by the absence of self-consciousness. These states include:

1. Bodily feelings, which are induced by normal bodily functioning and are characterized by nonreflective awareness in the organs and tissues of the digestive, glandular, respiratory, and other bodily systems. This awareness does not become self-conscious unless such stimuli as pain or hunger intensify a bodily feeling.

2. Stored memories, which do not become self-conscious until the individual reactivates them.
  3. Coma, which is induced by illness, epileptic seizures, or physical injuries to the brain, and is characterized by prolonged nonreflective consciousness of the entire organism.
  4. Stupor, which is induced by psychosis, narcotics, or over-indulgence in alcohol, and is characterized by greatly reduced ability to perceive incoming sensations.
  5. Non-rapid-eye-movement sleep, which is caused by a normal part of the sleep cycle at night or during daytime naps, and is characterized by a minimal amount of mental activity, which may sometimes be recalled upon awakening.
  6. Rapid-eye-movement sleep, which is a normal part of the nighttime sleep cycle, and is characterized by the mental activity known as dreams.
2. Hysterical consciousness, induced by rage, jealousy, fear, neurotic anxiety, violent mob activity, or certain drugs. As opposed to rapturous consciousness, which is generally evaluated as pleasant and positive in nature, hysterical consciousness is considered negative and destructive.
  3. Fragmented consciousness, defined as a lack of integration among important segments of the total personality, often results in psychosis, severe neurosis, amnesia, multiple personality, or dissociation. Such a state of consciousness is induced by severe psychological stress over a period of time. It may also be brought about temporarily by accidents or psychedelic drugs.
  4. Relaxed consciousness, characterized by a state of minimal mental activity, passivity, and an absence of motor activity. This state of consciousness may be brought about by lack of external stimulation, such as sunbathing, floating in water, or certain drugs.

The reflective, or self-conscious, states of consciousness are:

1. Pragmatic consciousness, the everyday, waking conscious state, characterized by alertness, logic, and rationality, cause-and-effect thinking, goal-directedness. In this level of consciousness, one has the feeling that he or she is in control and has the ability to move at will from perceptual activity to conceptual thinking to idea formation to motor activity.
2. Lethargic consciousness, characterized by sluggish mental activity that has been induced by fatigue, sleep deprivation, feelings of depression, or certain drugs.
3. Hyperalert consciousness, brought about by a period of heightened vigilance, such as sentry duty, watching over a sick child, or by certain drugs, such as amphetamines.

Levels or types of consciousness with varying degrees of what could be considered an altered state might include:

1. Rapturous consciousness, characterized by intense feelings and overpowering emotions and induced by sexual stimulation, the fervor of religious conversion, or the ingestion of certain drugs.
5. Daydreaming, induced by boredom, social isolation, or sensory deprivation.
6. Trance consciousness, induced by rapt attentiveness to a single stimulus, such as the voice of a hypnotist, one's own heartbeat, a chant, certain drugs, or trance-inducing rituals and primitive dances. The trance state is characterized by hypersuggestibility and concentrated attention on one stimulus to the exclusion of all others.
7. Expanded consciousness, comprising four levels: A) the sensory level, characterized by subjective reports of space, time, body image, or sense impressions having been altered; B) the recollective-analytic level, which summons up memories of one's past and provides insights concerning self,

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*A person may enter an altered state of consciousness through such things as sensory deprivation or overload, neurochemical imbalance, fever, or trauma.*

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work, or personal relationships; C) the symbolic level, which is often characterized by vivid visual imagery of mythical, religious, and historical symbols; D) the integrative level, in which the individual undergoes an intense religious illumination, experiences a dissolution of self, and is confronted by God or some divine being. Each of these four levels might be induced by psychedelic drugs, hypnosis, meditation, prayer, or free association during psychoanalysis. Through the ages, many of humankind's major material and spiritual breakthroughs may have come from these virtually unmapped, uncharted regions of the mind.

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**SKEPTICAL** *psychological researchers label claims of revelation and transcendence through altered states of consciousness as delusional and self-deceptive.*

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There are many reasons why the great majority of scientific researchers remain doubtful about the validity of altered states of consciousness, such as the misuse of hypnosis by amateur practitioners, the lack of understanding by professionals and public alike of the creative processes, and the disastrous results of the recreational use of LSD and other psychedelic drugs. Descriptions of mystical revelations become almost florid as self-proclaimed seers and mystics attempt to translate their psychedelic drug or trance state experiences into the language of a technically oriented society. Quite frequently, creative geniuses of Western culture have compared their moods of inspiration to insanity. The composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) once compared his behavior during creative periods to that of a madman. Such comparisons are regrettable, and it is unfortunate that modern culture has few models other than madness to describe the throes of creativity.

William James (1842–1910), the great pioneer of the study of consciousness, wrote in

the *Varieties of Religious Experience* that what is called “normal waking consciousness” is but one special type of consciousness, while all about it, separated by the slightest of barriers, “there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different.” While many individuals may go through life without suspecting the existence of these states of consciousness, “...apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness...No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these forms of consciousness disregarded.”

While skeptical psychological researchers continue to label claims of revelation and transcendence through altered states of consciousness as delusional and self-deceptive, others call for a serious examination of various states of consciousness and ask for more research to learn the particular significance of each state on the totality of the human entity. Many parapsychologists firmly believe that continued research into altered states of consciousness may well reveal that humankind's most important discoveries, its highest peaks of ecstasy, and its greatest moments of inspiration occur in reverie, in dreams, and in states of consciousness presently ignored by the professional world and the general public.

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### HALLUCINATIONS

The term hallucination comes from the Latin *alucinari*, meaning “to wander in the mind.” When a person sees, hears, smells, or feels something or someone that is not really there, he or she has experienced a hallucination. Although the hallucinatory state is commonly confused with that of an illusion, the latter is caused by real sense perceptions that have been misinterpreted, whether by natural phenomena or in the case of a stage illusion, by someone deliberately misdirecting and tricking an audience.

Hallucinations result when certain situations have altered one’s brain metabolism from its normal level. Common causes of hallucinations are a high fever, an adverse reaction or side effect of a drug, the deliberate ingestion of a psychedelic or hallucinogenic substance (LSD, peyote, opium), an adverse reaction to alcohol, or a post-traumatic stress disorder. The grief of suffering the recent death of a loved one sometimes prompts hallucinations of hearing or seeing the relative or close friend. Those individuals experiencing psychosis or delirium are also susceptible to the manifestations of hallucinations.

While people often associate a hallucination with dramatic circumstances, sleep deprivation can prompt the phenomenon, as can boredom, fatigue, and the frightening experience of “highway hypnosis,” when people have been behind the wheel driving too long and the monotony of the road causes them to see things that aren’t really there.

Many individuals who suffer from migraine attacks report certain kinds of hallucinations, especially those of colored, shimmering geo-

metric shapes, quite likely induced by changes in the retina or the visual pathway. Some researchers suggest that some of the visions experienced by certain mystics and saints were set in motion by migrainous hallucinations.

Some people have hypnopompic episodes, a kind of hallucinatory experience, while either falling asleep or waking up. They may believe that some kind of supernatural being has entered the room and settled on their chest. They may even hear the entity speaking to them in a peculiar language. Some researchers suggest that such hypnopompic hallucinations might explain the *incubus* and *succubus* phenomena of nighttime demonic attacks that have been reported since medieval times.

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HALLUCINATIONS result when certain situations have altered one’s brain metabolism from its normal level.

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Hallucinations caused by sleep or sensory deprivation require no medical treatment unless the individual continues to abuse the normal bodily demands for rest. Those caused by substance and alcohol abuse may likely need medical help to allow the individual to establish normality. Hallucinatory manifestations that continue without an individual’s being able to determine any physical or mental reason may require a psychiatric consultation.

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**Three students cover their faces with their shoes while under hypnosis. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)**

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#### HYPNOSIS

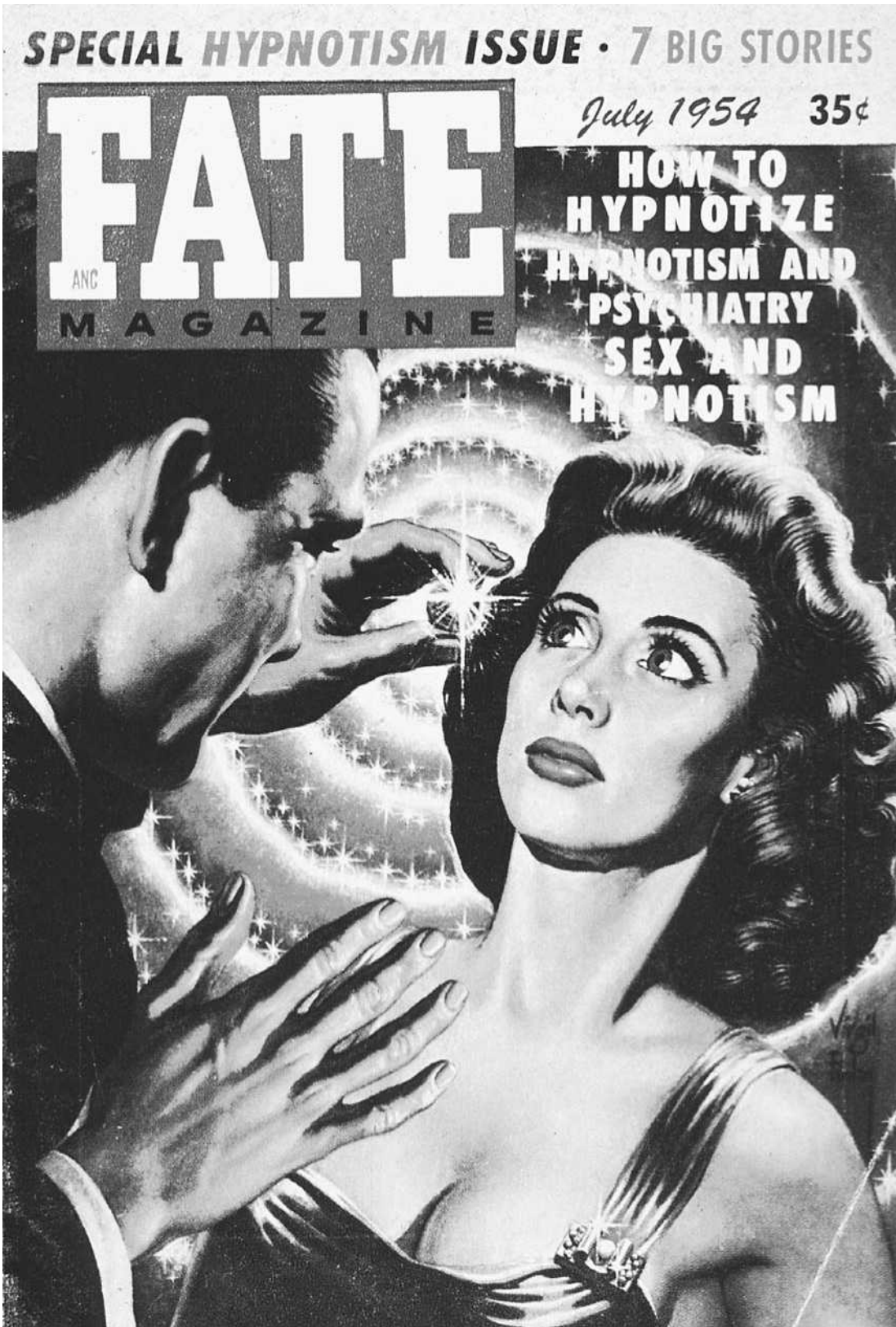
The process of hypnosis generally requires a hypnotist who asks a subject, one who has agreed to be hypnotized, to relax and to focus his or her attention on the sound of the hypnotist's voice. As the subject relaxes and concentrates on the hypnotist's voice, the hypnotist leads the person deeper and deeper into a trancelike altered state of consciousness. When the subject has reached a deep level of hypnotic trance, the hypnotist will have access to the individual's unconscious.

Many clinical psychologists believe that hypnotherapy permits them to help their clients uncover hidden or repressed memories of fears or abuse that will facilitate their cure. In certain cases, police authorities have encouraged the witnesses of crimes to undergo hypnosis to assist

them in recovering details that may result in a speedier resolution of a criminal act. Increasing numbers of clinical or lay hypnotists employ hypnosis to explore cases suggestive of past lives or accounts of alien abductions aboard UFOs. There are also show business hypnotists who induce the trance state in their subjects for the general amusement of their audiences.

Skeptical scientists doubt that hypnosis is a true altered state of consciousness and contend that the people who are classified as good subjects by professional or lay hypnotists are really men and women who are highly suggestible, fantasy-prone individuals. While it may be true that some psychologists and hypnotherapists make rather extravagant claims regarding the powers inherent in the hypnotic state, what actually occurs during hypnosis with certain subjects remains difficult either to define or to debunk.

Throughout the ages, tribal shamans, witch doctors, and religious leaders have used hypnosis to heal the sick and to foretell the future. Egyptian papyri more than 3,000 years old



Fate magazine featuring its cover story on hypnotism. (LLEWELLYN PUBLICATIONS/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

describe the use of hypnotic procedures by Egyptian soothsayers and medical practitioners.

In the early 1500s, Swiss physician/chemist Paracelsus (1493–1541) released his theory of what he called magnetic healing. Paracelsus used magnets to treat disease, believing that magnets, as well as the magnetic influence of heavenly bodies, had therapeutic effects. Magnetic treatment theories went through several stages of evolution and many successive scientists. It was during the latter part of the eighteenth century that Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), acting upon the hypotheses of these predecessors, developed his own theory of “animal magnetism” and hypnosis.

According to Mesmer, hypnosis entailed the specific action of one organism upon another. This action is produced by a magnetic force that radiates from bodily organs and has therapeutic uses. Hypnotism makes use of this force, or the vibrations, issuing from the hypnotist’s eyes and fingers.

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**HYPNOTHERAPY** *permits psychologists to help clients uncover hidden or repressed memories of fears or abuse.*

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When Mesmer reintroduced hypnotism to the modern world, paranormal activities and occult beliefs were associated with his works. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the **British Society for Psychical Research** appointed a commission for the study of pain transference from hypnotist to hypnotized subject. At the same time, psychologist Edmund Gurney and his assistant Frank Podmore experimented with the same area of research. In the Gurney-Podmore experiments the hypnotist stood behind the blindfolded subject. The hypnotist was then pinched, and the subject told that he would be able to feel the pain in the corresponding area of his own body. Gurney and Podmore reported substantial success, although none of their experiments were carried out with the hypnotist and researcher at any great distance from the subject.

Those earlier psychical researchers were intrigued by the fact that the hypnotic state so closely resembles the state of consciousness in which manifestations of ESP occur. Although a description of the hypnotic state is difficult to achieve, it appears to be much like that somnambulistic state between sleep and waking. Somewhere within this nebulous region, conscious mental activity ceases and deprives the mind of its usual sensory impressions, thereby directing all attention to that one area from which psychic impressions presumably come. To the psychical researcher, there seems scant difference between the trance of a psychic and an individual in the hypnotic state. The only immediately discernible difference is that the one is self-induced, while the other is induced by, and subject to, the control of the hypnotist. The argument therefore presented itself that if ESP can manifest under trance, then why cannot a hypnotist so manipulate the hypnotic state as to achieve the proper state of consciousness and, thereby, literally, induce ESP?

Research continued into the extrasensory aspects of hypnosis, despite hostility from the established sciences. In 1876 Sir William Barrett, an English physicist, presented the results of his experiments in clairvoyant card reading to the British Association for the Advancement of Science. A number of Barrett’s colleagues rewarded the physicist’s extensive endeavor by walking out during his presentation.

Hypnosis arrived on the threshold of the twentieth century under much the same cloud that had covered it since Mesmer’s day; and, in spite of decades of research and experimentation, the great majority of scientific researchers maintain a solid skepticism toward hypnosis at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales, a scientific yardstick by which to measure the phenomenon of hypnosis, was developed in the late 1950s by Stanford University psychologists Andre M. Weitzenhoffer and Ernest R. Hilgard. Scoring on the Stanford scales ranges from 0 for those individuals who do not appear to respond to any hypnotic suggestions, to 12, for those who are assessed as extremely responsive to hypnosis. Most peo-



ple, according to extensive experimentation, place somewhere in the middle range, between 5 and 7.

Among the results of the studies of Weitzenhoffer and Hilgard were demonstrations that a person's ability to be hypnotized is unrelated to his or her personality traits. Earlier suggestions that those individuals who could be hypnotized were gullible, submissive, imaginative, or socially compliant proved unsupported by the data. People who had the ability to become absorbed in such activities as reading, enjoying music, or daydreaming did appear to be the more hypnotizable subjects.

Another objection by the skeptics that the process of hypnosis was simply a matter of the subject having a vivid imagination also proved to be a false assumption. Many highly imaginative people tested by the experimenters proved to be bad hypnotic subjects, and there appears to be no relation between the ability to imagine and the ability to become a good hypnotic subject.

The Stanford experiments also learned that hypnotized subjects were not passive

automatons who would obey a hypnotist's commands to violate their moral or cultural ideals. Instead, the subjects remained active problem solvers while responding to the suggestions of the hypnotist.

By using hypnosis, the scientists at Stanford were able to create transient hallucinations, false memories, and delusions in some subjects. By using positron emission tomography, which directly measures metabolism, the researchers were able to determine that different regions of a subject's brain would be activated when he or she was asked simply to imagine a sound or sight than when the subject was hallucinating under hypnotic suggestion.

The mechanisms by which the process of hypnosis can somehow convince certain subjects not to yield to pain remain a mystery. Many researchers theorize some hypnotic subjects and experienced meditators can allow the altered state of consciousness to bring about an analgesic effect in brain centers higher than those that register the sensations of pain. A 1996 National Institutes of Health panel assessed hypnosis to be an effective

**A patient is hypnotized into a state of rigidity.**  
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

method of alleviating pain from cancer and other chronic conditions. Numerous clinical studies demonstrated that hypnosis could also reduce acute pain faced by pregnant women undergoing labor or the pain experienced by burn victims. In some instances, it was judged that hypnosis accomplished greater relief than such chemical pain killers as morphine.

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EGYPTIAN *soothsayers and medical practitioners used hypnotic procedures over 3,000 years ago.*

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While such experiments certainly indicate that something is going on within a subject's mind during the process of hypnosis, many psychologists, such as Dr. Nicholas Spanos, argue that hypnotic procedures merely influence behavior by altering a subject's motivations, expectations, and interpretations. Such influences have nothing to do with placing a person into a trance or exercising any kind of control over that person's unconscious mind. Hypnosis, in Spanos's view, is an act of social conformity, rather than a unique state of consciousness. The subject, he maintains, is only acting in accordance with the hypnotist's suggestions and responds according to the expectations of how a hypnotized person is supposed to behave.

Critics of hypnotic procedures during police investigations are concerned that too many law enforcement officers consider hypnosis as a kind of magical way to arrive at the truth of a case. The American Society of Clinical Hypnosis has certified about 900 psychologists, only five of whom specialize in forensic hypnosis and assist in police work. Federal courts and about a third of the state courts allow testimony of hypnotized individuals on a case-by-case basis.

Dr. William C. Wester, a nationally recognized psychologist, has used hypnotism to assist victims and witnesses of crimes to remember the details of more than 150 cases. Wester agrees that hypnosis is not magic, but

maintains that it is an effective tool in police work. "Hypnosis doesn't always lead to an arrest," Wester told Janice Morse of *The Cincinnati Enquirer* in 2002. "But it almost always generates some additional investigative leads for the police to follow."

Since 1991, Wester and John W. Kilnapp, a special agent and forensic artist with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, have teamed up to work on more than 50 robberies, rapes, kidnappings, and murders nationwide. After Wester has hypnotized a witness or victim of a crime and assisted that person to describe minute details of the events, Kilnapp works on a composite sketch of the perpetrator of the crime. While the team of artist and psychologist admitted that it was the police who solved the crimes, they estimated that in 95 percent of their cases, they helped expand a brief description of a suspect to fill several pages for investigators to use.

The Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis has stated that hypnosis should not stand alone as the sole medical or psychological treatment for any kind of disorder, but the society suggests that there is strong evidence that hypnosis may be an effective component in the broader treatment of many physical problems and in some conditions may increase the effectiveness of psychotherapy. While the clinical use of hypnosis has not become an accepted means of treatment among medical personnel and psychologists, it has gained many scientific supporters and evolved greatly from its occult and superstitious roots.

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#### MEDITATION

Meditation is generally defined as the act of extended thought or contemplation/reflection and is most often associated as being spiritual or devotional in nature. Interest in Eastern religions from the 1960s through the 1980s brought about a vast amount of scientific research regarding the benefits of meditation, which as a result has broadened its definition into two main categories: *mystical* and *secular*. Either type can include any of a variety of disciplines of mind and body, and although the techniques and desired goals of meditation are varied, the results are quite similar and include: achieving a higher state of consciousness, psychic powers, self-discovery, self-improvement, stress reduction, reduced anxiety, spiritual growth, better health, creativity, increased intelligence, and union with the Creator or God. Meditation *itself* doesn't directly provide or guarantee these benefits but somehow is believed to facilitate their cultivation.

Many have said there are only two ways to obtain a mystical state or altered state of consciousness and that is either through drugs or meditation. Hoping to achieve that altered state, there are those who take up meditation as the safe means to the more spectacular psychic experiences of visions, voices, out-of-body experiences, and traveling to an astral realm and to have the mystical "high" without inducing chemicals.

Throughout time, mystics, saints, and gurus have reported these expansive occurrences as commonplace amongst dedicated and longtime meditators; however, most of them caution against entering meditation in order to seek such incidents. Ancient texts caution that whatever the mind meditates on, it eventually takes the shape of or becomes the object habitually dwelled upon.

Zen Buddhism urges meditation practitioners to see the "extraordinary in the ordi-



**Meditation.** (FIELD MARK PUBLICATIONS)

nary" or the "splendor in the simple" and warns that such mystical, supernatural experiences as those listed above are irrelevant to the process of spiritual development and should they occur, they should not be given any special attention at all, as the ultimate goal is to achieve the state of nirvana, which is defined as the complete release from all physical limitations of existence.

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**THE** *two main categories of meditation are mystical and secular.*

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Although the founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha Gautama (c. 563 B.C.E.–486 B.C.E.), himself found spiritual enlightenment while meditating under a bodhi tree, the Buddhist approach to spiritual awakening does not only consist of meditation but of three ways believed to work together. Those ways are:

1. *Sila* or Purification
2. *Samadhi* or Concentration
3. *Punna* or Insight

*Sila*, or purification, is simply cleansing the body, mind, spirit. *Samadhi*, or concentration, involves fixing one's mind or attention on a single object that can be any object such as a colored wheel, a candle, reflections on attributes of Buddha or the elements of nature, etc.



*Punna*, or insight, doesn't come until the student masters mindfulness of the body, feelings, mind, and mind objects, and even then it is said that there are many states in between that may *trick* one into rapturous states or feelings such as happiness, lucidity and the like, that might make the student believe the state of nirvana has been reached when in fact there may be many other levels yet to be mastered.

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## THE *Upanishads* says meditation is the prelude to attaining God consciousness.

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Once the three levels are achieved, meditation becomes effortless and consciousness ceases to have a need of any object of any kind, thus all attachments to the material world are severed to the “wakened being.” This final stage is said to only be able to last for seven days as the person’s pulse, metabolism, and all other physical functions drop so low that death would occur.

In Tibetan Buddhism, training is composed of three parts as well. Those three parts are:

1. *Hearing*, which includes reading and listening to lectures, or studying and the like.
2. *Contemplation*.
3. *Meditation*.

Meditation dates back to antiquity as the *Rig Veda*, the earliest recorded religious literature of Northern India, written about 1000 B.C.E., in an Indo-European language, describes in detail the ecstasy experienced in meditation.

In the Taoist work, *Tao Teh Ching* of China, written four or five centuries B.C.E., formalized meditation is also recorded. The Taoists emphasized breath control in meditative practice and believed it to be a skill to be achieved in many stages. The ultimate stage or goal is to be able to breathe without inhaling or exhaling—to the point of the complete cessation of the pulse. If one were able to arrive at this stage successfully, it was said they would transcend conscious thought to the state of what they called the Great Quies-

cence, or the highest form of enlightenment and the goal of Taoist meditation.

The *Upanishads* of India give a detailed description of the psychology of meditation as being the way to control the physical senses and actions, thereby freeing oneself from the bondage of the external world. The *Upanishads* speak of the cultivation of a one-pointed mind through meditation as being the prelude to attaining God consciousness.

Kabbalistic literature and teachings, as well as biblical references to prayer and meditation throughout both the Old and New Testaments, cite setting self apart from the masses and going to a still, quiet place—within and without—as a source of mystical communication with God.

The process of meditation, whether spiritual or secular, is most often described as simply being a way of learning to still the mind—to slow it down, enabling one to listen within, to the “voice within.” Although most individuals are not aware of the myriad of thoughts and chatter that rampage through the mind like a wild, untamed horse at each and any given moment, that is the challenge—to slow down all thoughts to a single thought or even to no thoughts at all—complete stillness, the unruly beast tamed at last.

Another analogy often used to describe the process of meditation is to compare the human mind to a lake that contains great treasures deep within, but an intense storm agitates and stirs the waters—clouding the view of the treasures below. Even if an occasional glimpse of the treasures is possible through the windswept waters, the view would be distorted. Here again, to gain mental control and focus is the aim of slowing down the raging storm or the “mental tapes” that continually play in one’s head.

Some say that even the descriptions themselves of meditation are a misnomer by definition. Experts say it is not a manipulation of the mind, but a going beyond mind, beyond thought—to the total absence of thought. That “beyond mind” state—much like a calm, clear reflective pool—that not only mirrors the mind’s surface, but also reveals its depths. Accomplishing this mental/spiritual state isn’t

something that occurs in a one-time meditation and sitting; it is an achievement of much discipline and consistency.

In the early 1970s and 1980s, the National Institutes of Health conducted a series of experiments to determine the efficacy of the reported abilities of gurus from India to slow down their heartbeat, pulse rate, and even to raise and lower their body temperature to extremes through meditative states. Medically, this had been considered impossible, as it was believed that the autonomic nervous system was responsible and it could not be manipulated or controlled by mind or thought. Research proved this to be untrue and a whole bevy of human possibilities began to emerge which gave rise to the secular use of meditation.

As research continued, not only in the Institutes of Health, but in universities worldwide, new and astounding data emerged and continues to emerge on a regular basis. Scientists have proven the benefits of meditation in areas as far-reaching as crime reduction to improved health, longevity of life, and stress reduction. The National Institutes for Health and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute now recommend meditation as a viable treatment for moderate hypertension. Their research also shows that certain types of heart arrhythmia or irregularities respond to meditation.

In his groundbreaking book, *The Relaxation Response* (1975), Dr. Herbert Benson documents some interesting research on meditation. Benson found that by having a patient focus on a sacred sound, or a mantra, as used in transcendental meditation, the person's heart rate decreased, as did their breathing rate and oxygen consumption. In fact, Benson's findings were so convincing that the Mind/Body Medical Institute, of which Benson is president, received \$2.7 million from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to continue to investigate the scientific basis of the relaxation response.

Dr. Andrew Weil is an internationally recognized Harvard Medical School graduate and an advocate of alternative approaches to medicine, including the use of meditation. In his book *Spontaneous Healing* (1995), he recommends meditation to his patients as a means of

restoring balance in their lives. Mood swings, depression, erratic energy levels, hectic schedules, unhealthy eating habits, and unstable relationships are all signs of a life out of balance, which is a high disease factor. Weil and many other doctors are advising and/or teaching a variety of meditation techniques with great success in treating these and other afflictions. Research and documentation continues globally in the use of meditation to treat hypertension, pain, muscle tension, and even high cholesterol.

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CERTAIN types of heart arrhythmia or irregularities respond to meditation.

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#### PSYCHEDELICS—THE MIND-EXPANDING DRUGS

Throughout the tenure of the human species on Earth, certain mushrooms, extracts from cacti, various roots and herbs, and other unlikely substances have been chewed and ingested, not for the purpose of sustaining life, but for the physiological and psychological effects that they have on the body and the brain. Cults of mystical expression have grown up around the use of these mind-altering sub-

stances, for many shamans and priests believed that they could open portals to higher planes of consciousness and even to other worlds by ingesting certain plants. The ancient Greeks held the mushroom sacred, and some contemporary researchers have postulated that the famed **Oracle at Delphi** may have ingested some form of psychedelic drug, along with the fumes the entranced woman inhaled. Other cultures have also held the mushroom or the cactus sacred. The Mayan Indians of Central America erected stone monuments to the mushroom earlier than 1000 B.C.E. These monuments have been found in the tombs of the wealthier citizens of the Mayan culture, and for many years were thought to be fertility symbols.

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**D**R. *Humphrey Osmond* coined the word “*psychedelic*” to describe the effects of the mind-altering drugs.

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Such drugs as mescaline from the peyote cactus, ibogaine from the root of a rain forest shrub, and the so-called “magic mushrooms” came to be known as psychedelic, because they cause people to hallucinate, to see and hear things that are not really there. Dr. Humphrey Osmond (1917– ) began studying hallucinogens at a hospital in Saskatchewan in 1952 when he was examining the similarities between mescaline and the adrenaline molecule. It was Osmond who coined the word “psychedelic” to describe the effects of the mind-altering drugs, and it was also he who supervised the author Aldous Huxley (1894–1963) in the well-known series of experiments with mescaline that Huxley recorded in his book *The Doors of Perception* (1953).

While modern research techniques focus on psychedelics for purposes of learning more about the human brain, relieving pain, finding antidotes to drug overdoses, and other medical applications, the ingestion of such drugs in the past was most often done to achieve transcendence or to accentuate mystical experiences.

In 1953, R. Gordon Wasson (1898–1986), a vice president of the J. P. Morgan Company, and his wife observed a rite of the Mixtec Indians that involved the use of a sacred mushroom by a *curandero*, or witch doctor, who was said to have powers of prophecy after he had consumed the mushrooms.

The curandero made extensive preparations long before the all-night ritual began. For five days before and five after, he did not allow himself the company of a woman. He explained his actions to the Wassons by saying he feared he would go mad if he consorted with any female. He drank no alcohol for the same period and fasted for 24 hours before the ceremony began.

The Wassons first became involved in the ritual at nine o'clock in the evening when the witch doctor called them to a small room containing articles of ceremonial religious observance and asked them what information they sought. The Wassons answered that they wanted to know about their son, Peter, whom they had left in Boston.

Then in the small, dark room, illuminated only by candles, the witch doctor began the ceremony. By 10:30 P.M., he had eaten 14 pairs of the mushrooms. Other facets of the rite included the precise arrangement of the ceremonial articles in the room and the rubbing of green tobacco on the curandero's head, neck, and stomach. Then the candles were extinguished and they waited.

At 1:00 A.M. the witch doctor claimed that he was receiving a vision of the Wassons' son. He shocked them by saying that Peter needed them because of some emotional crisis in his life. The man continued, telling them that their son was no longer in the city they had thought he was in and that he was either going to war or joining the army. He ended his string of predictions by stating that a close relative of R. Gordon Wasson's would become seriously ill within a year.

It was not long after this ceremony that reality bore out the witch doctor's predictions. Peter Wasson had joined the army at the unhappy end of a romance that had left him emotionally distraught. He was only 18 at the time, but he had joined the service and was

shipped to Japan before the Wassons could protest. At the time of the ceremony, he had been not in Boston but in New York. The last portion of the curandero's prognostication also came true when one of R. Gordon Wasson's first cousins died of a heart attack within the one-year period the man had foreseen.

Intrigued by the witch doctor's performance, the Wassons became interested in trying the mushrooms themselves. They traveled the back trails of Mexican bush country until they found a village where the natives were willing to let them join a mushroom ceremony.

The Wassons were given explicit instructions on what and what not to eat before they consumed the mushrooms. The gathering was held in the basement of one of the villager's dwellings, and each person present consumed six pairs of the greasy-tasting mushrooms within a half an hour. The scene was lit by the moon that shone through an opening in the wall.

About a half an hour later, Wasson said that he felt as if his soul had been scooped from his body and had been projected to a point far away. He went on to describe scenes resembling those commonly described by the users of mind-expansion drugs. Yet, in his case, there was no instance of any kind of prophecy or clairvoyance.

The question of whether psychedelic drugs can induce or enhance psychic phenomena or extrasensory abilities remains poised before researchers without an answer. Although the drug-induced experiences are similar qualitatively to those described by mystics and mediums all over the world, they may be only an accompanying manifestation of the brain state of these sensitives.

In 1960 Dr. Erick-Will Peuckert, professor at Germany's Gottingen University, found a formula for witches' salve in an ancient book on witchcraft. Peuckert was aware that the salve was known to contain such psychedelic drugs as the thorn apple, the Deadly Nightshade, and other regional fruits and roots, but he and an unnamed attorney friend decided to test the ancient recipe in the exact ritual manner prescribed by the book of magic.

After the salve had been applied, both men fell into a state of consciousness that

resembled sleep. They were both entranced for 20 hours and awakened with mammoth hangovers, complete with dry mouths, sore throats, and headaches. Peuckert and his friend both claimed that they had witnessed the **Black Sabbath** of the witches.

In spite of the hangovers both men had upon awakening from the trance, they immediately set about writing separate accounts of what they had envisioned. Except for differences in wording, they described the same scenes. Peuckert's theory is that the Sabbath was often manifest with the use of such salves, and although the people involved actually had no physical experiences, they could be made to confess to their witchcraft because they could not separate hallucinations from reality.

Dr. Sidney Cohen, a Los Angeles psychiatrist-pharmacologist, author of *The Beyond Within: The LSD Story* (1972), commented, "It is hardly necessary to invoke supernatural explanations for the mind's more exceptional activities....Intuition, creativity, telepathic experiences, prophecy—all can be understood as superior activities of brain-mind function....The experience called hallucinogenic will play a role in leading us into the future. It points out the existence of unique mental states that must be studied and understood."

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LYSERGIC acid is found naturally in ergot, a fungus that grows on rye and other grains.

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On May 2, 1938, Dr. Albert Hofmann of the Sandoz Research Laboratories in Basel, Switzerland, first synthesized Lyserg-Saeure-Diaethylamid (LSD). Lysergic acid is found naturally in ergot, a fungus that grows on rye and other grains, and throughout history it has been used in various medications. Some researchers have even attributed ingestion of ergot to hallucinations that in the Middle Ages may have caused people to believe that they could fly through the air like witches or transform themselves into werewolves.

Five years after synthesizing the drug, Hofmann accidentally inhaled a minute quantity

while working with other ergot derivatives and experienced a kind of pleasant feeling of inebriation, which consisted of hallucinations that lasted for several hours. Since Hofmann's accidental discovery, scientists have been trying to fit LSD-25 and other drugs with hallucinogenic properties into biochemical schemes of many kinds. In the 1960s and 1970s, substances and chemicals that formerly had an aura of mystery around them were being broken down by chemical analysis and were hailed by some individuals as "mind-expanders" and by others as recreational drugs that could be exploited for fast "trips" to "far-out" places.

During the 20 years following World War II (1939–45), LSD was used to study brain chemistry and to trace its effectiveness in treating patients with schizophrenia and other mental disorders. It was also utilized in conjunction with cancer patients and alcoholics.

LSD was found to create such primary effects as the following:

1. a feeling of being one with the universe;
2. recognition of two identities;
3. a change in the usual concept of self;
4. new perceptions of space and time;
5. heightened sensory perceptions;
6. a feeling that one has been touched by a profound understanding of religion or philosophy;
7. a gamut of rapidly changing emotions;
8. increased sensitivity for the feelings of others;
9. such psychotic changes as illusions, hallucinations, paranoid delusions, severe anxiety.

In 1966 the investigational drug branch of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) distinguished four stages of LSD action:

1. Initial, lasting for about 30 to 45 minutes after oral ingestion of 100 to 150 micrograms of LSD, producing slight nausea, some anxiety, dilation of pupils;
2. Hallucinations, associated with significant alteration of consciousness (confused states, dreamlike revivals of past traumatic events or childhood memories), distortion of time and space perspective, anxiety,

autistic withdrawal, alteration of personality, impairment of conscience lasting from one to eight hours;

3. Recovery, lasting for several hours and consisting of feelings of normality alternating with sensations of abnormality;
4. Aftermath, consisting of fatigue and tension during the following day.

According to many researchers, LSD is not addictive. It is, in fact, self-limiting. If one were to take the drug for three days in a row, it would no longer produce a psychic effect. A week or longer would have to pass before the drug would again expand the mind.

Long-term use of LSD has been known to cause permanent psychoses, schizophrenia, and severe depression. Some researchers have noticed a change in the aging process among native shamans and diviners who steadily partake of their own home-brewed psychedelics. Rapid aging might be an as yet unforeseen result of extensive use of psychedelics. Some psychiatrists maintain that a psychotic disturbance can occur days, weeks, or even months after receiving LSD.

In 1963, Dr. Timothy Leary and Dr. Richard Alpert were discharged from their positions at Harvard University for their enthusiasm in advocating the mind-expanding properties of LSD. Undaunted, the two went on to establish a number of colonies of their International Federation of Internal Freedom. Throughout most of the 1960s, Leary was the primary and most well-known prophet of the LSD movement, and he predicted that by 1970, as many as 30 million persons, most of them young, would have embarked on voyages of discovery through the limitless inner space of their own minds. According to Leary, these voyagers would return much wiser and much more loving than when they began.

Years before Leary's predicted voyages by millions through their inner space, law enforcement officials had begun to regard traffic in LSD and other hallucinogens as just another racket and feared that they would soon have to contend with a black market in the drugs and that it would be aided and abetted by the crime syndicates. The growing use of psychedelics by the counterculture, the



“hippies,” and those who felt alienated from mainstream American society because of their anti-Vietnam War sentiments, all contributed to a growing traffic in illegal distribution of the drugs on the streets of cities throughout the United States. Physicians and psychiatrists warned against the indiscriminate use of LSD and other psychedelics and the possibilities that people could provoke otherwise hidden psychotic processes within themselves.

In 1966 further FDA research noted that extended use of the drug could lead to mood swings, including depression, which could in turn lead to suicide. Those who had continued to use LSD could also suddenly experience a sense of euphoria, which could lead to socially embarrassing situations. Time and space distortions could present obvious traffic dangers. A sudden onset of hallucinations could endanger the users and those with them.

Arguing the unpredictable results of uncontrolled use of such drugs as LSD-25,

mescaline, and psilocybine, critics of unrestricted use of the drugs demanded legislation that would curb the distribution of psychedelics. In 1970 the U.S. Controlled Substances Act, responding to the unsupervised use and abuse of psychedelic drugs by millions of young adults, made open distribution of such mind-altering substances illegal. Since that time, however, the Food and Drug Administration has allowed projects by medical researchers to continue to explore the potential of psychedelics, explaining that the Controlled Substances Act was never intended to hinder legitimate research, only the misuse and abuse of the drugs.

Because the drugs are now classified as controlled substances, research scientists must apply to the Drug Enforcement Administration for a permit and file an application with the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Federal Drug Administration. During the 1990s, researchers reported medical promise for the use of psychedelic drugs in the treatment of

**Tim Leary portrayed in a piece of computerized hallucinations artwork. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)**

alcoholism, addiction to pain medications, and alleviation of pain in cancer patients.

Individuals who continue to use psychedelics obtained through various means other than the Drug Enforcement Administration have organizations of their own and are determined to meet what they consider a challenge to their personal freedoms. They claim that the benefits gained from the psychedelic experience is valuable and should not be forbidden anyone who, of his or her own volition, would like to explore it.

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**FDA** research noted that extended use of LSD could lead to mood swings, including depression, which could in turn lead to suicide.

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Although mind-expansion drugs have not been found to be narcotic in the sense that they set up a physical craving within the user, possible long-term effects of the drugs have not yet been determined. If the drug is used as a means of escape from reality, it is possible that a user could become dependent upon it in the same manner that many people become dependent upon alcohol. Psychedelics have been studied extensively since ibogaine was isolated in the early 1900s, mescaline in the 1920s, and LSD since 1943, but government scientists state that it is still too early to determine whether or not the drugs have serious or practical medicinal uses.

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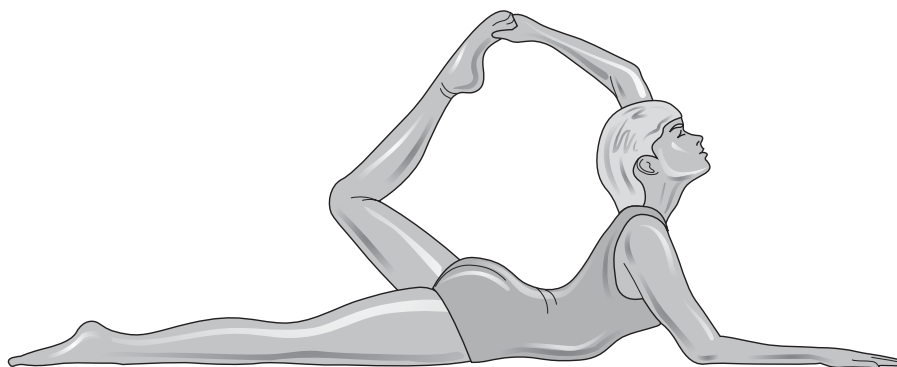
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#### RELAXATION

Unlike hypnosis, in relaxation the subjects do not enter a sleep or trancelike state. Instead, they are deeply relaxed and helped by a practitioner to achieve a positive state of mind wherein they can visualize (imagine) the alleviation of an illness or perceive a means by which they might achieve a certain objective or goal in their life. Generally, subjects are relaxed and led on a guided meditation or creative visualization by someone who reads the process from a script. In some cases, the individual may have prerecorded the script in his or her own voice and may thereby repeat the process as often as desired for reinforcement of the technique. Often, soft, soothing music is played in the background as the individual undergoes the relaxation process.

Relaxation and creative visualization utilizing symbolic imagery became increasingly popular among those in the New Age Movement in the 1970s, and seminars and workshops featuring such techniques continued to draw large audiences into the 1990s. Basically, the philosophy behind the relaxation process is quite

Yoga is used as a form of relaxation. (THE GALE GROUP)



likely as old as the first healers in ancient Babylon, Egypt, and Greece, who believed that the evil spirits within the ill could be replaced by good spirits if the patient concentrated on positive images of benevolent entities. New Age practitioners believe that in order to achieve a complete healing of body, mind, and spirit, one must counter the negative input that the individual has placed in his or her mind over decades of negative reinforcement. The individual must fill himself or herself with positive memories and images. Phobias, compulsions, and unresolved feelings of guilt can all be removed by relaxation techniques and healing miracles can be accomplished.

Generally, the person undergoing the relaxation process lies or sits in a comfortable position, undergoes a brief breathing exercise, then relaxes further by visualizing a peaceful scene. Once the individual appears to be as relaxed as possible, the practitioner guides him or her on a symbolic journey of discovery, in which valuable insights will be acquired.

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## EXTRASENSORY PERCEPTION: THE "SIXTH SENSE"

Extrasensory perception—ESP—is defined by parapsychologists as the acquisition by a human or animal mind of information it could not have received by normal, sensory means. Some researchers, however, take issue with the term "extrasensory perception." They protest that the phenomena may not be "perception" at all, as the receiver of this information does not know if the knowledge is right or wrong when he or she first perceives it. It takes a corroborating incident to convince anyone that he or she has perceived anything via extrasensory means. Some parapsychologists prefer to say "paranormal cognition," but this term is subject to the same sort of criticism if the receiver is not instantly certain of the validity of the information. Besides, the researchers insist that the material in their field will eventually merge with present-day physics, so the adjective "paranormal" may be considered a misnomer.

Contrary to common usage, a parapsychologist is not a psychic, a mentalist, an astrologer, or one who gives psychic readings. A parapsychologist is generally a member of the Parapsychological Association, which was founded in 1957 and elected an affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1969. A parapsychologist is a scientist who is seriously interested in the paranormal (or anomalous phenomena), which includes telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, psychokinesis, hauntings, reincarnation, and out-of-body or near-death experi-





Bruce Willis and Haley  
Joel Osment in the film  
"The Sixth Sense".  
(AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

ences. Here are brief definitions of the areas of ESP that are studied by parapsychologists:

**Clairvoyance** is the awareness, without physical aids or normal sensory means, of what is going on elsewhere. In recent years, clairvoyance has sometimes been called remote viewing.

**Out-of-body experience** (also called astral projection) is the apparent projection of the mind from the body, often with the seeming ability to travel great distances in a matter of seconds.

**Precognition** (premonition) is the obtaining of information about the future that could not have been gained through normal means.

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**EXTRASENSORY** *perception is defined  
the acquisition by a human or animal mind of  
information it could not have received by normal,  
sensory means.*

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**Psychokinesis (telekinesis)** is the movement of objects, seemingly caused by some force unknown to physical science. The direct action of mind on matter is the parapsychologists' current nominee as the energy involved in poltergeist cases—those bizarre occurrences when bottles and crockery float through the air, fires break out on living room tables, or disembodied voices cackle threats and obscenities.

**Telepathy** is the transference of thought from one mind to another. Distance and time seem unable to affect this phenomenon.

Even from these brief definitions, it becomes apparent that many attributes of parapsychological, or psi, phenomena overlap. It has long been a contention of serious parapsychologists that each of these types of phenomena is but a single aspect of the life and the universe of which humans are a part. If such parascientific phenomena as the projection of the astral self, the ability to glimpse the future, and the facility to convey telepathic impressions are established, the boundaries of humankind's universe become limitless.

Nearly everyone has at one time or another received what seemed to have been a glimpse into the world of ESP: Dreaming of a friend from whom one has not heard in months, then receiving a letter from that person in the next morning's mail; hearing a telephone ring and being so certain of the identity of the caller that one calls him or her by name the instant one lifts up the receiver. These incidents are so common that they receive little more than half-joking comment. It is only when a paranormal event of shocking or dramatic impact startles the emotions that one relates it to others and, perhaps, even records it.

According to parapsychological laboratory work with such phenomena, nearly everyone has some degree of ESP. Perhaps many people utilize extrasensory perception to a considerable degree as children, but as they mature, tend to inhibit these subconscious faculties or allow them to atrophy. Many parapsychologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and psychoanalysts, including Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), have theorized that telepathy may have been the original archaic method by which individuals understood one another. As a better means of communication evolved—one that could be readily intelligible to the sensory organs—the original archaic methods were pushed into the background of the human subconscious where they may still persist, waiting to manifest themselves under certain conditions.

It is obvious to psi researchers that some individuals, functioning largely according to

An opinion poll conducted in Canada in October 2002 discovered that 40 percent of Canadians believe that certain individuals have **extrasensory perception** that enable them to see into the future. The poll also revealed that 30 percent of the respondents had consulted with a **medium**, a psychic, or an astrologer.

In the United States, the National Science Foundation's biennial report on the state of science understanding, research, education, and investment conducted in April 2002 found that 70 percent of adults do not understand the scientific process. According to their poll, 60 percent of the respondents believed that there were individuals who possessed psychic powers or extrasensory perception.

Peter Brugger, a neurologist from the University Hospital in Zurich, Switzerland, has suggested that whether or not one believes in the paranormal depends entirely upon one's brain chemistry. As an experiment, Brugger gathered 20 individuals who believed in the paranormal and 20 who said that they were skeptical. The subjects were asked to distinguish real faces from scrambled images flashed briefly on a screen. The second phase consisted of the volunteers forming real words from made-up ones.

In his July 2002 report, Brugger stated that during the first stage of the experiment the individuals who believed in the paranormal were much more likely to see a face or a word when there was none. The skeptics were more likely to miss the real words and faces when they appeared on the screen.

Next, the volunteers were given L-dopa, a drug that increases levels of dopamine in the brain. Dopamine is a chemical utilized in the brain's system of reward and motivation and in deciding whether information received is relevant or irrelevant.

Under the influence of L-dopa, both groups had difficulty in distinguishing real faces and words from the scrambled ones—but interestingly, the skeptical individuals developed a greater ability to interpret the jumbled images as the real thing.

## PARANORMAL BELIEFS AND BRAIN CHEMISTRY

Brugger theorized that the improvement in the skeptics' performance suggests that paranormal thoughts are associated with high levels of dopamine in the brain. The dopamine allows people to see patterns and to become less skeptical regarding the perception of relationships between events.

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their moods and psychic needs, are able to draw upon their latent ESP abilities. Some gifted individuals are even able to make regular and practical use of the seemingly rare powers of psi.

It is interesting to note how many psi activities are experienced while the percipient is either asleep or in the sleeplike states of trance or hypnosis. This may indicate that each individual, in his or her subconscious, has the faculties necessary to focus on the consciously unperceived world of ESP. Dr. Montague Ullman has observed that many persons who are incapable of effective communication in normal ways can communicate at a telepathic level and surprise the therapist with a telepathic dream of rich awareness even of the physician's problems. The same laws of psychodynamics that apply to the dream also appear to apply to psi phenomena. Both the dream and psi are incompatible with currently accepted notions of time, space, and causality.

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**T**ELEPATHY *may have been the original archaic method by which individuals understood one another.*

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More conventional scientists, who work within the confines of those currently accepted boundaries of known physical laws, insist that parapsychologists satisfy the requirements demanded of all other sciences and that they do the following: (1) produce controlled and repeatable experiments; (2) develop a hypothesis comprehensive enough to include all psi activity from telepathy to poltergeists, from water dowsing to materializations.

The enormous difficulty in fulfilling these requirements can be immediately grasped by anyone with the slightest knowledge of psi phenomena. It would be impossible, for example, to repeat the apparition of a man's father as it appeared to him at the moment of his father's death. This sort of crisis apparition occurs only at death, and the man's father is going to die only once. Psi phenomena is

almost completely spontaneous in nature, and ungovernable elements of mood and emotion play enormously important roles in any type of paranormal experience. As researcher G. N. M. Tyrrell commented, a percipient is never aware of a telepathic, clairvoyant, or precognitive process at work within him. He is only aware of the product of that process. In fact, it seems apparent from laboratory work that conscious effort at determining any psi process at work within oneself will either completely destroy it or greatly diminish its effectiveness. Therefore, laboratory experiments have sometimes established, by incredibly laborious tests and veritable mountains of statistics, only slightly better-than-chance evidence of the validity of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis.

Parapsychologists suggest that their colleagues in the physical sciences resist becoming dogmatic. Each generation seems to forget that scientists have had to admit some seemingly impossible facts in the past. Electricity, for example, was unknown except through a few sporadic events completely devoid of explanation, such as lightning and the mysterious attraction of bits of paper to rubbed amber. As facts became gradually accumulated, the theory of an electromagnetic field pervading all space was evolved. Perhaps one day, psi phenomena will be recognized as another kind of energy that pervades time, space, and matter.

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## ESP RESEARCHERS

In their biennial report on the state of science understanding released in April 2002, the National Science Foundation found that 60 percent of adults in the United States agreed or strongly agreed that some people possess psychic powers or extrasensory perception (ESP). In June 2002, the Consumer Analysis Group conducted the most extensive survey ever done in the United Kingdom and revealed that 67 percent of adults believed in psychic powers. Report author Jan Walsh, commenting on the statistics that found that two out of three surveyed believed in an afterlife, said that as far as the British public was concerned, “the supernatural world isn’t so paranormal after all.”

Michael Shermer, author of *Why People Believe Weird Things* (2002) and publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, was among those scientists who deplored the findings that such a high percentage of Americans accepted the reality of ESP. In Shermer’s analysis, such statistics posed a serious problem for science educators. Complaining that people too readily accepted the claims of pseudoscience, Shermer concluded his column for *Scientific American* (August 12, 2002) by writing that “for those lacking a fundamental comprehension of how science works, the siren song of pseudoscience becomes too alluring to resist, no matter how smart you are.”

Ever since he entered the field of parapsychology full time in 1947, Dr. Robert A. McConnell, holder of a doctorate in physics and the leader of a radar development group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during World War II (1939–45), has primarily devoted his efforts to answering the question of why so many scientists reject ESP. As early as 1943, after reading the literature on British and American scientific psychical research in the Harvard library, he came to the conclusion that ESP did occur, although presently beyond explanation by known physics and psychology. McConnell is a life senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, a fellow of the American Psychological Society, research professor emeritus of Biological Science, and a fellow of the American Associa-



J. B. and Louisa Rhine.  
(DR. SUSAN  
BLACKMORE/FORTEAN  
PICTURE LIBRARY)

tion for the Advancement of Science. He became the founding president of the Parapsychological Association in 1957 and saw that group admitted to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1969. In McConnell’s opinion the adamant denial of the existence of extrasensory perception by materialist scientists can best be explained by their fear of the consequences that might follow in the event of their acceptance.

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CERTAIN *psychic-sensitives might have the ability to direct random energy at subatomic levels.*

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According to McConnell in *Joyride to Infinity* (2000), “all general textbooks of psychology and physics would have to be rewritten.” In the field of physics, recognition of psychic phenomena might require no more than an acknowledgement that there is a nonphysical realm “with which the physical realm can interact, both spontaneously and experimentally.” In psychology, however, McConnell states that “the fallout from a universal recognition of the reality of [ESP] would be catastrophic.” Experimental psychology as it is currently practiced would be destroyed as a “scientific enterprise.” Psychiatry would have to go back to its beginnings and start all over again. The prevailing contemporary worldview of materialist science would shatter, McConnell says, and “any attempt by a thoughtful scientist to reconcile the established facts of parapsy-

ESP researcher Harold Sherman. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)



chology with his understanding of his philosophical commitment to his profession would encounter an emotional block.”

In September 2001 physicist Brian Josephson of Cambridge, England, winner of the Nobel Prize for physics in 1973, provoked an academic controversy when he declared that there was a great deal of evidence to support the existence of telepathy, but scientific journals censored such research and would not publish articles on the paranormal. Josephson expressed his belief that certain psychic-sensitives might have the ability to direct random energy at subatomic levels and that developments in quantum physics “may lead to an explanation of processes such as telepathy still not understood within conventional science.”

Serious-minded scientists have been researching ESP since the mid-nineteenth century. It was Max Dessoir (1867–1947) who first coined the term “parapsychology” in an article he wrote for the German periodical *Sphinx* in 1889. Although he would later become a distinguished professor of philosophy, Dessoir was a student when he defined “parapsychologie” (in German) as something

that went beyond the ordinary, as phenomena that was outside of the usual processes of the inner life. The study of this unknown area between ordinary and pathological states, this “paraphysical” phenomena, he suggested, should be called parapsychology.

William James (1842–1910), the foremost American psychologist of the nineteenth century, explored the nonphysical realm of psychic phenomena and mysticism in his classic work *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902).

Sir William Barrett (1844–1925), professor of physics and fellow of the Royal Society of London, became convinced of the reality of telepathy and was one of the founders of the British Society for Psychical Research in 1882.

Frederic Myers (1843–1901), a classical lecturer at Cambridge, wrote *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, which was published posthumously in 1903.

Psychologist William McDougall (1871–1938), fellow of the Royal Society, provided sponsorship to Drs. J. B. (1895–1980) and Louisa E. (1891–1983) Rhine, which allowed them to conduct parapsychological research at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, in 1927.

Gardner Murphy (1895–1979), an American psychologist, championed the early ESP experiments at Duke University and served as the editor of the *Journal of Parapsychology* for two years.

L. L. Vasiliev (1891–1966), professor of Physiology at the Institute of Brain Research in the University of Leningrad, holder of the Order of Lenin, carried out experiments in ESP from 1921 to 1938, focusing on the theory that ESP was a form of electromagnetic radiation.

By 1930, Drs. J. B. and Louisa Rhine expanded their investigations of ESP beyond college courses at Duke University and established the first scientific laboratory dedicated to research of psychic phenomena. It was Rhine who first coined the term “extrasensory perception” (ESP) to describe the ability of some individuals to acquire information without the apparent use of the five known senses. He also applied the term “parapsychology” to

distinguish research in psychic phenomena from the pursuits of mainstream psychology.

Considered by many to be the “Father of Modern Parapsychology,” Rhine first collaborated with Professor McDougall, chairman of the Department of Psychology at Duke University, on a series of experiments in the area of extrasensory perception. Most of these tests involved the use of Zener cards, a specially designed deck of 25 cards that include five cards each of five symbols—a cross, star, wavy lines, circle, and square. The Rhines enlisted hundreds of volunteer subjects to guess the symbols of the cards or to determine the number of dots in rolled dice. Louisa Rhine became a leading parapsychologist as a result of her own studies in spontaneous psychic phenomena, exploring such areas of ESP as clairvoyance, precognition, and telepathy.

Louisa Weckesser and Joseph Rhine had been teenage friends who married in 1920. Although they had both earned doctorates in botany from the University of Chicago and had embarked on promising careers in the field, a lecture by **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** (1859–1930) on his research into psychic phenomena changed their lives. The young couple were so inspired by the prospect of conducting serious investigations into the world of **mediumship** and the afterlife, that they made the decision to abandon botany for psychical research.

Some of their early experiences sitting with spirit mediums were discouraging, for the Rhines felt that they caught the individuals employing trickery to delude others into accepting their abilities to contact the realm of spirit. In their opinion, psychical research would best be examined in the laboratory under controlled conditions. Learning of Dr. William McDougall’s interest in the paranormal, the Rhines contacted him at Duke University, and Professor McDougall invited them to join him at Durham.

In 1934, after they had established the parapsychology laboratory, J. B. Rhine wrote a monograph entitled “Extra-Sensory Perception,” which managed to get noticed by the media and subsequently gained wide attention for the ESP lab at Duke. The monograph led



Dr. Stanley Krippner.  
(DENNIS STACY/FORTEAN  
PICTURE LIBRARY)

to Rhine’s *New Frontiers of the Mind* (1937), which became a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. Within a short time after achieving such a level of celebrity, Rhine had a prime-time radio program and was focusing attention on the work in psychical research that was being conducted at Duke. Such attention did little to earn the approval of many of the professors in the material sciences at the university, who were dismayed that Duke was becoming known as a center for pseudoscience and weird research projects.

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**D**RS. *J. B. and Louisa Rhine expanded their investigations of ESP and established the first scientific laboratory dedicated to research of psychic phenomena.*

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After decades of conducting controlled experiments in ESP, the Rhines offered their conclusion that such psychic abilities as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis did exist. Many scientists were unimpressed by the Rhines’ accumulated research and questioned the validity of their statistical analyses.

In the summer of 1957, J. B. Rhine suggested that parapsychologists form an interna-

tional professional society in parapsychology, and on June 19, 1957, the Parapsychological Association was founded with R. A. McConnell, president; Dr. Gertrude R. Schmeidler, vice president; and Rhea White, secretary-treasurer.

For six years during the 1950s, Dr. Karlis Osis (1917–1997) worked with J. B. Rhine at the parapsychology laboratory at Duke University. Born in Latvia, Osis received his doctorate in psychology from the University of Munich in 1950. His dissertation topic, “A Hypothesis of Extrasensory Perception,” reflected an interest in the field of parapsychology prompted by an experience as a teenager in which he had undergone a mystical encounter with a mysterious light source that had filled him with sublime joy.

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**ESP** *research remains a source of constant controversy.*

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Osis had a long and distinctive career in parapsychology, and he worked in such areas as animal ESP, distance effects on extrasensory perception, psychokinesis, out-of-body experiences, and life after death. In the 1960s, Osis did a pilot study of deathbed visions for the **American Society for Psychical Research**, which was later verified across several different cultures. Osis was a past president of the Parapsychological Association, director of research for the Parapsychology Foundation from 1957 to 1962, and the author of more than 70 scientific articles.

In 1962 the Rhines dissociated their research with Duke and established the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man. Although the foundation remained in Durham, J. B. Rhine felt that their controversial work required the scientific freedom of becoming a privately funded, independent research organization.

In 1964 experimental methods for studying ESP during dreams was pioneered under the directorship of Dr. Montague Ullman and

Dr. Stanley Krippner (1932– ) at the Dream Lab at the Maimonides Medical Center in New York. Krippner received a doctorate in Educational Psychology from Northwestern University, and he has done pioneering work in the scientific investigation of human consciousness, especially such areas as the relationship of creativity to parapsychological phenomena and altered states of consciousness. Extremely prolific and diverse in his interests in investigating the mysteries of psychic phenomena, Krippner has written more than 500 articles and many books, such as *Human Possibilities* (1980), *Dream Telepathy* (with Montague Ullman and Alan Vaughan; 1989), and *Healing States* (with Alberto Villoldo; 1986).

In the 1970s, Dr. Russell Targ and Dr. Harold Puthoff conducted some of the best-known experiments on the connections between ESP “senders” located at a distance from the “receivers” of the psychic communication. The designated receiver was placed in a sealed, opaque and electrically shielded chamber, while the scientists would situate the sender in another room where he or she was subjected to bright flashes of light at regular intervals. Each of the experimental subjects was connected to an electroencephalograph (EEG) machine that registered their brain-wave patterns. After a brief period of time, the receiver began to produce the same rhythmic pattern of brain waves as the sender, who was exposed to the flashing light. Targ and Puthoff also carried out experiments in what came to be known as “remote viewing,” in which sender and receiver were separated by distances that eliminated any possibility of any form of ordinary sensory communication between them.

Dr. Charles T. Tart (1937– ) studied electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before deciding to become a psychologist. He received his doctorate in psychology from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in 1963 and while a member of the faculty at the University of California at Davis for 28 years became internationally known for his research on the nature of consciousness, particularly altered states. Tart is one of the founders of the field

of transpersonal psychology and has authored such classic books as *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969), *Transpersonal Psychologies* (1975), and *Learning to Use Extrasensory Perception* (1976). Tart considers his primary goals as being able to build a bridge between the scientific and the spiritual communities and to help accomplish an integration of Western and Eastern approaches for knowing the world.

In 1995, in honor of the 100th anniversary of J. B. Rhine's birth, the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man was renamed the Rhine Research Center. On June 8, 2002, the Rhines' daughter, Sally Feather, welcomed well-wishers to the Rhine Research Center when it officially opened its first new building. Feather had worked with her parents at the facility at Duke and later at their ESP laboratory when they left the university in 1964. The new building, said to be the most advanced parapsychological facility in the United States, was declared by Feather as "the culmination of a dream that my parents had, but it's my dream now."

ESP research remains a source of constant controversy between parapsychologists and their colleagues in the material sciences. Dr. Robert Morris, director of the Koestler Parapsychology Unit at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, told *New Scientist* magazine (March 3, 2001) that he recognized the skeptics' mocking accusation that ESP stood for "Error Some Place" and he understood that parapsychology needed two things to satisfy the critics: "One, effects of sufficient strength and consistency, so you know something is going on that isn't readily understood by other means...[Two]...coming up with a mechanism. One big question is whether we are talking simply about one mechanism or three or four." Morris stated that he is convinced that ESP is presently "above and beyond what present-day science could account for," but he remains confident that future scientists will one day figure it out.

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#### CLAIRVOYANCE

The Netherlands' Gerard Croiset (1909–1980) was claimed to be a gifted clairvoyant. Perhaps the most remarkable of the many experiments conducted with Croiset was an endless series of chair tests that had been devised for him by Professor Tenhaeff of the Dutch Society for Psychical Research. From the outset of the tests in October of 1947, the results were startling and Croiset repeated the experiment several hundred times in front of scientists in five European nations.

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CLAIRVOYANTS *have been cooperating with law enforcement agencies for years, but usually in an unofficial capacity.*

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The test itself was conducted quite simply. Croiset was taken to a theater, an auditorium, or a meeting house, where a chair number was selected completely at random by a disinterested third party. Croiset then predicted, anywhere from one hour to 26 days, who would sit in the chair. The descriptions given by the paragnost (as such sensitives are called in Holland) were never vague and generalized but quite exact and astonishingly detailed. Often, not only was the individual's appearance described but also characteristics of his or her

personality and even certain emotional difficulties that the subject may have been experiencing at the time. Sometimes Croiset saw the subject's past and was able to predict things about the person's future.

In June of 1964, Croiset was consulted in the murder case of the three Mississippi civil rights workers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner. Via transatlantic telephone wire, Croiset accurately described the area where the three young men's bodies would be found and correctly implicated the local law enforcement officers as participants in the slayings. Although the FBI later made no formal acknowledgment of the clairvoyant's aid in the case, according to writer Jack Harrison Pollack, the federal agents actively sought information from the Utrecht sensitive.

Another famous Dutch clairvoyant, Peter Hurkos (1911–1988), manifested latent powers after he had suffered a fractured skull in June of 1943. After the Second World War (1939–45), Hurkos began to devote most of his time to psychic crime detection. In one of his first cases as a psychic sleuth working with police, Hurkos had only to hold the coat of a dead man to be able to describe the man's murderer in detail that included the assailant's eyeglasses, mustache, and wooden leg. When police admitted that they already had such a man in custody, Hurkos told them where the man had hidden the murder weapon.

Clairvoyants have been cooperating with law enforcement agencies for years, but usually in an unofficial capacity, the Dutch police being among the few official agencies who openly consult clairvoyants for assistance in crime detection. In the United States, England, and Canada, in spite of some astonishing results achieved with the help of such psychics as Irene F. Hughes, Dorothy Allison, and Bevy Jaegers, the official policy is to discuss such important cooperation only in "off the record" interviews and unofficial statements.

In an attempt to determine the amount of clairvoyance the hypnotic state might produce, extensive laboratory tests have been deliberately designed to allow the subject to achieve a hypnotic state amenable to manifes-

tations of ESP. In one experiment Dr. Jarl Fahler, a Finnish psychologist, had four subjects go through 360 runs of an ESP deck, performing half of them in a waking state, and the other half in a hypnotic state.

The results of this experiment showed scoring at chance level in the waking state with significantly higher scoring in the hypnotic state. The subjects did much better on the part of the experiment that tested clairvoyance than on the precognition portion.

Experiments combining clairvoyance and hypnosis go back for centuries. In 1849 the famous mathematician, Augustus de Morgan (1806–1871), wrote of his first experience with what came to be known as “traveling clairvoyance.” The early mesmerists (hypnotists) carried out many experiments during which the subjects would be asked to “go somewhere” mentally and to describe what they saw. In the particular experiment of which de Morgan wrote, the mathematician told of dining at a friend’s house that was about a mile from his own. De Morgan’s wife was not present, having remained at home to treat a young epileptic girl with mesmeric therapy. When de Morgan returned to his home, his wife greeted him with the words: “We have been after you.” While in a hypnotic trance the girl—whose clairvoyant abilities had been demonstrated on numerous previous occasions—had been instructed to “follow Mr. de Morgan.”

When the girl’s mother had heard the name of the street on which the mathematician could be located, she told Mrs. de Morgan that her daughter could never find her way there, for she had never been so far away from home. But in a moment, the girl announced that she stood before the house. Mrs. de Morgan told her that she should knock at the door and go in. The hypnotized clairvoyant answered by saying that she could not knock at the door until she had entered the gate. Mrs. de Morgan was puzzled at this, and it was only upon Mr. de Morgan’s return that the mystery was explained. Having never been to this particular friend’s house, Mrs. de Morgan was not aware of the fact that the house stood in a garden and that the front door was reached only after one had entered

at the garden gate. But the hypnotist bade her subject to simulate entering the house and continue in her pursuit of Mr. de Morgan.

The girl said that she was inside the house and could hear voices upstairs. She “walked” up the stairs and gave a detailed description of the people assembled, the furniture, objects, pictures in the room, and the colors of the drapes and curtains. De Morgan, admittedly awed by the clairvoyantly gained information, verified that each detail was precise and exact. He was even more astonished when the girl repeated the conversations she had overheard and described the dinner menu.

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## EXPERIMENTS *combining clairvoyance and hypnosis go back for centuries.*

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Dr. Milan Ryzl, a Czechoslovakian chemist and physicist who became interested in the field of parapsychology in the 1960s, developed the working hypothesis that if a hypnotic trance could produce the proper level of consciousness for manifestation of ESP, then these extrasensory abilities could be not only induced hypnotically but eventually brought forth spontaneously by the subject without the aid of hypnosis. Ryzl’s experiments involved three major phases: 1) achievement of the proper level of consciousness through hypnosis; 2) perfecting the manifested ESP by a long and intense training period; 3) self-induction by the subject for the state of consciousness receptive to psi manifestation, with encouragement for the subject to use his other ESP faculties independently of the experimenter who trained him or her.

Ryzl originated his experiment with 463 subjects, mostly university student-volunteers between the ages of 16 and 30. Out of this large group only three individuals had sufficient patience and diligence to complete the extensive training period with any degree of proficiency. The parapsychologist’s most talented subject was Pavel Stepanek, a man who came to Ryzl’s laboratory at the age of 30 and

who had the tenacity to stay with the program for three years.

When he began the experiment, Stepanek demonstrated no extrasensory abilities and was evaluated as psychologically normal. Stepanek was given a standard test throughout the experiment. He was asked to tell whether the green or the white side of a two-color card was facing up. Under these conditions a chance score would have been 50 percent.

To test the repeatability of Stepanek's above-chance scoring and to confirm to visiting researchers that the subject was free from any dependency on Ryzl, the testing procedure involved three phases. In the first, or control, phase of the experiment, Ryzl handled the proceedings with the visitors observing. In the second phase, Ryzl was present to stimulate the subject with the procedure in the hands of the guests. The third phase was conducted entirely by the visitors, with Ryzl in no way present or participating.

In the actual procedure of the experiment, Pavel Stepanek was to ascertain the color of the face-up card from a series of ten two-color cards completely enclosed in opaque covers. As the experiment progressed, even more precautions were taken. The cards were shut up in packs of opaque cardboard and wrapped in layers of blue wrapping paper. Enclosed in the pack was a strip of sensitive photographic film, which was examined after each test for further assurance that the deck had not been opened.

In an adjoining room Mrs. Ryzl prepared the cards, determining their order by astronomical data available for the day of the experiment. She handed the cards to Ryzl, then sat in a corner of the room. Ryzl and Stepanek were separated by an opaque screen through which there was no possibility of seeing the cards or the envelopes.

The first test of 200 sets was run, giving a total of 2,000 individual cards. For this test Stepanek performed under hypnosis, not having achieved a high enough degree of proficiency to function without it. He scored 1,144 hits and 856 misses. In all successive tests the subject brought himself to the level of consciousness in which ESP manifests.

Several parapsychologists began accepting Ryzl's invitation to come to Prague to take part in the experiments. Among those who came were British psychologist John Beloff, American parapsychologist John Freeman, Indian parapsychologist B. K. Kanthamni, and American parapsychologist J. G. Pratt. Each of these men suggested variations of the test; and from these variations, additional observations were devised for the steadily growing body of research. Stepanek consistently scored above chance.

At one point, however, his abilities did begin to deteriorate. To help him regain his ability, Ryzl gave Stepanek a deck and told him to go home and try to rebuild his psychic powers himself. Ryzl suggested that he return when he once more felt confidence in his abilities.

This Stepanek did, and eventually he returned to the lab, stating that he once more felt assured of successful high scoring. The tests were resumed and Stepanek immediately regained his former high level of accuracy. Ryzl interpreted Stepanek's ability to retrain his ESP ability by himself, without any outside help, as indicative of the fact that the subject exerted at least some conscious control over his extrasensory process.

In a review of the total experiment, Ryzl concluded that there had been a number of obstacles to be overcome. The first of these obstacles occurred during the initial phase of the experiment, when the subject was first brought to a hypnotic trance corresponding to the proper level of consciousness in which ESP manifests. At this stage the subject was in an extremely suggestible state. Unfortunately, the maintenance of such a state requires the suspension of critical thinking. Without this discriminatory aid the subject makes mistakes, as he or she is unable to determine the difference between true impressions and other sensory impressions. To overcome this difficulty, Ryzl juggled the different levels of hypnosis. Thus, while the subject was in deep sleep, he was more receptive to extrasensory impressions, and while in the lighter stages, he could use his critical faculties and memory. In this way the subject was able to progress by correcting his own mistakes and by learning to rely upon, and trust, his own judgment.

An interesting difficulty that arose concerned the resistant aspect of psychic impressions. Psi impressions do not seem to occur in the same set patterns and symbology as do sensory impressions. Extrasensory perceptions are usually perceived subjectively and manifest most frequently through the physical senses as hallucinatory experiences. This means that a color may manifest itself as a texture, sound, or temperature.

Ryzl learned that one of the difficulties in testing for ESP lies in the fact that psychically received impressions, manifesting as false sensory hallucinations, are frequently indistinguishable from conventional hypnotic hallucinations. ESP subjects must double their energy for they must constantly be assessing their impressions against what they know to be reality.

In addition to tests for clairvoyance and other manifestations of ESP conducted under hypnosis, numerous experiments have been conducted with the subjects under the influence of various psychotropic or psychedelic drugs. In 1966 R. E. L. Masters, a psychologist, and Jean Houston, a philosopher, were running LSD, mescaline, and psilocybin experiments at the Foundation for Mind Research. While engaged in this study, a number of subjects reported instances of telepathy and clairvoyance. These consistent reports were responsible for Houston's and Masters' inauguration of a specific ESP experiment. Their goal was to elicit extrasensory impressions during the psychedelic sessions.

The original setup of the experiment required 27 subjects to run through a Zener ESP deck (five cards for each of the symbols circle, square, cross, wavy line, star) ten times. The cards were reshuffled after each run of 25. This procedure proved boring to the subjects, who were more interested in following the subjective impressions being triggered in their minds by the drug. The majority of the subjects, 23 of the 27, scored consistently at chance or below-chance levels. They averaged a score of 3.5, which is below chance. The other four subjects averaged a score of 8.5—considerably above chance—and were personal friends of the guide. They were cooperative throughout

the test, providing additional indication that attitude influences psi performances.

Masters and Houston learned from this experience to make their tests more compatible to the psychedelic state. The testing further revealed that a subject was more likely to manifest ESP during the leveling-off segment of his “trip” than during the core of the experience. The attention span was much greater and more easily motivated toward taking part in the experiment.

On the basis of these developments, Masters and Houston designed a test utilizing 10 emotionally charged images of historic or aesthetic content in place of the ESP cards. These pictures attempted to trigger the subjective, visual impressions a subject would receive while in the drug state. The agent opened the envelopes containing the target images in an adjoining room. In the room containing the subjects, an assistant attempted to elicit verbal responses from the 62 individuals who had volunteered for the test. Of the 62, 48 described approximate images at least two times out of 10. Of the 62, only 14 were unable to give descriptions corresponding to at least two of the images, and these poor performers were either unknown to the experimenter, anxiety-ridden, or “primarily interested in eliciting personal psychological material.” The full results of this experiment were published in 1966 by Masters and Houston in their *The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience*.

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#### OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE (OBE)

To primitive humans, a dream was an actual experience enacted by the soul as it wandered about during sleep. Today a great deal is still unknown about the mysteries of sleep and dreams, but electroencephalograph records of brain waves and the study of rapid-eye-movement patterns have convinced psychologists and dream scientists that the action of a dream (for most people) takes place within the individual dream machinery and is confined within the brain. However, some individuals have experiences in which they feel certain that their soul, their mind, truly did leave the body during sleep or an altered state of consciousness and travel to other dimensions or other geographical locations on Earth. Are such out-of-body experiences (OBEs) actual journeys of the soul or are they only vivid dreams or hallucinations?

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To primitive humans, a dream was an actual experience enacted by the soul.

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Dr. Hornell Hart's investigation of out-of-body experiences (also known as astral projection) and psi phenomena led him to theorize that the brain was but an instrument by which consciousness expressed itself, rather than a generator that produced consciousness. Hart contended that the available evidence strongly supported the testimonies of those individuals who claimed that their personal consciousness had observed scenes and acted at long distances away from their physical bodies.

Dr. Eugene E. Bernard, professor of psychology at North Carolina State University, who

studied astral projection extensively, stated that he found it highly improbable that so many people who were apparently psychologically healthy were having hallucinations of leaving their bodies. Bernard estimated one out of every 100 persons has experienced some sort of out-of-body projection and stated that his study indicated that such projections occurred most often during times of stress, such as undergoing natural childbirth or minor surgery, and at times of extreme fear. In addition to these kinds of spontaneous instances, Bernard stated he also had encountered a number of individuals who seemed to be able to have out-of-body projections almost at will. Acknowledging that there was still much that remains unknown about the mind and its abilities, he expressed his opinion that the astral projection theory can be proved and controlled.

In *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, his classic work published in 1903, psychical researcher Frederic W. H. Myers (1843–1901) believed out-of-body experiences to be the most extraordinary achievement of the human will. What, he wondered, “could be a more central action—more manifestly the outcome of whatsoever is deepest and most unitary in man’s whole being—than the ability to leave one’s body and return to it?” Such an ability, this self-projection, Myers said, was the most significant of all vital phenomena. And, even more wondrous, astral projection “appeared to be the one profound act of the spirit that one might perform equally well before and after physical death.”

Here are some of the most common types of out-of-body experiences, or situations in which OBEs might occur:

1. Projections that occur while the subject sleeps.
2. Projections that occur while the subject is undergoing surgery, childbirth, tooth extraction, etc.
3. Projections that occur at the time of an accident, during which the subject suffers a violent physical jolt that seems, literally, to catapult the spirit from the physical body.
4. Projections that occur during intense physical pain.

5. Projections that occur during acute illness.
6. Projections that occur during near-death experiences (NDEs), wherein the subject is revived and returned to life through heart massage or other medical means.
7. Projections that occur at the moment of physical death when the deceased subject appears to a living percipient with whom he or she has had a close emotional link.

In addition to these spontaneous, involuntary experiences, there are also those voluntary and conscious projections during which the subject deliberately endeavors to free his or her mind from the physical body.

Dr. Robert Crookall, the British geologist and botanist who was also a pioneer in the study of out-of-body experience, stated in the introduction to his *More Astral Projections* (1964) that the astral, the etheric, body “is normally enmeshed in, or in gear with the familiar physical body” so that most people are not aware of its existence. “But many people have become aware of it, for . . . [their] Soul Body separated or projected from the physical body and was used, temporarily, as an instrument of consciousness.”

Crookall perceived this “Soul Body” as consisting of matter, “but it is extremely subtle and may be described as ‘super-physical.’” In his view the physical body is animated by a semi-physical “vehicle of vitality” that bridges the physical body and the Soul Body and is the “breath of life” to which the book of Genesis refers. Crookall suggests that some projections “involve the Soul Body only; others merely represent an extrusion of part of the vehicle of vitality; most are a combination of the two—the Soul Body goes out accompanied by a tincture of substance from the vehicle.”

Many individuals who have undergone out-of-body experiences have made mention of a kind of cord of silver color that seems to attach their soul or mind to the physical body. Such glimpses of the silver cord have prompted those experiencers and researchers of a religious orientation to recall the verses in the book of Ecclesiastes which refer to the time of death when “the silver cord is loosed and the golden bowl be broken. . . . Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (KJV

Ecclesiastes 12:5–7). In Tibetan Buddhist tradition, out-of-body experiencers have also long observed that a strand exists between the astral double and the physical body. In diverse cultures, many individuals who have undergone out-of-body phenomena have noticed that their “silver cords” were highly elastic. In the oft-cited case of the Reverend Bertrand, the French clergyman saw that his etheric double was attached to his physical body by “a kind of elastic string.” An American student of OBE, Sylvan Muldoon, reported “an elastic-like cable” linking his two bodies.

On many occasions, out-of-body experiencers have commented that the silver cord appeared to be luminous, like a beam of light. Others state that it was not really any kind of actual physical cord, but a stream of light that continued to connect them to their physical bodies. Crookall mused from his gathering of accounts of OBE that the so-called silver cord corresponds “to the umbilical cord in childbirth (where an old body gives birth to a new body)”; and if such is the case, its severance may mean death.

Dr. Alexander Cannon saw the various strata of physical and nonphysical human beings a bit differently. In his *Sleeping Through Space* (1938), Cannon related the view of the Master-the-Fifth of the Great White Lodge of the Himalayas, Kushog Vogt of Northern Tibet, who believed that the astral body surrounds the physical body “like an eggshell surrounds the egg within it and is linked up with the physical body by invisible vibrations on the ether in the air being carried to the mind centers on the plexuses of the involuntary nervous system.” In Cannon’s view, the astral body is the scriptural “golden bowl” and the etheric body is the linking “silver cord.”

“The astral body,” he wrote, “is mainly the emotional body and has to do with emotions, moods, and feelings. The astral body is not only linked up with the physical body through the solar plexus, but also linked up with the etheric body through vibrations passing from it through the physical body between the eyes. . . . to the top of the etheric body.”

Cannon compared the etheric body to a “streak of light running down the front of the

spinal cord of the physical body but independent of either the astral or physical body, whereas the physical body is dependent, through the involuntary sympathetic nervous system, on the astral body, and in turn the astral body is dependent on the etheric body.”

According to Cannon, the East has long believed that when the physical body dies, the astral body containing the etheric body separates from the physical body after three days, and that after years, perhaps centuries, the astral body dies and leaves only the etheric body to become a spirit. The Eastern schools of initiation, Cannon informed, teach the chela (student) how to withdraw his or her astral body under the direction of a master. To achieve such control of the spirit, the student must subject himself or herself to a rigorous and prolonged period of highly intensive and specialized training. Such esoteric knowledge, Cannon reminded his readers, had been acquired by centuries of effort and experimentation by Eastern adepts. The Western world is only beginning to be made aware of the existence of the spiritual self.

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## STUDENTS of astral projection, bilocation, and OBE have commented on the phenomenon of dual consciousness.

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Students of astral projection, bilocation, and OBE have frequently commented on the phenomenon of dual consciousness, i.e., having complete awareness of one's body, its functions, and the room in which it is lying at the same time that one is traveling astrally to visit a faraway person or place. The lines between out-of-body travel and other psi phenomena are nebulous and may overlap a great deal.

In 1951 Sylvan Muldoon, who was accomplished in seemingly leaving his body almost at will, collaborated with Hereward Carrington (1880–1958), a psychical researcher of international reputation, to produce *The Phenomena of Astral Projection*. In this book, the authors felt confident that they had presented

a considerable number of case histories that proved beyond reasonable doubt that astral projection is a fact, that humans can leave their physical bodies spontaneously and project to considerable distances at will. Muldoon and Carrington were certain that such a fact represented an important truth to all humankind: individuals are not their material brains, nor are they a product of their brains' functional activities. Muldoon and Carrington argued that if humans are here and now spiritual entities, then the prospect of another life in a spiritual world becomes not only a possibility but nearly a certainty.

There is nothing new about the belief in immortality and in humankind's possession of a nonphysical capacity that remains aloof to the physical considerations of time, space, and matter. But just how could science go about proving out-of-the-body experiences? Can an astral, or soul, body be weighed and measured? Can it be seen as it rises from the host body of a laboratory volunteer? Certainly it cannot be followed to determine the validity of the experience, nor can it disturb carefully arranged flour dusted on the floor.

Dr. Charles T. Tart (1937– ), a core faculty member of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Palo Alto, California, is responsible for pioneer work in bringing the soul out of the body and into the laboratory. His books *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969) and *Transpersonal Psychologies* (1975) are considered classics in the field of consciousness studies and scientific parapsychology. The first of Tart's experiments with OBE were conducted in the electroencephalography laboratory at the University of Virginia Hospital during the early 1960s. At that time, Tart was primarily concerned with spontaneous OBEs during the sleep state, as this appears to be the most common state in which such projection occurs. His two subjects, a man and a woman, were individuals who claimed knowledge of leaving their bodies in sleep. To test the validity of the out-of-body experience, the two subjects were asked to read a five-digit numeral placed on the shelf of the equipment room in the laboratory. The number was so placed that the subjects would be unable to see it under normal conditions, but in a state of conscious disen-

gagement from the body, they could supposedly read it off with ease.

In the experiment, electrodes were attached to each subject's head for electroencephalograph (EEG) readings. (The EEG records brain waves.) Additional equipment was used to measure the subjects' rapid eye movements (REMs). A great deal of study in recent years has indicated that REMs accompany dreams and early sleep stages, but are absent in later stages. Finally, an electrocardiogram was made, recording heart action. Tart hoped, with such equipment, to provide psychophysiological substantiation to each subject's out-of-body projection. He also wished to learn from bodily responses more of the nature of an OBE.

The male subject was tested on nine different nights. Although he claimed he could project himself at will, he was unable to do so, by his own account, until the next to the last night of the experiment. On that evening he reported leaving his body twice within a few minutes. The subject's first OBE found him in the presence of two men and one woman, all unknown to him. He tried to arouse their awareness of him by pinching and touching, but he was unsuccessful in his attempts. The validity of this experience could not be verified. During his second OBE, he reported walking through the doorway into the equipment room. Not finding the technician on duty, he continued on his way to the office section of the building. There he found the technician, talking with a man whom he did not know. Again he tried to attract attention to his presence. When he was once more unsuccessful, he returned to his body, awakened, and called out to the technician. She confirmed that she had been in the office with her husband. The subject's description of her husband was exact.

It was determined by the EEG record within the few minutes before he awakened—which was the time the subject indicated he had been out of his body—that he had been in a state of Stage One dreaming. It is in this state that sleep is lighter and dreams are accompanied by rapid eye movements. Since the subject's experience had occurred not in the later or deeper stages of sleep and not in a state of

drowsiness, but totally during the dream state, Tart labeled the experiment "inconclusive." Even though there was objective evidence that the technician was not at the controls when the subject said she was not, and she had been in the office with her husband, whom the subject was able to describe, Tart did not feel he could offer irrefutable evidence that an actual OBE had occurred.

The female subject was tested for four non-successive nights over a period of two months. This woman was subjected to even stricter laboratory controls and physiological response measuring devices. Her efforts were concerned mainly with attempts to read the test numeral Tart had placed on the shelf. On the third night of the experiment, the subject claimed that she had visited her sister in another city, and although this astral flight could not be verified, her EEG pattern sequence was "unusual." On the fourth and final night of the experiment, the subject correctly identified the number on the shelf as 25,132.

Tart termed the experiment a "conditional success," but he refused to call it conclusive. Jumping ahead of the skeptics' disclaimers, Tart said that the subject could possibly have seen the number high on the shelf reflected in the black plastic case of a clock. Although he did not himself believe this to be the case, he deemed it necessary to make due note of it.

Tart, who for 28 years was professor of psychology at the Davis Campus of the University of California, has stated that to him the most significant aspect of his early experimentation was not the tentative findings that they produced, but the fact that such traditionally "occult" manifestations as astral projection, OBEs, can be subjected to scientific study. A considerable number of scientists have become convinced of the reality of out-of-body travel because of such pioneering experiments as those conducted by Tart, but it remains extremely difficult to satisfy the more material sciences' demand for controlled and repeatable laboratory proof. Science is the art of definition; therefore, the intangible must somehow be made tangible.

"Once we rid ourselves of the stubborn and conventional notions that man is separate



from his universe, that external reality is separate from internal reality, and that the study of consciousness is a waste of time, the taboos against imaginative investigation in creativity, parapsychology, hypnosis, and the psychedelics will diminish," Dr. Stanley Krippner has observed. "To perceive and understand reality in its totality, we will want to utilize the insights obtained in altered states of consciousness, as well as those available to us in the everyday, waking state."

In the assessment of many parapsychologists, the thousands of anecdotal cases of spontaneous out-of-body projection and laboratory experiments in controlled mind travel demonstrate that the human psyche is not to be held in thrall by the limitations of time and space. Even while humans' physical bodies exist in this physical world, wherein the limitations of mass, energy, space, and time shape and control the environment, the human essence is capable of extending outside of itself.

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#### PRECOGNITION

Precognitions, visions of future events to come, have been noted regularly not only in the literature of psychical research but in that of science itself for more than 2,000 years. The Bible includes a collection of divinely inspired prophecies and promises. Over the centuries, an argument that time is not an absolute has been building up. A great number of psi researchers have suggested that the common concept of time might be due to the special pattern in which humankind's sensory apparatus has evolved. One thing seems certain about true precognition: whether it comes about through a dream or the vision of a seer, the percipient does not see possibilities but actualities.

In 1934, H. F. Saltmarsh issued a report to the London Society for Psychical Research in which he had made a critical study of 349 cases of precognition. In the report, and later in his book *Foreknowledge* (1938), Saltmarsh established the following conditions that would, in his estimation, make a case of precognition wholly satisfactory:

1. It should have been recorded in writing or told to a witness or acted upon in some significant manner before the subsequent incident verified it.
2. It should contain a sufficient amount of detail verified by the event to make chance coincidence unlikely.
3. Conditions should be such that the following phenomena may be ruled out as explanations: telepathy, clairvoyance, auto-suggestion, inference from subliminally acquired knowledge and hyperaesthesia.

Saltmarsh used the above criteria to proclaim 183 of the 349 cases as being wholly satisfactory cases of precognition. One of these, the "Case of the Derailed Engine," will serve as an illustration of the sort of experience that Saltmarsh assessed as truly precognitive.

A minister's wife and daughter were staying at lodgings at Trinity, near Edinburgh, Scotland, on July 15, 1860. It was a bright Sunday afternoon, and between three and four o'clock, Mrs. W. told her daughter to go out for a short walk on the "railway garden," the name that she had given a strip of ground

between the seawall and the railway embankment. The daughter had only been gone a few minutes when Mrs. W. distinctly heard a voice within her say: "Send for her to come back or something dreadful will happen to her."

Mrs. W. was seized by a sense of foreboding that progressed into a feeling of terror that soon had her trembling and physically upset over the nameless dread. She ordered a servant to go and bring her daughter home at once. The servant, seeing her mistress visibly distraught, set out immediately. Mrs. W. paced the floor, more upset than ever, fearful that she would never again see her daughter alive.

In about a quarter of an hour, the servant returned with the daughter, who was safe and well. Mrs. W. asked the child not to play on the railroad embankment and obtained her promise that she would sit elsewhere and not on the spot where she usually played.

Later that afternoon an engine and tender jumped the rails and crashed into the wall where her daughter had been playing before the servant brought her home. Three men out of five who were there, were killed. Much later, Miss W. and her brother visited the scene of the tragedy and saw that the smashed engine had crashed into the precise spot where she had spent two hours with her brother on the previous Sunday afternoon.

Saltmarsh theorized that what is called the "present moment" is not a point of time, but a small time interval called the "specious present." According to his theory, the human subconscious mind has a much larger "specious present" than the conscious level of being. For the subconscious, all events would be "present." If, on occasion, some of this subconscious knowledge were to burst into the conscious, it would be interpreted as either a memory of a past event or a precognition of a future event. The past is neatly cataloged somewhere in the subconscious. Some psi researchers, such as H. F. Saltmarsh, believe that all events—past, present, and future—are part of the "present" for the deeper transcendental mind.

In view of such concepts as Saltmarsh's, some researchers maintain that the age-old query, "Can the future be changed?" has no

meaning. The foreknowledge of the future, of which some level of the subconscious is aware and of which it sometimes flashes a dramatic bit or scene to the conscious in a dream or trance, is founded on the knowledge of how the individual will use his or her freedom of choice. The "future event" conditions the subconscious self. The level of the subconscious that "knows" the future does not condition the "future event." The transcendent element of self that knows what "will be" blends all time into "what is now and what will always be." For the conscious self, what is now the past was once the future. One does not look upon past events and feel that one acted without freedom of will. Why then should one look at the future and feel that those events are predetermined? That a subconscious level in the psyche may know the future, these researchers insist, does not mean that the conscious self has no freedom of choice. Simply stated, if the future could be changed it would not be the future. In a true precognitive experience when one perceives the future, he or she has glimpsed what will be and what, for a level of subconscious, already exists.

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PRECOGNITIONS *are visions of future events.*

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The fact that precognitive dreams that tell of future events, accomplishments, dangers, and deaths appear to be so common has persuaded many psi researchers that somehow, in a way that is not yet understood, every individual is aware of the future at an unconscious level of his or her mind. Such knowledge usually lies imprisoned at a subconscious level, out of the grasp of the conscious mind. Occasionally, however, in especially dramatic dreams, bits and snatches of scenes from the future bubble up to become conscious memories. Then, later, as the experience is lived through in waking reality, it is astonishing to have the dream play itself again before conscious eyes.

Psychiatrist Dr. Jan Ehrenwald has theorized that at the lower level of the subconscious—

which Freudian analysts refer to as the “id”—time and spatial relationships may be all mixed up. Here and there, past, present, and future may all be interlocked and interchangeable.

Is it possible to avoid foreseen danger? The question is probably as old as humankind itself. Can one change the course of future events or is everything inexorably preordained? It is perhaps not so much a question of free will as it is a matter of what constitutes time. “In any attempt to bridge the domains of experience belonging to the spiritual and physical sides of our nature, time occupies the key position,” mused A. S. Eddington in *Science and the Unseen World* (1929).

There is a general consensus among psi researchers that there are five types of precognitive experiences. At the most elementary level is subliminal precognition, or the “hunch” that proves to be an accurate one. Next would come trivial precognition, which takes place only a short time before the actual occurrence of a rather unimportant event. Then, in the area of full-blown, meaningful precognitions, which indicate a power of mind not limited by space or time, there are beneficial, non-beneficial, and detrimental previsions. In a beneficial premonition, the transcendent self may over-dramatize a future event in such a way that it proves to be a warning that is acted upon by the conscious self’s characteristic reaction to such a crisis.

On a July morning in 1952, according to a case in the files of Louisa E. Rhine, a woman in New Jersey attempted to avoid the death of a child as she had foreseen it in a precognitive “vision.” In this glimpse of the future, which had occurred as she lay resting in a darkened room, she envisioned the aftermath of a dreadful traffic accident. A child had been killed and lay covered on the ground. Because the child was covered, the woman could not identify the victim.

In the morning, she told her next-door neighbor of the strange dream and begged her to keep close watch on her five-year-old child. Next she phoned a son, who lived in a busy section of the town, and admonished him to keep an eye on his two small children. She had another son who lived in the country, but

she felt there was little need to warn him to be wary of traffic. Nonetheless, it was his little Kathy who was killed that same day when a township truck backed into her.

To take a final example from Louisa Rhine: A young mother in Washington State awakened her husband one night and related a horrible dream. She had seen the large ornamental chandelier that hung above their baby’s crib crash down into the child’s bed and crush the infant to death. In the dream, as they ran to discover the terrible accident, she noticed that the hands of the clock on the baby’s dresser were at 4:35.

The man laughed at his wife’s story, rolled over, and went back to sleep. Although she felt foolish for doing so, the young woman slid out of bed, went into the nursery, and returned with the baby. Placing the sleeping child gently between them, the woman fell at once into a deep sleep.

A few hours later, the young couple were awakened by a loud, crashing noise. The sound had come from the nursery, and the couple found that the chandelier had fallen into the baby’s crib. The clock on the baby’s dresser indicated the time as 4:35.

For the young woman’s deep level of subconscious, the falling of the chandelier was a present fact that was still a future fact for her conscious self. The absence of the baby in its crib was also a present fact to the transcendental self because it was aware of how the conscious self of the young mother would react if she knew the safety of her child were threatened. To stimulate the woman to action, the deep level of her psyche formulated a dramatic precognitive dream with an attached tragic ending. The future, therefore, had not been altered by the woman’s action, only implemented.

In his book *An Experiment with Time* (1938), J. W. Dunne gave many examples of his own precognitive dreams, which he recorded over a period of several years. Dunne firmly believed in sleep and dreams as the prime openers of the subconscious and formulated a philosophy, which he called “Serialism,” to account for precognition. In Dunne’s view, time was an “Eternal Now.” All events that have ever occurred, that exist now, or that ever will, are

everlastingly in existence. In a person's ordinary, conscious, waking state, his or her view is only of the present. In sleep, however, the individual's view might be sufficiently enlarged to allow several glimpses of the future.

Although Dunne's theory is considered too deterministic by the majority of psi researchers and has been generally discredited, one of his theories in regard to *deja vu*, the sense of the already seen, is quite intriguing. Dunne suggested that this curious experience (which almost everyone has had at one time or another) of "having been here before" is due to the stimulation of a partially remembered precognitive dream. When the conversation becomes familiar or the new location becomes suddenly recognizable, one may, according to Dunne, simply be remembering a precognitive dream, which had been driven back into the subconscious.

For those researchers who study precognition, the conventional idea of time existing as some sort of stream flowing along in one dimension is an inadequate one. In this linear view of time, the past does not exist: it is gone forever. The future does not exist because it has not yet happened. The only thing that exists is the present moment. But the present does not really exist, either, since it is no sooner "now" than that "now" becomes part of the past. If the past completely ceased to exist, one should have no memory of it. Yet each individual has a large and varied memory bank. Therefore, the past must exist in some sense—perhaps not as a physical or material reality, but in some sphere of its own. Similarly, certain psi researchers maintain, the future must also exist in some way in a sphere of its own. The subconscious does not differentiate between past, present, and future but is aware of all spheres of time as part of the "Eternal Now."

There are certain kinds of precognitive experiences that can be easily identified as part of the normal process of the subconscious. A woman dreams of coming down with the measles and laughs it off. She did not succumb to the disease as a child; why should she weaken as an adult? In two days, she is in bed with the annoying rash covering her body. Rather than judge this to be a prophetic dream, one

might better regard the experience as an example of the subconscious mind being much more aware of the condition of the inner body than the superficial conscious mind.

In other cases, a keen intellect and a great awareness of one's environment will enable one to make predictions. Much of the affluence of the contemporary economy, from stock market juggling to hemline raising, is based upon the ability of certain knowledgeable people to make predictions concerning the preferences of a mass society.

In contrast to these "explainable" predictions, however, are the many examples of men and women who seem beyond any doubt to have experienced precognitions. Parapsychologists will state that this "power of prophecy" rested not in some occult knowledge, but within the transcendent self, which seems to be aware of events that belong in the realm of the future for the superficial self.

Some psi researchers have presented time in an analogy that has a man riding on the rear platform of a train. The man looks to the left and to the right. As the train chugs along, he is able to see a panorama of new scenes as they come into his view. As the train continues, these scenes fade into the distance and are lost to view. They have become the man's past. But these scenes do continue to exist after they have passed from the man's view, and they were in existence before the man perceived them, even though he was only able to see them at the time that they were his present. However, if another man were flying high above the train in an airplane, he would be able to see what has become the train passenger's past and present, as well as foreseeing future scenes that lie beyond the man's limited ground level view. All scenes for the man in the airplane exist as an "Eternal Now."

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#### PSYCHOKINESIS

Apart from the uncontrolled eruptions of psychokinetic power examined in the cases of poltergeist hauntings described in chapter ten, there are individuals who have demonstrated the ability to discipline psychokinesis (PK). Professional gamblers have long alleged that they can “make the dice obey” or make the little white ball in the roulette wheel stop wherever they wish.

Parapsychologist Dr. J. B. Rhine began his experimental lab work in PK in 1934. Using dice-throwing experiments and utilizing several volunteers who claimed to have been able to use “mind over matter” to bring in tangible rewards at the gaming tables, Rhine and his associates conducted tests and accumulated data until 1943 before they made any announcement of their results. In his *The Reach of the Mind* (1947), Rhine set forth an analysis of this data and concluded that psychokinesis had been established beyond all question.

In 1964, when Loyola University professor James Hurley was contemplating writing a book on ESP, he contacted Rhine, the dean of academic parapsychologists, and was told about the remarkable psychic-sensitive **Olof Jonsson** (1918–1998), who had the ability to produce psychokinetic effects, as well as demonstrate clairvoyance and telepathy. One night in the summer of 1964, Hurley and Jonsson were finishing dinner in a Chicago restaurant when Jonsson demonstrated PK by causing an individual globe to move in a chandelier located across the dining room.

Two Swedish doctors, Anders Perntz and Sven Erik Larsson, conducted numerous psychokinetic experiments that they conducted with Jonsson under full control. In one test, Jonsson turned a pewter candlestick weighing 1.25 kilograms 180 degrees while standing three yards away. In another experiment, Jonsson stood in front of a table and caused a piece of wood sculpture to slide at an even speed across the table top before it fell down to the floor.

The Danish psychical researcher and photographer Sven Turck conducted repeated tests of Jonsson’s psychokinetic powers, guarding against any possible trickery by creating strong controls in his laboratory. In Turck’s laboratory in Copenhagen, the researcher photographed Jonsson, together with a select group of psychic-sensitives, performing feats of psychokinesis. Turck set up three cameras at different angles, so that one always showed the action from behind, one from underneath, and one from above. After a series of sittings with the sensitives, chairs and objects began to move. A large worktable rose up on one leg and began to whirl around its own base, pirouetting faster and faster. Turck’s greatest wish was that they might get the table to soar freely in the air so that he might photograph the phenomenon of levitation. A few evenings later, the photographer was able to capture the fulfillment of his wish on the film of three cameras.

These phenomena were repeated often during the course of several months’ of sittings in Turck’s laboratory and were always dutifully recorded by the trio of cameras that had been loaded with infrared film. On one occasion, a large commode, of such a weight that two men could not lift it without great effort, was moved soundlessly out into the middle of the laboratory floor.

Author Stig Arne Kjellen said that Turck had never been able to believe in such dramatic displays of psychokinetic force until he had become a participant in the sessions held in his own laboratory. In principle, the psychokinetic moving of a candlestick is just as remarkable as the moving of a heavy table. Both feats are quite impossible in the view of orthodox science. The series of photographs taken during Turck’s experiments in Copenhagen were carefully examined by five of Denmark’s foremost photographic technicians, among them the director of the Danish photographic professional school, Theodore Andresen, who had full access to the photographic negatives. Each of the photographers agreed that no manipulations whatsoever had been worked upon the negatives.

Kjellen recorded 140 carefully controlled experiments in psychokinesis before Jonsson

left Sweden in 1953 at the invitation of Rhine, who asked him to come to Duke University for a series of parapsychological tests. Kjellen tells of how without any previous preparations whatsoever, accompanied by people he had never met before and in places so distracting and mundane as restaurants and hotel vestibules, Jonsson got bottles, flowers, jars, ashtrays, toothpick holders, and candlesticks into motion, while talking to others with an altogether untroubled smile. Frequently such demonstrations took place with Jonsson situated a great distance away, and yet he was able to exert such force that, on some occasions, objects were moved several yards in one direction or another, sometimes directly up into the air.

In Rhine's view, **clairvoyance** and **telepathy** are sensory types of phenomena, matter affecting mind; PK is a motor-type phenomenon, mind affecting matter. In his opinion, the existence of one implies the existence of the other and he maintained that they are closely related phenomena.

In his series of tests, Rhine noted that dice-throwers with marked control over the dies were much more successful at the beginning of a run. The same sort of "decline" effect that has been noted by agents testing telepathic percipients in card-guessing tests was in evidence in testing for PK.

Other similarities existed between ESP and PK tests as observed in the Duke University parapsychology laboratories where Rhine and his colleagues conducted the tests. For example, mechanical devices made no difference in the effectiveness of PK, and neither did distance. Once again, as in ESP testing, a relaxed, informal atmosphere produced the best PK results. Another important similarity between the two paranormal abilities is the fact that the person who expects success and "believes" in his or her ability to produce the desired result will always score much higher than the individual who is indifferent to ESP or PK.

It appears that psychokinesis as well as extrasensory perception is a talent that can be developed and encouraged and is an ability present, to a certain degree, in all people.

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#### TELEPATHY

In his *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1904), Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) had discussed several alleged supernormal occurrences and expressed a profound skepticism about prophetic dreams and telepathic phenomena. However, in 1922, he published his article "Dreams and Telepathy" and publicly proclaimed that he admitted the possibility of telepathic phenomena. He had written a much less cautious full-length essay, "Psychoanalysis and Telepathy," which he would have read to the International Psychoanalytic Congress of 1922 if Ernest Jones, founder of the British Psychoanalytical Society, had not persuaded him to consider the damaging repercussions his outspoken attitude might have on the whole fledgling psychoanalytic movement. Consequently, the article did not see print until 1941, after Freud's death.

In 1924 Freud wrote a letter to Jones in which he remarked how strongly he had been impressed with a report on telepathic experiments that Gilbert Murray had prepared for the Society for Psychical Research. Freud confessed that he was ready to give up his opposition to the existence of thought-transference and said that he would even be prepared to lend the support of psychoanalysis to the matter of telepathy. Once again, the skeptic Jones, fearful of the damage that such a public declaration might deliver to psychoanalysis, convinced Freud not to publish any such offer of support to parapsychological research.

Today psychiatrists and psychoanalysts vary greatly in their attitudes toward psi research. Those who profess nothing but an adamant skepticism say that the illustrations of ESP brought forward by their colleagues express nothing but the analyst's own desire to believe in their validity. Those who consider psi research to be a serious and valuable contribution to human understanding insist that paranormal activities, particularly those of telepathy and clairvoyance, are too numerous to be dismissed by an arched eyebrow and a cursory examination.

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*In 1922, Freud publicly admitted the possibility of telepathic phenomena.*

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Many psychiatrists have developed a respect for psi research when, during the course of analysis, a close relationship that can only be described as psychic, has developed between a doctor and his or her patient. Some doctors have reported patients who have related dreams that have dramatized actual incidents that the analysts themselves have experienced that day or even the week before. In several cases, the key to a patient's mental disturbance has been located in a dream experience of the analyst. Reports have even been made of several patients of the same analyst sharing dreams or reenacting group or individual experiences, as if some strange circle of telepathic dreams had been established.

Parapsychologists have long contended that telepathy (and ESP in general) functions best between individuals who have a strong emotional link. This particular level of the human mind seems to operate best spontaneously, especially when a crisis situation makes it necessary to communicate through other than the standard sensory channels.

For quite some time, psi researchers have been aware that twins show unusually high telepathic rapport. A series of tests conducted by psychologists at the University of Alberta, Canada, confirmed this theory by establishing statistical evidence that identical twins, and

to a lesser extent, fraternal twins, have remarkable ability to communicate with one another through ESP.

At the behest of Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University, Olivia Rivers, a psychologist at Mississippi State University, conducted tests with identical twins, Terry and Sherry Young. The Jackson, Mississippi, twins were able to pass entire sentences to each other via telepathy. The girls seemed to be in constant rapport; and even when separated, each knew if the other had turned an ankle, gotten a toothache, or developed a cold. Sherry was better as the receiver; Terry as the sender. Their schoolteachers despaired of ever receiving an accurate test from either girl. Even when placed in separate classrooms the girls still used similar phrases and got similar marks. They made no secret of the fact that they helped one another in their school work, but insisted that it was by telepathy alone. It was not cheating to them, nor could anyone consider it as being unfair or dishonest of the girls. It was not their fault if their minds functioned as one.

Remarkable experiments have been conducted with nontechnological traditional peoples to test the hypothesis that telepathy is an archaic means of communication, which, although remaining as a vestigial function of the mind, was once the sole method for conveying ideas. It has been observed that the bushmen in Australia can accurately transmit thoughts, feelings, and ideas to friends and relatives several miles away. They also use psi abilities to locate missing objects, straying cattle, and thieving enemies. In many cases, even today some bushmen live a virtual Stone Age existence. Their normal sensory abilities have been heightened by their struggle for survival. Their eyes can identify objects at great distances without the aid of field glasses. Their powers of smell are incredible. Their ESP talents are even more remarkable.

Dr. A. P. Elkin, an anthropologist from Sydney University, was forced to rearrange some of his scientific thinking after he conducted studies among the bushmen. In his *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*, Elkin writes that although his arrival was never announced by messenger, drums, or smoke signals, each village was pre-

pared for his arrival, knew where he had just come from, and was aware of the purpose of his wilderness trek. Whenever the anthropologist heard of a case where a native claimed to have gained personal information telepathically from a faraway village, subsequent investigation proved the knowledge to be accurate. Whether the information concerned a dying parent, the birth of a nephew, or the victory of a successful hunt, the recipients' knowledge of the event was completely in accordance with the actual happening.

Laboratory tests have indicated a number of interesting facts concerning the conditions under which telepathy—and, in general, all testable psi phenomena—work. Distance seems to have no effect on telepathy or clairvoyance. Equally remarkable results have been achieved when the percipient was a yard away from the agent or when the experimenters were separated by several hundred miles. Dr. S. G. Soal, the British researcher who has conducted extensive tests with “mind-readers,” has written: “In telepathic communication it is personality, or the linkage of personalities, which counts, and not spatial separation of bodies. This is what we might expect on the assumption that brains have spatial location and spatial extension, but that minds are not spatial entities at all...we must consider brains as focal points in space at which Mind produces physical manifestations in its interaction with matter.”

Parapsychological researchers have learned that the percipient's attitude is of great importance in achieving high ESP scores. Personalities do enter into psi testing even as they do into other aspects of human relationships. It has also been demonstrated that those who believe in their psi powers score consistently higher than those who are skeptics and who regard it all as a lot of nonsense.

Although the staff in a parapsychology laboratory must be careful to create and foster a friendly and cheerful atmosphere, spontaneous psi seems to work best under conditions that Dr. Jan Ehrenwald terms a “state of psychological inadequacy.” Naming this state of psi readiness the “minus function,” Ehrenwald believes that “a necessary condition for tele-



Twins being tested for telepathy capabilities. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

pathic functioning is a state of inadequacy or deficiency such as loss or clouding of consciousness (sleep, hypnosis, trance, fever, brain defects).”

The psi researcher faces another risk in the laboratory when he is engaged in the long-term testing of a percipient: the decline effects in ESP that can be brought on by sheer boredom in the method of testing. The exercise of psi ability does sap psychic energy and even excellent performers invariably score higher when they are fresh. Once the novelty of the test has worn off, the interests of the percipient wander elsewhere, and so, apparently, does his or her ESP. It is difficult to force psi into the laboratory for the controlled and repeatable experiments demanded by orthodox science.

It is interesting to note that, on the average, a man is more effective as an agent, a sender, and a woman is more effective as a percipient, a receiver. This seems to apply to spontaneous instances of telepathy and other functions of psi as well as to roles assumed under laboratory conditions.

In 1930 the novelist Upton Sinclair (1878–1968) published a record of experiments in telepathically transmitted drawings, which had been conducted with his wife and his brother-in-law, R. I. Irwin. Mrs. Sinclair was always the percipient, the receiver, and when Irwin was the agent, the sender, he “transmitted” from more than 40 miles away. The agent would make a set of drawings of such simple items as a nest with eggs, a flower, or a tree, and enclose each sketch in an opaque



envelope. At the agreed-upon time, or later, Mrs. Sinclair would lie down on a couch and allow her mind and body to enter a state of complete relaxation. Experience soon taught her that other levels of mind would attempt to “guess” the sketch and thereby often confuse the true information that would come from a deeper level of authentic knowledge.

Mrs. Sinclair commented that for best results in such tests, one must develop the ability to hold in consciousness, without any sense of strain, a single idea, such as the petal of a flower. Association trains must not be allowed to develop, and, above all, no *thinking* about the idea must take place. A completely relaxed state of body and mind must be achieved.

It is difficult to measure the success of such tests with drawings, because often an idea associated with the drawing would come across rather than the actual sketch. In the Sinclair experiments of 290 drawings, 65 were judged successes, 155 partial successes, and 70 were failures. Professor William McDougall (1871–1938), a fellow of the Royal Society, a brilliant British-American pioneer of parapsychology, said of the Sinclairs’ experiments with their “mental radio,” that the degree of success and the conditions of the experiment were such that they could not be rejected and should be accepted as evidence of “some mode of communication” not presently explicable in accepted scientific terms.

While acknowledging the existence of telepathy, many parapsychologists became interested in proving that far from simply being a “mental radio,” telepathy must be some form of electromagnetic radiation that could be measured and understood. Russian parapsychologists, especially, seemed concerned with demystifying telepathy and ESP in general. In the 1920s, Vladimir M. Bekhterev worked with subjects who had been hypnotized and enclosed in an electromagnetically screened chamber known as a Faraday cage. The hypnotist, who was stationed in a separate room, mentally suggested that the subject perform certain tasks. This experiment was carefully planned so that the door to the screening chamber could be opened and closed without the knowledge of either the

subject or the hypnotist. As long as the subject was screened electromagnetically from the hypnotist, none of the man’s telepathic suggestions were followed. When the door was opened, the subject responded to his suggestions with a high degree of accuracy.

These and other experiments (one of which even attempted to direct the telepathic signals with the use of a metal mirror) seemed to confirm the hypothesis that telepathy was basically electromagnetic in character. This school of Russian parapsychology was under the influence of the Italian neurophysiologist F. Cazzamalli, whose conclusions also pointed to an electromagnetic wave character for telepathic signals. Cazzamalli’s experiments have been criticized several times since the 1920s when they were performed, since they were not conducted under rigid controls.

Even while these experiments were being carried out, one of Bekhterev’s pupils, Leonid L. Vasiliev (1891–1966), was disturbing this pet theory with some astounding results of his own. Vasiliev’s original experiments were also conducted with volunteer subjects and hypnotists, but his concern was not to solicit responses from the suggestion of the hypnotists via telepathic means, but to induce the trance state itself by the use of telepathy.

The subject was given an inflated rubber ball that was attached by a hose to a pressure-sensitive recording device. He was then instructed to squeeze the ball with his hand. These contractions were recorded as notches on the moveable graph. When the subject was hypnotized, the rhythmic contractions would stop, and the notches would no longer appear on the graph. The subject and the hypnotist were separated by two intervening walls. The room between housed the recording equipment and those in charge of monitoring it. Time for each attempt of this telepathic hypnosis was determined by the use of a roulette wheel, and was thus completely random.

In 1932, Vasiliev was fortunate enough to find three very sensitive subjects with whom the goal of long-distance hypnosis was attainable. When the hypnotist was instructed to induce a trance on the person he could not see, he was able to perform the feat. Later,

when instructed to bring the subject out of the trance, the hypnotist was again able to accomplish this by the force of his will, without once coming in contact with the subject during the entire course of the test.

As work in this series of experiments continued, a few unforeseen problems began to develop. After a number of trials, the subjects became so accustomed to the surroundings and the preparations for the tests, that they would automatically fall into trance. Such auto-hypnosis is not uncommon, even when the hypnotist is not trying to induce the trance state via telepathy. But even when this occurred, the effect of a telepathic impulse was striking. A subject could be put in a trance state two or three times faster when the hypnotist attempted to send a telepathic signal than when the auto-hypnosis was allowed to occur. As these tests with the same subject continued, it became more difficult to bring the subject out of the trance state with the use of telepathy. Yet telepathy was still a factor as the hypnotist could revive the subject momentarily before he would fall back into a trance.

Because these results were consistently good, Vasiliev was able to devise even more interesting tests. He placed the subjects within chambers that were heavily sealed from all forms of electromagnetic radiation. In this test the subjects responded exactly as they had without the shielding, contradicting the results of the other Soviet experimenters. Vasiliev's rigidly controlled experiments showed that there was more to telepathy than electromagnetic waves. A Russian physicist, V. Arkadev, supported Vasiliev's contention by saying that the intensity of the waves that could be spawned by the electric currents in the brain is so low that dissipation occurs very close to the skull. Even though it has been proven that electromagnetic radiation can affect the central nervous system, the electromagnetic waves generated by the electric currents that are constantly surrounding modern men and women are of a much higher intensity than any kind of electromagnetic radiation the brain could muster.

These contradictory results have not yet been explained, but former Soviet scientists and psi researchers have since leaned away

from the theory that telepathic signals are electromagnetic waves. Even more than in other scientific endeavors, parapsychologists must be certain to eliminate all prejudice from their minds. It is possible that a researcher's brain state may have as much effect on a subject as an intended telepathic signal. The early Soviet experiments may have shown that telepathy was electromagnetic in character because the investigators, under the heavy influence of the Italian Cazzamalli, wanted or expected them to show it. A prejudice that cannot be separated from the mind may be a decisive factor in any experiments involving psychic phenomena. These possibilities only add to the difficulty of conducting experiments, but they cannot be ignored.

Research into the nature of telepathy continues in parapsychological laboratories around the world. While telepathy is commonly thought of as mind-reading, psi researchers have commented that instances of telepathy in the laboratory seldom involve the actual perception of another's actual thoughts. And sometimes the information that the percipient receives from the agent does not really seem to have been an instance of mind-to-mind communication, but rather an example of clairvoyance. Once again it must be recalled that there is a great deal of "bleed-through" from one parapsychological phenomenon to another.

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## MAKING THE CONNECTION

**amnesia** The loss of memory which can be temporary or long term and usually brought on by shock, an injury, or psychological disturbance. Originally from the Greek word *amnestos*, literally meaning not remembered and from a later alteration of the word: *amnesia*: forgetfulness.

**banal** Boring, very ordinary and commonplace. From the French word *ban*, originally used in the context of a mandatory military service for all or common to all.

**clairvoyance** The ability to see things beyond the normal range of the five human senses. From the French word *clairvoyant*, meaning clear-sighted and *voyant*, the present participle of *voir* to see.

**consciousness** Someone's mind, thoughts or feelings, or can be referring to the part of the mind which is aware of same. The state of being aware of what is going on around you, either individually or the shared feelings of group awareness, feelings or thoughts.

**ecstatic** Intense emotion of pleasure, happiness, joy or elation.

**electroencephalographic dream research** Researching dreams using an electroencephalograph to aid the researcher in the brain activity of the one being studied.

**electroencephalograph** A device or machine that through the use of electrodes placed on a person's scalp, monitors the electrical activity in various parts of the brain. These are recorded and used as a diagnostic tool in tracing a variety of anything from brain disorders, tumors or other irregularities to dream research.

**electrodes** Two conductors through which electricity flows in batteries or other electrical equipment.

**electromagnetic** Of or pertaining to the characteristics of an electromagnet, which is a device having a steel or iron core and is magnetized by an electric current that flows through a surrounding coil.

**encode** To convert a message from plain text into a code. In computer language, to convert from analog to digital form, and in genetics to convert appropriate genetic data.

**false memory** Refers to situations where some therapies and hypnosis may actually be planting memories through certain suggestions or leading questions and comments; thereby creating memories that the patient or client believes to be true, but in reality they are not.

**Gestalt therapy** A type of psychotherapy that puts a great deal of emphasis on a person's feelings as revealing desired or undesired personality traits and how they came to be, by examining unresolved issues from the past.

**hallucination** An experience of something or someone being present when it is not, or when one imagines hearing, seeing or sensing an occurrence vividly, but it is not real.

**hypnagogic** Relating to or being in the state between wakefulness and sleep where one is drowsy. From the French *hypnagogique* meaning literally leading to sleep.

**hypnopompic** Typical of or involving the state between sleeping and waking. Coined from *hypno* and Greek *pompe*, meaning a sending away.

**hypnosis** The process of putting or being in a sleeplike state, although the person is not sleeping. It can be induced by suggestions or methods of a hypnotist.

**hypothesis** An explanation or assumption for a phenomenon that sets the basis for additional investigation. From the Greek *hypothesis* meaning foundation or base.

**ions** An atom or group of atoms that are electrically charged through the process of gaining or losing one or more electrons. From the Greek *ion* meaning moving thing; and from the present participle of *ienai* meaning to go—from the movement

of any ion toward the electrode of the opposite charge.

**narcolepsy** A condition where a person uncontrollably falls asleep at odd times during daily activities and/or for long extended periods of time. Hallucinations and even paralysis might also accompany this condition. Coined from *narco* and *lepsy*, from the model of epilepsy.

**neuron** The basic functional unit of the nervous system: a cell body that consists of an axon and dendrites and transmit nerve impulses. A neuron is also called a *nerve cell*. Via German from Greek *neuron*, meaning sinew, cord, nerve.

**parapsychology** The study or exploration of mental phenomena that does not have a scientific explanation in the known psychological principles.

**pharmacologist** The study of or science of drugs in all their aspects, including sources, chemistry, production, their use in

treating ailments and disease, as well as any known side effects.

**physiology** The study of the functioning and internal workings of living things, such as metabolism, respiration, reproduction and the like. From the Latin word *physiologia* and the Greek *phusiologia*, and *phusis* meaning nature.

**psi** The factor or factors responsible for parapsychological phenomena. Derived from the Greek letter *psi* which is used to denote the unknown factor in an equation.

**psyche** The soul or human spirit or can refer to the mental characteristics of a person or group or nation. Via Latin from Greek *psukhe* meaning breath, soul, mind and from *psukhein*: to breathe.

**psychiatrist** A doctor who is trained to treat people with psychiatric disorders.

**psychoanalysis** The system of analysis regarding the relationship of conscious and unconscious psychological aspects and their treatment in mental or psycho neurosis.

**CHAPTER 13**  
**SUPERSTITIONS,**  
**STRANGE CUSTOMS,**  
**TABOOS, AND**  
**URBAN LEGENDS**

*Out of the fears and feelings of helplessness, there arose accounts of personal rituals of survival. Superstitions and religions evolved into accepted rules for appropriate human behavior (customs) and forbidden behavior (taboos). Many of these societal customs, and religious and cultural taboos, are perpetuated in the urban legends of today.*

CHAPTER EXPLORATION

**SUPERSTITIONS**

Cats  
 Days of the Week  
 Dogs  
 The Evil Eye  
 Four-Leaf Clover  
 Gems  
 Horseshoes  
 Knocking on Wood  
 Ladders  
 Numbers  
 Rabbit's Foot  
 Sneezing  
 Spitting

**STRANGE CUSTOMS AND TABOOS**

Courtship and Marriage  
 Hospitality and Etiquette  
 Burials and Funerals

**URBAN LEGENDS AND BELIEFS**

Deadly Reptiles in the Imported Carpets  
 The Fabulous Cookie Recipe  
 Green M&Ms  
 The Hook on the Car Door  
 If Your College Roommate Commits  
 Suicide....  
 Jesus on the Freeway  
 The Phantom Hitchhiker  
 Proctor & Gamble Is a Satanist Company  
 The Scuba Diver in the Tree  
 Snakes in the Toilet  
 Spiders in the Hairdo

## INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the oldest and most basic of human instincts is that of fear. Early humans experienced an array of bewildering hostility lurking all around them. In addition to predators from the animal kingdom who pursued them as prey, there were such frightening and unexplained natural phenomena as the rumbling terror of thunder and lightning, the glowing eyes of the stars in the night sky, and the deadly volcanic craters that shot fire into the air. Equally as terrifying as the physical threats of their world were the fiendish creatures that sprang from their imaginations, specters that could come to life from their own shadows on the walls of their caves or huts.

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*An amulet or talisman was a charm intended to exert a magical influence upon evil spirits.*

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Out of these primitive fears and feelings of helplessness, certain beliefs and practices arose that helped to ease the terrors of existence. The experiences of those who had faced great dangers and lived to tell the tale were ritualized by others who listened carefully to such accounts and took note of what the survivors had worn, thought, said, or did to escape death. As the sharing of the survivors' stories spread, highly individualized personal rituals grew out of the methods by which these heroes had been able to ward off evil or the deadly attack of predators or human enemies. These personal rituals became the beginning of what is called superstition and evolved over time into systems of magic and religious practices.

As the belief in magic and superstition grew stronger, witches, wizards, and magicians were increasingly regarded with awe and great respect. Everyone, rich and poor alike, sought their counsel and advice, for it was believed that the magicians were in direct communication with the spirit world and were able to foretell the future. They could prevent storms or make the rain to fall in time of drought. They could pacify angry deities and thus save

the people of the tribe or community from impending punishment.

Magical words and spells were created, and **talismans**, **amulets**, and good luck charms were invented.

In ancient times, the amulet or talisman was a charm intended to exert a magical influence upon evil spirits and frighten them away. In the twenty-first century, the good luck charm is intended to attract good rather than to repel evil. The transition has given rise to the custom of accepting certain objects and certain happenings as good luck omens. The word "luck" itself appears to have been derived from an old Anglo-Saxon verb meaning "to catch."

Magic practices were divided into two distinct kinds—**black magic** and **white magic**. Simply stated, the term "black magic" applied to all those practices that caused evil and harm to others, and the practices termed "white magic" were intended to counter the influences of black magic, achieving good instead of evil.

As human society continued to evolve into cities with a hierarchy of rulers, a class system of the citizenry, and respected priests to guide group worship of gods and goddesses, what had once been superstitions became formalized social customs and established religious practices. Identification with a particular nation and its borders continued to grow among the people. The more primitive forms of religions evolved into large and organized systems of faith. Distinctive and unique customs representative of specific religions or identified with ethnic groups became more firmly fixed in the mass consciousness. Because what is custom and what is taboo—forbidden or improper behavior—depends so much upon the individual's cultural, societal, and religious orientation, it is difficult to judge between what may be harmless conduct in one group and an act of evil intent in another.

This chapter will examine those universal social occasions of courtship, marriage, hospitality, and the respect of the dead that are practiced by all societies and religious institutions. The chapter concludes with a review of a number of so-called urban legends—those remarkable experiences that the storytellers always insist really happened to "a friend of a friend."

## SUPERSTITIONS

Throughout the centuries, the early superstitions that brought solace to the fear-stricken primitive mind have spawned thousands upon thousands of magic practices and beliefs—all with the goal of warding off danger, of placating angry deities, or of summoning good fortune. Since humankind's earliest awareness of the final destiny of the grave that awaits all individuals, people have feared death and they have imagined omens, or warnings, in the simplest things, such as the appearance of a black cat, the spilling of salt, the number 13.

In a broad sense, superstitions are a kind of white magic in that people will believe that their observing or practicing the personal ritual will bring them good luck, prevent illness, and ward off evil. And many superstitions offer procedures for overcoming the negative acts threatened by these omens, such as casting a pinch of salt over the shoulder or whispering a blessing after a sneeze.

Out of these early forms of magic and superstition grew many curious customs that remain to this day. For example, in time of illness the medicine man applied his lips to the part that issued pain and “sucked out the evil spirit.” Mothers around the world still kiss the bruised finger or knee of their crying children to “kiss it and make it well.” Many people still “knock on wood” to guard against their words or thoughts having been misunderstood by eavesdropping spirits who might wish to punish them by bringing bad luck upon them. Some believe that the howling of a dog during the full moon predicts the death of its owner. To place three chairs in a row accidentally means a death in the family. If a sick person is changed from one room to another it is a sure sign that he will die. One who counts the number of automobiles in a funeral procession will die within the year. An open umbrella, held over the head indoors, indicates approaching death.

Scores of superstitions such as these still exist among people everywhere. Centuries ago, human beings entered into a superstitious bondage from which they have never wholly escaped. Many men and women today, in spite

of the wonders of contemporary technology, still feel a great sense of helplessness as they attempt to chart their individual fates in a hostile environment. In many instances, the terrors of the modern world surpass the horrors that lurked in the shadows in that time long ago when primitive humans first dared to venture out of their caves. Even the most sophisticated of today's men and women may still knock on wood and carry a rabbit's foot in their pockets for luck.

Niels Bohr (1885–1962), the Danish Nobel Prize-winning physicist, kept a horseshoe nailed over the door to his laboratory. When someone once asked him if he really believed the old superstition about horseshoes bringing good luck, he replied that he didn't *believe* in it, but he had been told that it worked whether one believed in it or not.

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SUPERSTITIONS *are a kind of white magic.*

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David Phillips, lead author of an extensive study of the effect of superstitions on the lives of those who believe in them, has stated that superstitions of any kind can raise stress and anxiety levels. The scientists who conducted the study, which was published in March 2002, concluded that it is as if superstitions are hard-wired into the human brain, for they affect all people, regardless of educational level or ethnicity. While numerous studies have demonstrated that positive attitudes and certain religious practices, such as prayer and meditation, can reduce stress, superstitions that have become ingrained in someone's belief system can become extremely harmful.

### CATS

Perhaps no animal has inspired as much superstition as the cat. Throughout history, cats have been worshipped as gods by certain cultures and abhorred as demons by others. In European folklore, the black cat is the traditional companion of witches. Because of this old belief,

If a black cat crosses one's path, it is also considered a sign of bad things to happen.



the black cat has become an omen of misfortune and ill luck, and a popular notion is that unhappiness will follow quickly in the wake of the black cat that crosses one's path.

An old book called *Beware the Cat* (1584) gives warning that black cats are witches in disguise, and that killing a cat does not necessarily mean killing the witch, for a witch can take on the body of a cat nine times. In the Middle Ages, the brain of a black cat was considered an essential ingredient in all recipes of the witches and witch doctors.

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THROUGHOUT *history, cats have been worshipped as gods by certain cultures.*

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The old belief that a cat has nine lives goes back to ancient Egypt. The cat-headed goddess, Bast (or Ubasti), was associated with the benevolent aspect of Hathor, the Lioness, and was said to have nine lives. The Egyptians did not fear the cat, but rather revered it, and they elevated cats far above the role of domestic pet. To the Egyptians, the cat was transformed from mouse catcher to supreme deity, the "Sayer of Great Words." The Egyptian word for cat was *Mau*, which is at once an imitation of the animal's call and the nearly uni-

versal human cry for mother. Cats came to be worshipped with such intensity that the wanton killing of a cat was punishable by death.

Because the old Egyptians had a great fear of the dark, they observed with awe that the cat, a creature of the night, walked the shadowed streets with confidence. Carefully considering the import of the cat's midnight vigils, the Egyptian sages decided that the cat was solely responsible for preventing the world from falling into eternal darkness.

At the same time, the cat's nocturnal excursions made it a symbol of sexuality and fertility. It seems quite likely that long before Cleopatra worked her magic on Caesar and Antony, the sirens of the Nile used makeup that mimicked the hypnotic eyes and facial markings of the cat.

Bubastis, a city in Lower Egypt, dedicated itself to the worship of the cat. Each May some 700,000 pilgrims journeyed to the city to participate in the festival of the cat.

During the Persian invasion of 529 B.C.E., the Egyptians' deification of the cat proved their undoing. Knowing of the obsession of the Egyptian people with the divinity of felines, Cambyses II, king of the Persians, made a cat part of the standard issue to each of his soldiers. The Nile-dwellers led by King Psamtik III laid down their spears and bows for fear of harming the cat that each enemy soldier carried, and the Persians conquered the city of Pelusium without shedding a drop of blood.

Some people believe that the unwavering stare of the cat can bring about illness or insanity or even cause death. Such an unreasoning, fearful response to cats is known as ailurophobia. Henry III of England (1207–1272) would faint at the sight of a cat. Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) had plans to dominate the world with his Third Reich, but the sight of a cat set him trembling. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) arrogantly snatched the crown of the Holy Roman Emperor from the pope and conquered nearly all Europe, but when he spotted a cat in his palace, he shouted for help.

Such dread of cats may be genetically transmitted: when Joseph Bonaparte (1768–1844), King of Naples, visited Saratoga Springs in 1825, he complained just before he fainted



that he sensed a cat's presence. Although his hosts assured His Majesty that no such animal was anywhere present, a persistent search revealed a kitten hiding in a sideboard.

Besides a glance that can bring on terror, folklore also empowers the cat's eyes with the ability to see in the dark. Since all other creatures can see only in the daylight, to see at night reverses the natural order of things and is perceived as sinister and satanic.

Today the cat is not feared as it was in earlier times, and it is now the most popular pet among people in the United States, Australia, and France. However, many superstitious people still regard a cat as an unlucky omen and believe that not only the black cat, but all cats, have nine lives.

#### DAYS OF THE WEEK

The belief in lucky and unlucky days is very old and appears to have been originally taught by the magicians of ancient Chaldea. The natives of Madagascar have since the earliest times believed in lucky and unlucky days of birth, and in previous times if a child was born on what they considered the unlucky day, it would be killed.

The ancient Greeks believed that the 13th day was unlucky for sowing, but favorable for planting. Many early peoples harbored the superstitious belief that it was best to sow seed at the full of the moon. Others maintained that it was best to gather in the harvest when the moon was full. Still others regarded the crescent moon as a fortunate omen. Even today in South Africa, many people consider it unlucky to begin a journey or undertake a work of importance during the last quarter of the moon.

The Romans marked their lucky days with a piece of chalk, their unlucky days with charcoal. From this custom of marking unlucky days with charcoal started the phrase "black-letter day." Today, "black-letter days" are generally ones remembered with regret because of some unfortunate occurrence connected with them.

"Blue Monday" is an old phrase still in general usage. In early days those whose business circumstances forced them to work on Sunday, the official day of rest, were consid-

ered entitled to a holiday on Monday. On Monday, therefore, while others were back at work, the people who worked on Sunday had a day of rest. Because the churches throughout Europe were decorated with blue on the first Monday before Lent—which was a holiday or "lazy day" for everyone—the day of rest throughout the rest of the year for the Sunday workers came to be known as "Blue Monday." Although the term is still used, now when people speak of a "Blue Monday," they most often wish to convey that they feel lazy, tired, or would rather be on holiday than at work.

The origin of the superstition concerning Friday is traced by most authorities to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.—c. 30 C.E.) on that day. But some writers advance the theory that Friday is regarded as an unlucky day because, according to ancient tradition, it was on Friday that Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit and were cast out of paradise.

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**THE** *custom of marking unlucky days with charcoal started the phrase "black-letter day."*

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Followers of Islam try to avoid beginning any new enterprise on Wednesdays. For reasons long forgotten, Wednesday is seen as a bad day. Even today, many Muslims avoid even getting their hair cut on that day. And such important occasions as weddings are never scheduled for a Wednesday.

A familiar old rhyme preserves the old superstitions concerning the personalities of various children on various birthdays: "Monday's child is fair of face,/Tuesday's child is full of grace,/Wednesday's child is sour and sad,/Thursday's child is merry and glad,/Friday's child is loving and giving,/Saturday's child must work for a living,/But the child that is born on Sunday/Is blithe and bonny, good and gay."

#### DOGS

Dogs, "man's best friend," do not have any of the kind of sinister superstitions that surround the cat, their domesticated companion and

A witch riding a black dog from the 1926 book *La Vie Exécrable de Guillemette Babin* by M. Carron. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)



competitor in hundreds of thousands of households around the world. Not only have dogs been humankind's most consistent and considerate animal friend, but certain scientific research now suggests that the human species might not be here today if it hadn't been for an ancient linkup with the canine family. In his book *Evolving Brains*, biologist John Allman of the California Institute of Technology stated that canines and humans formed a common bond more than 140,000 years ago and evolved together in one of the most successful partnerships ever fashioned.

To the Native American tribes, as well as to all aboriginal people throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas, the wolf was the great teacher, and the social structure of early humans was largely patterned after the examples set by their canine instructors. Although among the vast majority of mammals the care of the young is left solely to the mother, human tribes soon adopted the cooperative rearing strategy employed by the wolf, with both parents participating in the rearing process.

According to the legends of several Native American tribes, the first humans were created in the shape of wolves. At first these wolf people walked on all fours; then, slowly, began to develop more human characteristics until they became men and women.

Among the superstitions associated with the dog is the ancient belief that the howling of dogs portends death and calamities. This appears to be a relic of the time when humans made deities of animals, and as a deity, the dog was supposed to be able to foresee death and give warning of it by howling or barking. This superstition became perpetuated among the Egyptians, who depicted the god that presided over the embalming of the dead as Anubis, the jackal-headed deity. It was also Anubis's task to lead the spirits of the deceased to the hall of judgment.

Among many Native American tribes, it is the dog who awaits the spirit of the newly deceased on the Way of Departed Spirits and who accompanies the entity to the Land of the Grandparents. In addition to its role as a guide to the other side, a number of tribes

associated the dog with the moon and the sun. Such an association with the moon may have stemmed from the dog's howling at the moon on shadowy nights. The connection with the sun may derive from the dog's habit of walking around in a small circle before it lies down. To early people, the making of such a circle was to create a symbol of the sun.

In ancient Persia, dogs were believed to be able to protect the dying soul from possession by evil spirits. When a person was dying, a dog was stationed by the bedside to keep away the negative spirits that hovered near newly released souls.

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**CANINES** *and humans formed a common bond more than 140,000 years ago.*

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The Greeks believed that dogs had the ability to perceive the presence of Hecate, the goddess of darkness and terror. While this malign entity remained invisible to human eyes and was thus able to work her evil undetected, dogs were able to see her and warn their human companions by barking and growling at her unseen presence in darkened corners.

There is an old superstition that good luck will be granted to a person who is followed by a stray dog. If the dog should follow someone on a rainy night, however, such action brings bad luck.

#### THE EVIL EYE

Among many people and cultures, the fear of the evil eye persists as strongly today as in ancient times. In the contemporary world of superstitious beliefs, both men and women can possess the evil eye and direct its negativity toward those who invoke its wrath. A vast array of charms, spells, and incantations for the purpose of warding off evil influences has been passed down from generation to generation. In ancient times, the amulet intended for protection against the evil eye was usually just a bit of stone, a shell, or an image carved



**Basket of evil eye charms for sale at an outdoor market in Istanbul. (CORBIS CORPORATION)**

on wood or bone. Today these amulets have taken the form of good-luck charms and are offered in such forms as miniature wishbones or horseshoes, little china pigs or elephants.

The Dutch, the Irish, the Italians, the Egyptians, and the Chinese all fear the evil eye and have charms for the purpose of warding off its evil influence. The Dutch place broad strips of black paint upon their farmhouses; the Irish have special charm phrases; the Chinese employ the universal means of fighting off the evil eye by spitting over the shoulder to frighten away the Evil One. Italians, especially the men, wear a charm shaped like a small horn around their necks as a deterrent to *malocchio*, the evil eye. Some individuals may also spit over their shoulder and cross themselves when they feel they have been the victim of *malocchio*. Even more effective than the sign of the cross, many Italians feel, is to make the sign of the devil's horns by extending the index and little finger. Ever since ancient times, if one does not have a special amulet to defend

against the evil eye, then the prescribed antidote is to spit as quickly as possible over the shoulder—preferably the left.

Even today among the country people of Greece, people with blue or green eyes are believed to be capable of *matiasma*, the evil eye. Those people whose eyebrows are connected are also under suspicion, as well as those individuals who, when they were babies, had their breastfeeding interrupted. Most Greeks believe that those who possess *matiasma* are not necessarily evil or malicious people, but may simply have the uncontrolled power to kill or injure livestock, cause mechanical breakdowns in machinery, and precipitate various accidents.

The belief in the evil eye remains powerful among the Muslim and Christian Arabs of the Middle East. Mothers purposely leave their children unwashed and shabbily clothed so they will not attract the attention of malignant men and women who might curse them with the evil eye if their offspring should appear too

healthy or attractive. If one should ever inquire about her child's health, the affectionate mother will hastily emphasize any defect or illness the child has. Poor mothers dress their baby sons as girls to counter the evil eye. Some give their children nonsensical names, such as "sandal" or "toy marble," so the possessor of the evil eye will overlook them. Any compliment that may be directed at a woman's child will quickly prompt the exclamation, "Mashallah!" (by the grace of God) from the wary mother.

#### FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

The superstition that the finding of a four-leaf clover can bring good luck is so old that its origin is lost in antiquity. One of the oldest legends has it that Eve, upon being ejected from the Garden of Eden, took a four-leaf clover with her. Because the clover was a bit of green from paradise, its presence in one's own garden came to be looked upon as an omen of good luck.

According to some traditions, a young woman seeking a husband should go in search of a four-leaf clover. If she is fortunate enough to find one, she is to eat it. The first unmarried man she encounters after eating the clover will be the one she will wed. Another tradition of gaining a husband or wife is to find a four-leaf clover and place it in one's shoe first thing in the morning. The first unmarried member of the opposite sex encountered that day will be one's future spouse.

#### GEMS

The popular superstitions concerning gems are survivals of the ancient custom of wearing amulets. An amulet (from the Arab word *hamala*, "to carry") is anything hung around the neck, wrists, ankles, or in any way attached to the person for the purpose of warding off evil or protecting against illness. For many individuals, the gem amulets of modern times carry the same powers to deflect the evil eye or other negative forces as they did in the days of the pharaohs.

Amber is one of the oldest of all gem amulets. Because it is said to change color with the state of one's health, it is an excellent indicator of one's physical condition. There is also a belief that amber has the power to prevent illness, and that it will provide a special

protection against throat problems if it is worn on a ribbon around the neck.

Coral also is said to change color according to the state of one's health. An old tradition instructs mothers to hang an amulet of coral around an infant's neck to save it from falls and illness. During the Middle Ages, coral amulets were worn as protection from evil wrought by witchcraft.

For centuries, opals have been thought to be lucky gems and to possess supernatural powers.

The sapphire has also been a symbol of good luck since the most ancient of times. The Greeks believed that to wear the sapphire was to invite the favor of the gods. The diamond was also considered lucky, particularly among the Romans.

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**A**MBER is one of the oldest of all gem amulets.

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In many Arabian countries the favorite good-luck amulet is turquoise, which is often engraved with the name of Allah or a verse from the Koran.

While certain people believe that pearls bring bad luck, the Romans and Greeks wore pearls to win the favor of the goddess Venus. Asians generally esteem pearls to have medicinal properties and believe that to wear them greatly improves the clearness and beauty of the skin.

The custom of wearing one's birthstone as a lucky gem still exists. Following are the birthstones that are traditionally believed to bring good luck to the wearers: January, garnet; February, amethyst; March, bloodstone; April, diamond; May, emerald; June, agate; July, ruby; August, sardonyx; September, sapphire; October, opal; November, topaz; December, turquoise.

#### HORSESHOES

There is no greater symbol of good luck than finding a horseshoe with the open hoof space

facing toward the fortunate discoverer. No ill omens seem to be connected with this particular superstition. Even if a person merely dreams of finding a horseshoe, good luck will come to him or her. In the modern world, it is not quite as easy to find a discarded horseshoe as it was in the days before the automobile became the principal means of transportation, so perhaps the horseshoe is even luckier in the twenty-first century than it was in the past.

According to one application of the old superstition, the individuals who find a horseshoe must first examine it to see how many nails still remain in the holes. They must next count the number of holes, which then determines how many weeks, months, or years (depending upon the beliefs of the region) it will be before they will become rich or will be married. In a variation on this process, it is the number of nails remaining that must be counted to determine the length of time before good luck arrives. According to yet another interpretation, the number of nails remaining in the horseshoe indicates the number of years of good luck that the finder will enjoy. Some traditions advise that one shouldn't even bother with a found horseshoe unless it still has some nails remaining in it.

Some old accounts advise that one toss the horseshoe over the left shoulder and spit after it to increase the good luck that will soon arrive.

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**THE** *last letter in the Greek alphabet, Omega, is shaped like a horseshoe.*

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The last letter in the Greek alphabet, Omega, is shaped like a horseshoe, and perhaps the ancient Greeks used reverse psychology when they tacked a symbol of "the end" on their walls to protect themselves from the plague. The Romans must have thought the horseshoe was an able defender against the terrible disease, for they followed the Greek custom of placing a horseshoe on their walls.

The U-shaped image of the horseshoe was undoubtedly revered even before humans

domesticated horses and shod their hooves. Many prehistoric stone monuments and structures, such as **Stonehenge**, are set in a horseshoe shape, quite likely associated with the early humans' attempt to trace the movements of the sun.

Nailing a horseshoe to the threshold of one's home helps to bring good fortune to the family. The horseshoe, tacked in place with three nails and the open end down, wards off evil.

In the old days, sailors used to see to it that a horseshoe was nailed to the foremast of their vessels to keep witches and wizards from cursing the voyage or damaging the ship.

Some traditions prescribe the hanging of a horseshoe in the bedroom to prevent nightmares from invading one's sleep. If the horseshoe is tacked points upward, the sleeper's masculine powers will be increased. If the sleeper is female, her latent powers will be awakened if the points are facing downward.

#### **KNOCKING ON WOOD**

The old superstition of knocking on or touching wood to ensure continued good health or fortune remains common today. One often hears the expression used after someone has stated something like, "I've never had a toothache," then quickly adds, "knock on wood." Many authorities on folklore and traditions believe that the custom may have originated in the practice of touching wood upon every occasion of happiness or good fortune in gratitude and veneration to Christ who died upon a wooden cross.

Others state that their research indicates that the ancient Druids of Great Britain and Northern Europe began the practice with their belief that the trees housed deities. Touching the trees in a respectful manner encouraged the gods and goddesses within to grant one's physical selves health and prosperity and one's spirit eternal life. Through the process of cultural evolution within the mass consciousness, the custom of touching or knocking on wood came to be looked upon as a means of warding off ill luck.

**LADDERS**

Ladders are among humankind's earliest tools and constitute one of its most universal symbols. But where did the superstition originate that bad luck would dog one's path if he or she walked under a ladder? It would seem to make great sense not to walk under a ladder while a carpenter is standing on it pounding in nails with a heavy-headed hammer. Is this superstition just plain common sense?

Going back to ancient Egypt, when the priests placed ladders in the tombs for the dead so they might ascend upward if they chose to do so, it was believed that spirits collected in the space that formed in the area between the ladder and the wall that it leaned against. When a ladder leans against a wall, it forms a natural triangle, and that particular geometric shape has been regarded as sacred since the most ancient of times. And since it is a region to be venerated, it is also a space to be avoided. Evil, as well as benign, spirits may be resting there.

Those people who have somehow walked under a ladder can placate the disturbed spirits by immediately placing their thumb between their index and middle finger. This is an age-old method of warding off bad luck.

In Christian Europe in the Middle Ages, individuals who inadvertently walked under a ladder would cross their fingers on both hands, calling upon the sign of the cross to protect them from any evil entities lurking in the shadows existing between wall and ladder. Others would employ the always-reliable method of spitting to banish the negative beings, for best results, three times—one for the Blessed Virgin, one for the Son, and one for the Holy Ghost.

More optimistic folks altered the superstition to state that if a person was, through unusual circumstances, forced to walk under a ladder against his or her will, he or she might receive anything wished for. This is much preferable to the superstition that to tread under a ladder is to foreshadow one's being hanged.

On the symbolical level, the ladder often represents an individual's spiritual quest as it moves from a lower to a higher level. Seen in dreams, the ladder may symbolize that the per-

ipient is about to achieve a transition to a higher state of awareness.

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**LADDERS** *are among humankind's earliest tools.*

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The archetypal ladder vision or dream for Christians and Jews is the one received by Jacob at Bethel when he perceived angels descending and ascending a ladder and giving assurance to him that he would be the chosen vessel to extend the Jewish people into a great nation (Genesis 28:11–19). Since that seminal experience, dreams or visions of ladders have been associated with communication with a higher source or with the rites of passage.

**NUMBERS**

One of the most widespread of superstitious beliefs is that the number 13 is unlucky. So pervasive is this notion that many hotels and office buildings in Europe and the United States do not have a room number 13.

In Scandinavian mythology there were 12 Aesir or gods living in relative harmony until the god Loki came among them, making the 13th. Loki was cruel and evil, and according to the myths, he took special delight in causing human misfortunes. Because he was evil, and because he was the 13th member of the hierarchy of the gods, the number 13 came to be looked upon as an omen of ill luck. Another explanation for the origin of this superstition also comes from Scandinavian mythology, which states the winged Valkyries, who waited to escort the heroes fallen in battle to Valhalla, were 13 in number.

The most popular explanation for the superstition surrounding the number 13 is that there were 12 apostles and their master Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) who partook of the Last Supper, Judas Iscariot being represented as the 13th guest. According to Christian tradition, Judas betrayed his master after they had observed the Passover meal. Judas later hanged

himself because of his guilt, and he was said to be damned for all time as his punishment.

It has long been a matter of etiquette in France to avoid having exactly 13 guests at a dinner or party. Napoleon (1769–1821) wouldn't allow a dinner to begin if there were 13 guests at the table. There is a custom of the "quattrozieme," a professional guest who can be called on short notice to avoid having only 13 people dining at a dinner party. Although the superstition of 13 guests is not quite so strong in the United States, President Herbert Hoover (1874–1964) would not permit a gathering of 13 while he was in the White House. President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945) had the same superstition, and it is said that his personal secretary was often called upon to be the 14th guest at a dinner party.

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*A professional guest, "quattrozieme," can be called on short notice so a host can avoid having only 13 people at dinner party.*

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The number seven has been regarded with superstitious awe for centuries—some consider seven to be lucky; others, unlucky. Rather than being viewed as bringing good fortune or misfortune, the number seven has long been considered a digit of great power. For example, there are seven ecstasies of Zoroaster, the seventh day that celebrates the Sabbath, the seven days of the week, the seven golden candlesticks of Solomon's temple. Among various early peoples, the seventh son of a seventh son was believed to be born with supernatural powers, a boy who would become a wizard when he grew to manhood. Likewise, the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter was believed to be born with gifts of prophecy and healing.

Chinese and Japanese people have a superstitious fear of the number four, because the word for death, *shi*, sounds just like the word for *four*. Even in the contemporary United States, cardiac deaths for Chinese and Japanese Americans spike 7 percent higher on the fourth of each month. The number four is considered so

unlucky in China and Japan that many buildings don't list a fourth floor, the Chinese air force will not assign the number to any of its aircraft, and even cartoon characters that have only four fingers are deemed bad luck.

Among many Jews, even numbers are considered unlucky, even dangerous. While there are no official Christian teachings regarding any numbers being lucky or unlucky, many people believe that the number 12 has significance because of the 12 apostles. And then there is the unholy number 666, which many Christians attribute to Satan or the Antichrist.

#### RABBIT'S FOOT

Experts cannot agree why the rabbit's foot has become synonymous with good luck. The superstition that a front paw—or a hind paw—of a rabbit can bring good fortune is so old that its origins are lost in the mists of time. While it may be forgotten exactly why the furry little foot is lucky, the rabbit's foot remains one of the most common of good-luck charms throughout Europe and North America.

Those who believe in the superstition don't seem to be able to agree if the foot should be carried in the right pocket or the left. Some insist that it must be the right foot of the rabbit carried in the left pocket or the left foot tucked into the right pocket. The foot may also be secured in a purse, a makeup kit, or the door pocket of an automobile.

Wherever one carries the rabbit's foot, the general procedure is to stroke it three or four times before entering into any kind of social event, athletic contest, or gambling effort. Actors take out their rabbit's foot before going on stage or filming a big scene. Lecturers stroke their bunny's paw before approaching the lectern and making the speech that will inspire the audience. Athletic coaches likely wear out several rabbit's feet during a single season of sporting contests.

Some experts suggest that the most likely origin of the rabbit's foot bringing good luck is the gentle creature's association with the holiday of Easter, which for Christians celebrates the resurrection of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.). In actuality, there is nothing to connect a rabbit with any scriptural references to the



death or resurrection of Jesus. Christian tradition borrowed the symbols of a rabbit and colored eggs for children to hunt on Easter morning from an even older religious tradition in Northern Europe that portrayed the rabbit as the escort of the fertility goddess Eastre (Easter). As Christianity spread through Europe, the adaptation and incorporation of the rites and symbols of Eastre into the celebration of Jesus' resurrection transferred to the rabbit the dubious distinction of people attributing good fortune to the act of removing one of his hind legs and carry it on their person.

### SNEEZING

Many people believed that the soul was located inside the head, so they regarded the sneeze as a sign that the soul was giving them an omen, which some interpreted as a lucky omen, others as unlucky. The Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians considered the sneeze a kind of internal oracle that warned them in times of danger and foretold future good or evil. Sneezing to the right was considered lucky; to the left, unlucky.

An old Flemish belief maintained that a sneeze during conversation proved the truth of a remark. Such a superstition was also prevalent among the Greeks, the Romans, and the Egyptians.

The custom of uttering a benediction, a "God bless you," after the sneeze is universal, and each country has its own particular superstition concerning it. The Romans believed that the sneeze expelled evil spirits; therefore, the act of sneezing was considered an effort on the part of the person to rid his or her system of evil spirits, and those present at the time would say, "Good luck to you."

There is an old legend that before the time of the Old Testament patriarchs, people sneezed only once, and died. But the patriarch Jacob interceded on behalf of humankind and obtained a cessation of this law on the condition that the benediction "God bless you!" follow every sneeze.

In Iceland, according to legend, there was once a dreadful epidemic in which many people died. In a certain household, a brother and sister observed that everyone around them who succumbed to the disease was first seized by a sneez-

ing attack. Therefore, when they themselves sneezed they cried, "God help me!" Because of this prayer they were allowed to live, and they spread the story of the healing benediction to all the inhabitants of the district. The Icelanders have continued the custom of saying, "God help me!" when they themselves sneeze and "God help you!" when others sneeze.

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**PEOPLE** *believe a sneeze is a sign that the soul was giving them an omen.*

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In England during the seventeenth century, it was the custom for all those within earshot of someone who sneezed to remove their hats, bow, and shout, "God bless you!" In nineteenth-century England, someone originated a rhyme regarding the consequences of sneezing on certain days of the week:

Sneeze on Monday, sneeze for danger.  
Sneeze on Tuesday, kiss a stranger.  
Sneeze on Wednesday, sneeze for a letter.  
Sneeze on Thursday, something better.  
Sneeze on Friday, sneeze for woe.  
Sneeze on Saturday, a journey to go.  
Sneeze on Sunday, your safety seek—for Satan will have you for the rest of the week!

Many people believe that the custom of uttering the benediction "God bless you!" after a sneeze dates from the Great Plague that swept London in 1665. Other traditions are firm in stating that the practice began much earlier during the pontificate of Gregory the Great (c. 540–604; pope 590–604). During this period a deadly pestilence raged throughout Italy that proved fatal to those who sneezed. The pope issued prayers to be said against the plague, accompanied by signs of the cross. It was during this era, according to some scholars, that the custom of crying "God bless you!" to persons who sneezed became definitely established.

### SPITTING

Since ancient times, one's spittle has been valued as a charm against all evil. Spitting is a

way of consecrating or anointing. To spit on anything has been accepted as a method of ensuring good luck or success in an undertaking for so long that no one can determine when the practice began.

Sailors spit on their ships for luck. Fishermen spit over the edge of their boats to guarantee a good catch. Schoolboys spit on their shooter marbles for luck in knocking the other players' marbles out of the circle. In the old days, those about to engage in a fistfight spit on their knuckles to increase the power of their blows. Even today, some people who are about to undertake a difficult physical task first spit on their hands to make the job easier.

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SINCE *ancient times, one's spittle has been valued as a charm against all evil.*

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In many cultures, if people accidentally drop their money, they must spit on it for luck after they retrieve it. Others spit on their money for luck before placing a bet on a sporting event. Some individuals spit on their paycheck to bless it before cashing it. Modern postal employees are used to seeing people spit on the envelopes containing contest entries before the hopeful contestants drop them in the mail slot.

Almost universally, if people feel that a person with evil intent has put the evil eye on them, they must spit immediately to protect themselves from the curse. Whenever individuals sense that a spell of witchcraft for sorcery has been directed toward them, they must spit over their left shoulder. If one should awaken from a frightening nightmare, one must spit over the left shoulder three times to be certain that it doesn't come true. Even if one should encounter Satan himself, the Prince of Darkness can be made to disappear if one spits between his horns.

In the gospel accounts of the ministry of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.—c. 30 C.E.), the miracle worker from Nazareth healed people of blindness and deafness with his spittle. The ancient Greeks believed that eye troubles could be cured by

rubbing them with the spit of someone who had been fasting. On occasion, mothers worldwide use their spittle to rub over their child's bruise or cut to make it heal faster.

#### ✦ DELVING DEEPER

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## STRANGE CUSTOMS AND TABOOS

In 2001, bits of stone etched with intricate patterns were found in the Blombos Cave east of Cape Town on the southern African shores of the Indian Ocean. Scientists were surprised when the chunks of stone were dated at 77,000 years old, indicating that ancient humans were capable of complex behavior and abstract thought thousands of years earlier than previously expected. In Europe, thousands of sites have been excavated and artifacts unearthed that prove that what would be considered modern behavior existed there about 40,000 years ago. From everything that we understand about human evolution, certain forms of behavior were already being accepted as customs and certain actions judged as taboos even in those earliest of times.

Some stories of alleged supernatural occurrences cannot really be classified as either **urban legends** or **hoaxes**, but as accounts that have been told so often that the truth of the original report has become obscured over the years. Perhaps a classic story of this type would be the curse of King Tut.

The following individuals have been linked to Tut's curse:

- Howard Carter's canary
- Lord Carnarvon
- Sheik Abdul Haman
- Jay Gould
- Woolf Joel
- Sir Archibald Douglas Reid
- Lady Carnarvon
- Professor Cisanova
- Georges Benedite
- Albert M. Lythgoe

## THE CURSE OF KING TUT

- Sir William Garstin
- A. Lucas
- Arthur E. P. Weigal
- The Honorable Mervyn Herbert
- Richard Bethel

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Customs are those activities that have been approved by a social group and have been handed down from generation to generation until they have become habitual. However, many customs vary from culture to culture, and those who visit other countries may suddenly discover that the simplest of customary actions in their own society may be misinterpreted as improper in another. For example, whether they are being introduced to someone for the first time or greeting an old friend, men and women in western nations are accustomed to shake hands. While the clasping of hands is intended as a gesture of friendship by Westerners, the people of many Asian countries may be alarmed by the boldness of a stranger who extends a hand, for they prefer to bow as a sign of goodwill.

Some travelers to foreign countries have also discovered much to their dismay that

even the most innocent of hand gestures in their home culture may be considered offensive in another. It must soon become apparent to any fairly objective observer that the traditional values and customs of one culture may be considered very strange by another.

When an action or activity violates behavior considered appropriate by a social group, it is labeled a "taboo," a word that we have borrowed from the Polynesian people of the South Pacific. An act that is taboo is forbidden, prohibited, and those who transgress may be ostracized by others or, in extreme instances, killed.

While the marriage of near-blood relations is prohibited in contemporary civilization, in earlier societies it was quite common. The ancient gods of Egypt, Isis and Osiris, brother and sister, provided an example for royal couples, as pharaohs commonly married their sisters. The Hebrew patriarch Abraham took as a

wife his half-sister, and Abraham's nephew Lot committed incest with his own daughters.

Polygamy, the marriage of one man and several women or one woman and several men, is prohibited in modern civilization, but there are still religious groups in nearly every nation who justify plural marriages as being ordained by the deity they worship. The history of every modern culture is replete with accounts of kings, caliphs, emperors, and patriarchs who had numerous wives. The great Solomon, the prototype for the wise ruler and credited with writing some of the world's greatest love poetry, is said to have had 700 wives and 300 concubines.

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**HINDU** *religious doctrines order both man and woman involved in infidelity, humiliated, mutilated or killed, depending upon their caste.*

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Adultery, an act of infidelity on the part of a married individual, is one of the most universal of the taboos. The code of Moses condemned both parties involved in the act to be stoned to death. The Hindu religious doctrines order both man and woman, humiliated, mutilated or killed, depending upon their caste. In ancient Egypt, the male offender was castrated, and the woman's nose was cut off. In ancient Greece, the guilty pair might be killed by being dragged behind horses or starved. As the Greek civilization matured, adulterers were seldom killed, but they were deprived of all public privileges and sometimes covered from head to foot with wool to render their guilt easily visible by others. The laws in Old Scandinavia permitted the offended husband to castrate his wife's lover and to kill his spouse.

While adulterers may still be dealt with quite harshly in many societies around the world, in most Western nations the act of infidelity is regarded with great tolerance. Men and women who have been unfaithful to their spouses are seldom ostracized by the public at large, and adultery by one of the marriage partners is no longer considered necessary as grounds for divorce.

There are few universal taboos, for societies continue to evolve. Acts that were considered forbidden at one time have developed into an acceptable social activity. For example, seeing a couple kissing in public would seldom raise an eyebrow today, but in the Puritan New England of the 1690s, such a harmless act would have sent the man and woman to the stocks and public humiliation. On the other hand, kissing a woman in public might still get a man jailed or fined in many of the Islamic nations in the Mid-East.

As the world grows smaller because of modern transportation and its diverse inhabitants encounter people from different cultures more often than ever before in the history of the human species, it becomes increasingly difficult to condemn one person's custom as another's taboo. Within a nation, such as the United States, which has always endeavored to maintain a democratic, pluralistic society, an influx of immigrants from Asia and Africa, which began in the 1970s, has made the task of balancing cultural variety with traditional American mainstream values more and more difficult.

Barbara Crosette, writing in the March 8, 1999 issue of *The New York Times*, tells of a refugee from Afghanistan who was arrested in Maine when he was seen kissing his baby boy's genitals. The father was exhibiting a traditional expression of love that had long been practiced in his culture, but to his neighbors and the police, he was abusing his child. In another instance, Cambodian parents were accused of child abuse by teachers and social workers because of their traditional cures of placing hot objects on their children's foreheads during an illness.

In this section, the fascinating evolution of the customs and taboos surrounding courtship and marriage, hospitality and etiquette, and burials and funerals is explored. While some of the customs of the past may seem amusing or quaint, primitive or savage, certain elements of such barbaric acts as capturing one's bride have been preserved in many traditions is still practiced in the modern marriage ceremony.

✦ **DELVING DEEPER**

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#### COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Many anthropologists and social historians have expressed their views that early humans practiced polygamy (one man with several women in the marriage union) or polyandry (several men with one woman). In either case, quite likely the women involved in the union probably had been captives before they were wives.

Although these marital circumstances may have existed for quite some time among early humans, there are a number of reasons why neither polygamy nor polyandry could have survived as universal or general practices. For one thing, some societies practiced infanticide, killing primarily female infants, and creating a scarcity of women. For another, among those tribes and nations who were constantly at war with each other, there would inevitably be a scarcity of men in proportion to the women. And even though the women of the conquered foe were usually considered among the spoils of war, more were killed in the bloody battles than were dragged off as unwilling mates of the victors. Regardless of the reasons for the disproportion between the sexes, they would lead to monogamy, the marriage of one man to one woman—marriage as it most commonly exists in modern civilized societies. In communities where men were scarce, a woman would try to hold the affections of one man to be assured of his protection and a constant supply of food. In those tribes or societies where women were in short supply, a man would want to be assured of at least one woman whom he would not have to share.

Some social historians argue that children presented the greatest incentive toward monogamy. Among many primitive tribal peo-

ples even today, a marriage is not solemnized until the first child is born, and if no child is born the man is at liberty to leave the woman. Biologists have long noted that among the lower animals the natural instinct is to protect the young and supply food for their subsistence.

Before humankind began to gather in clans and tribes, what passed for courtship was likely a raid on a distant group of humans that resulted in the capture of a woman who was forced to participate against her will in an instant marriage. True courtship practices between the sexes did not exist to any great extent, and feelings of fondness or affection, if they entered into the equation at all, resulted from compatibility extended over a period of time. As the human species became more mannered and various religious rites began to be observed, young men and women sought to make themselves attractive to non-family members of the opposite sex who resided near them in the same village or series of villages. Rules of exogamy, which denied marriage between persons of the same bloodline, and the laws of endogamy, which prohibited marriage with any persons except those of the same bloodline, arose to define the pool of eligible mates from which young people could choose.

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FROM the earliest tribal gatherings, young people have hoped to attract favorable attention to themselves as potential marriage partners by spending time in ornamenting, mutilating, painting, and tattooing themselves.

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Anthropologists and various scientists of social behavior theorize that from the earliest tribal gatherings, young people have hoped to attract favorable attention to themselves as potential marriage partners by spending a great deal of time in ornamenting, mutilating, painting, and tattooing themselves, much as they do in contemporary times.

In the early developmental stages of courtship, those tribal cultures that permitted

their young to have some role in the selection of their mates might dictate that if there were two or more suitors for the hand of a woman, the men would have to wrestle and fight for the opportunity to become the victorious husband. These struggles were seldom to the death, but were in keeping with the custom among various peoples of forcing young men to undergo tests of endurance before granting them permission to marry. The underlying principle was that no man should have a wife until he has proved that he is able to protect her.

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THE screams, tears, and struggles of the bride shows her bashfulness and modesty.

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*Capturing a Bride.* Courtship by capture contributed its share of customs to the rituals of modern marriage. The screams, tears, and struggles of the bride among various peoples are known to be merely a part of the marriage routine; yet they are considered absolutely essential to show her bashfulness and modesty. The conscious or unconscious simulation of capture as retained in later systems of marriage appears to be due to a much earlier concept of modesty and delicacy. Even after the establishment of Christianity had abolished marriage by capture throughout all of Europe, the Anglo-Saxons persisted in simulating the capture of the bride.

Among the Arabs of the Sinai peninsula, a girl acquires a permanent reputation of chastity and modesty in proportion to her tears and her struggles of resistance on her marriage day. In many Irish traditions, a marriage is considered scarcely legal unless the bride attempts to escape and the bridegroom overtakes and “captures” her. A custom in Wales requires the relatives of the bride to grab her as she reaches the church door and run off with her, forcing the bridegroom and his party to follow in pursuit. When the stolen bride is recaptured, she is at once handed over to the groom. A popular superstition arising from this tradition is that whoever of the groom’s friends caught her will be married within the year.

*Buying a Bride.* Marriage through purchase was quite likely the next stage in the evolution of courtship. The transition from marriage by capture was much more peaceful a manner to gain a bride for a young man. In earlier times when a bride was stolen from a village by men from another tribe, members of the captured woman’s clan would set out to avenge their loss. Perhaps after centuries of such violent reprisals, some unidentified wise man or woman suggested that instead of fighting and chancing people being killed, why not have the bridegroom offer compensation to the parents of the daughter that he had stolen from them? Perhaps after a few more centuries had passed, another wise man or woman suggested that the potential bridegroom simply buy the bride without going through all the effort of kidnapping her. In the traditions of a wide variety of peoples from the nomadic Jews and Arabs to the Native American tribes, a beautiful daughter became a valuable asset. In later years, a variation on marriage by purchase united the feudal kingdoms of Europe.

Perhaps even more common than buying a bride was the ancient custom of gaining a wife by working for her father for a certain period of time. Such an exchange of a prized daughter for an agreed-upon term of labor was practiced among many of the early societies and tribes of America, Africa, and Asia. Many are familiar with the Old Testament story of how Jacob worked 20 years for his uncle Laban to gain Leah, a bride whom he did not want, and Rachel, whom he loved (Genesis: 29, 30).

Among many early peoples, valuable presents were given to the parents by the bridegroom instead of a monetary payment. In Japan, it was the custom of a suitor to send certain previously stipulated gifts to the parents of the young woman whom he wished to marry. If the initial gifts were accepted, negotiations would begin to discuss the marriage agreement.

The prospective groom in many Native American tribes exchanged horses for his bride. The fathers in African tribes considered it proper to exchange cattle for their daughters.

The word “wedding” harkens back to the time when men purchased their wives. The *wed* was the money, horses, or cattle that the groom

gave as a pledge to acquire his bride from her father. From *wed* is derived the later idea of wedding or pledging the bride to the man who promises to provide her future security.

The spread of Christianity throughout Europe dealt a fatal blow to the custom of marriage by purchase and brought about a more wholesome attitude toward women, as well. But it required several generations before the civilized world was largely freed from the demeaning customs of wife purchase and woman barter, although it is known that in some more primitive regions of the world, such practices continue today.

*Infant Betrothals.* Among early tribal cultures, betrothals were commonly arranged by parents between their infant daughters and their future husbands, sometimes even before the girls were born. Infant males also had their brides selected for them by their families, most often with a girl from a family with whom an alliance would be profitable. Among those societies in which people arranged the marriages of their children in infancy, the betrothals were considered absolutely binding.

For most of the Polynesian people, the father had absolute power of life and death over his children, and he could promise his infant children in marriage to whomever he wished to suit his own ambitions. Many African tribes practiced infant betrothal.

The Fiji islanders arranged for their children to be married when they were three or four years old. A ceremony was performed for the children at that time that remained binding upon the bride and groom when they became mature. Such types of infant marriages were also common in India and among the tribes of New Guinea, New Zealand, and Tahiti.

In the old traditions of certain Eskimo tribes, as soon as a girl was born, a man who wanted her for a wife went to her father and made an offer of marriage. If the husband-to-be was a child, his father acted on his behalf and made the offer of marriage to the infant girl's father. If the offer was accepted, a betrothal promise was given that was considered as binding as the marriage ceremony, and the girl would be delivered to her husband when she had reached the proper age.

*Mutual Love.* Mutual love, wherein members of the opposite sex are able to determine their marriage partner based upon emotional feelings, could not develop until the time when humans began to establish themselves in tribes and clans and attained a certain amount of stability in their social environment. While the primary impetus of tribal humans was still survival, periods of leisure time developed by the process of banding together and developing divisions of labor. It was at that level of civilization that men seeking a mate began to abandon courtship by kidnapping or conquest. It was no longer necessary to steal a bride from another tribe and risk retaliation and death. Villages were growing larger, and there were eligible women available from clans with which political or religious alliances had been formed.

In those early days of building permanent social structures, men and women began to devise various ways of making themselves attractive to the opposite sex by ornamenting, mutilating, painting, and tattooing themselves. It is also likely this elementary level of romance consisted of two people sneaking away from their clans at night for some privacy; such forms primitive expressions of mutual attraction began to alter in dramatic ways the ancient customs of courtship.

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Since primitive times, the underlying principle of courtship has been that no man may have a wife until he can prove that he is able to protect her. If two men were attracted to the same woman, the one who won her hand might first have to win a competition of physical prowess. In many societies, the potential groom was forced to undergo tests of endurance to prove his ability to guard his wife and their family from danger. Such customs survived in many cultures for centuries, and while few suitors today engage in feats of endurance to win their brides, it is not uncommon for contempo-

rary women to select the stronger suitor, perhaps yielding on an unconscious level to the ancient instinct of self-preservation.

In the early days of transition from marriage by abduction to relationships developed by individuals with a mutual attraction for one another, most marriages were arranged and wives could be purchased. The evolution of romance would create great conflicts with these old traditions.

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THE *dowry was a way of compensating the husband as the newlyweds began their life together.*

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According to many social historians, the Greeks “invented” love in the Golden Age of Greece (about 480 to 399 B.C.E.). The Greeks gave love two names: *eros* (physical love) and *agape* (spiritual love). Yet for all its familiar aspects, love in classic Greece was still quite different from the concept of mutual attraction between man and woman that serves as the standard for marriage in the modern Western world. Marriages were still arranged by parents, and a solemn betrothal almost invariably preceded the actual marriage.

For centuries, marriages in Europe continued to be arranged for monetary, religious, and political advantages. Those couples who found themselves attracted to individuals other than the mate chosen by their parents were forced to take matters into their own hands and defy family, society, and sometimes their religious traditions.

*Elopement.* It was not until the ninth century that women in Europe began to gain the privilege of choosing or refusing their husbands according to their own judgment. Although it is known from biblical accounts, mythology, and legends that love between man and woman existed long before this period, there had been little chance of mutual love existing when marriage by capture and marriage by purchase were the prevailing methods of courtship. Once women began to accept the idea that they could have a say in the selection

of a spouse whether or not her parents, clan, or church approved, the practice of a couple running off together (eloping) was born.

Quite likely, however, the tradition of a young woman eloping with the man of her choice began when marriage by purchase was still a grim reality. To avoid marrying a man who was able to pay the bride-price her parents demanded but who personally disgusted her, a young woman would run away from her parents and elope with the man she really loved.

Obviously elopement could never have thrived in primitive societies. Women were guarded too closely, and their parents arranged marriages to suit their own purposes, caring nothing about the wishes or happiness of the girl.

*Hope Chest and Dowry.* The “hope chest” that many modern young women still maintain is largely a social relic that harkens back to the old custom of the dowry. The dowry derived from the even older custom of marriage by purchase and was a way of compensating the husband as the newlyweds began their life together.

In ancient Greece, once a betrothal had been announced, the dowry amount of the bride was settled, and her social position as a married woman depended largely upon the value of her dowry. On some occasions, the daughters of poor parents in Athens were granted dowries by the city-state or by wealthy private individuals.

Among many European cultures, it was tradition that a young woman should make every bit of household linen that went into her hope chest to ensure happiness for her marriage. In old Romania, it was once customary for girls as young as five to begin working on their bridal finery. As each article was completed, it was placed carefully away in the hope chest until the time when a proper suitor appeared.

In the Europe and Great Britain of only a few generations ago, wardrobes and closets in which to hang clothes were uncommon, so chests of various sizes were used to store away household linens and wearing apparel. In most homes there would be one chest set aside for the daughter, and into this chest she would



place the handmade linens and other items she would use one day in “the home of her hopes.”

*The Lovers' Kiss.* Some anthropologists theorize that the origin of the kiss of affection is to be found in a mother's caresses and gentle nibbles on her child's body. Out of these maternal caresses grew the kiss of feeling and reverence as known today. However, the act of kissing one's sweetheart on the mouth as a form of affection did not develop until comparatively late in the evolution of love.

Among Semitic people, a kiss on the cheek has been considered a traditional form of blessing or greeting for centuries. Some ancient Romans kissed a person's eyes or mouth as a form of greeting, but it was done in a cursory manner. Roman husbands kissed their wives on the mouth at the end of the day, but their motive was not at all romantic. They were checking their spouses' breath to see if they had been sitting around drinking wine all day.

Kissing the hand or the foot or even the ground on which some royal personage would walk was deemed a mark of respect and homage in ancient times, but scholars of social customs cannot trace the kiss on the lips as a form of affection between lovers ever occurring in antiquity.

One of the earliest definite instances of kissing as a form of love and affection appears to have developed in Tours, France, in the sixth century, when it became fashionable for a young man to give his betrothed a ring as a symbol that he was bound to her. In addition, he would gift her with a pair of shoes, to indicate his subjection to her, and a kiss on the lips as a seal of his affection.

In France, the kiss as a form of affection between sweethearts developed rapidly and soon found a permanent place in courtship and love. When social dancing became popular, almost every turn on the dance floor ended with a kiss. From France the kiss spread quickly all over Europe.

Until after World War II (c. 1945), kissing one's sweetheart on the lips was largely a Western habit, and most Asians were strangers to the practice. In the years before the lovers' kiss was demonstrated throughout

the world by means of Western motion pictures and military personnel, a kiss in Samoa was a sniff in the air beside a sweetheart's cheek. Polynesians showed affection by rubbing noses together—as did the Laplanders and the Eskimo. Neither the Chinese nor the Japanese kissed on the lips. Until quite recently in the evolution of the customs and taboos of love and marriage, it was only in North America and Europe that the kiss was an important element in courtship.

*Exchanging of Gifts.* Throughout all of the history of courtship, it is likely that the presentation of gifts by the groom-to-be to the object of his affections or to her father is one of the surest methods of winning approval—and in earlier cultures the idea of a lavish betrothal gift meant a great deal more than it does today. In times past, the suitor felt that part of himself was being given to his beloved and her family.

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In Japan, the sending of presents to the bride by the groom is one of the most essential aspects of the marriage ceremony. Once the gifts have been received by the bride and accepted, the marriage contract is considered complete and neither party can withdraw from the union.

Among many Native American tribes, the suitor was expected to bring gifts of horses, hides, or any item that might be esteemed to the woman's father as an indication of his prosperity and his ability to care for the man's daughter in a marital relationship.

A certain aura of romance has centered around flowers since early humans began to notice the beauty of nature and developed the aesthetic sense necessary to draw correlations between the appeal of a flower and the attractive qualities of one's beloved. It was a custom among the ancient Greeks for two lovers to

wear flowers in full bloom to indicate a love newly awakened. Once the lovers had exchanged their engagement vows, they wore the same kind of flower in their hair as a public emblem of their betrothal.

In Indonesian Timor, a woman bestows the highest mark of attachment upon her lover when she gives him the flower garland from her hair. Among the Polynesians, men and women alike wear flowers behind their ears when they are in love. The flower, it seems, has been the quintessential gift between lovers in many cultures for many centuries, and it is the considerate suitor of today who remembers to call upon his sweetheart bearing a bouquet of flowers.

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**FLOWERS** *have been the quintessential gift between lovers in many cultures.*

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*The Engagement Announcement.* While it is still considered good relations for a young man to obtain the formal consent of his sweetheart's parents before asking for her hand in marriage, for most modern couples in the United States, Great Britain, and Europe that particular old custom is seldom observed. Today, once a man and woman have decided to marry, there is usually the presentation of an engagement ring to the woman, and as a couple they simply make an announcement of their intentions to family and friends.

While it is not uncommon in contemporary society to celebrate an engagement with a dinner party, in many earlier societies the occasion of a betrothal required a feast of great festivity and celebration. Among certain peoples, the betrothal was not considered binding until a feast had been given and both families had eaten together.

Among many of the Afghan tribes, no man may even see or speak to his promised wife from the time of betrothal until marriage. In Greece, the rings for betrothal are exchanged in the priest's presence, and the engagement may then not be broken without the consent of the priest. Following the betrothal, the

engaged couple may not see each other or talk to each other until the day of the wedding.

In old Russia, it was considered a great disgrace for a man to propose directly to his sweetheart. Until the two sets of parents had settled the amount of the dowry and selected the exact day of marriage, the prospective bridegroom was strictly forbidden to see his betrothed or even venture near her home. Some scholars have suggested that customs such as these forbidding the interaction of the intended marriage partners before the day of the wedding hearkens back to even earlier times when the bride's parents might have feared that they would be cheated of her bride-price if their daughter decided to elope with her betrothed before the wedding day.

While most modern couples continue to see one another until the day of the wedding, the old superstition persists that if the bride permits herself to be seen by the groom before the actual time of ceremony on the day of the wedding, the marriage will be blighted with bad luck.

*The Bridal Shower.* Many consider the custom of the bridal shower to be one of the more charming of the old traditions handed down to modern brides from centuries past. In contemporary times, the bridal shower is essentially a social occasion during which friends and relatives of the bride wish her well on her approaching marriage and present her with gifts.

The custom of the bridal shower grew out of earlier times when a poor woman's family might not have the money to provide an acceptable dowry for her, or, in some circumstances, when a stubborn father refused to give his daughter her dowry because he did not approve of the marriage. In such situations, friends of the woman would gather together and bring her gifts that would compensate for the dowry and allow her to marry the man of her choice.

*The Bridal Dress.* The bride in the Western world traditionally wears a gown of white, as an emblem of purity. In many Asian countries, however, the bride may wear a black bridal dress.

Even before it denoted purity, white represented the color of joy. The early Romans always wore white on occasions of rejoicing, such as birth and feast days. The white rose

was an emblem of joy among the Greeks. The aboriginal inhabitants of Patagonia in southern Argentina painted their bodies white on every joyous occasion. The whole bodies of the bride and groom were covered with white paint on the eve of their wedding ceremony.

Some social historians believe that the tradition of the bridal veil originated in the covering of the bride in ancient times to show her submission. Others believe that the veil originated in sexual shyness in women and the attempt to hide from view. Among some early peoples, the bride was draped completely in a shroud that she wore during the marriage ceremony. Once the wedding ritual ceremony was completed, she was uncovered and the shroud was placed in a chest. It would be taken out again only when the woman was ready to be buried.

It is well known that among various ancient peoples it was customary to keep the bride hidden from her future husband until the day of the wedding. In Egypt, for instance, the groom was not permitted to see the face of his bride until the marriage ceremony when he engaged in the solemn ritual of uncovering her visage. The same sort of custom was observed among the Arabs, the Indians, and among other European and Asiatic peoples.

It has been a custom for brides to wear gloves since the time of ancient Egypt. In Egyptian hieroglyphics, the glove is the symbol of the hand. The word itself signifies to give, to honor.

The “something blue” that brides are told to wear during their wedding is a tradition borrowed from the ancient Israelites when young women were advised to place upon the borders of their fringed garments a ribbon of blue, the color of purity, love, and fidelity. According to the old bridal saying, the bride is to wear: “Something old and something new, Something borrowed and something blue.”

*The Wedding Procession.* Most of the traditional wedding observances that are honored today in North America originated in Europe and the United Kingdom during the Middle Ages. Then as now, the ushers enter first, escorting guests and relatives to appropriate seating before the altar.

The bridesmaids enter after the guests and family members have been seated, walking down the aisle most often one at a time, though some traditions favor them approaching the altar two by two. The bridesmaids may wear colorful gowns, often similar in design to the bride's, but they may never wear white, a color reserved for that of the bride.

Flower girls may precede the bridesmaids, or they may walk just in front of the bride. In medieval times, it was customary to have two little girls, usually sisters, dressed exactly alike, carry garlands of wheat and walk in front of the bride. The bouquets of wheat symbolized the wish of family and friends that the union between bride and groom would prove fruitful. Later, flowers carried in small ornamental baskets replaced the garlands of wheat, and petals were often strewn from these baskets in the path of the bride.

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The maid or matron of honor, who is unattended, comes next, followed by the bride. The bride is always the last to enter, and she walks down the aisle leaning on the arm of her father or whoever is to give her away at the altar. A page or pages, usually a young boy closely related to either bride or groom, may be added to the group to bear the train of the bride's gown. It has been suggested by some historians that the tradition of the bride carrying a bouquet of flowers began as a precaution against body odor. In the Middle Ages, according to these scholars, most people planned to be married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and were still smelling good. Brides carried a bouquet of flowers to guard against any offensive odors that might have developed since their annual bathing ritual.

The “best man” who attends the groom is quite likely a relic of marriage by capture. When a young man in those ancient times set

out to capture a bride, he was usually accompanied by a strong-armed friend who helped defend the groom against the pursuing father and relatives of the stolen woman. In medieval times, the groomsmen were known as bride knights, whose duty it was to guard and protect the bride on her way to the church, accompany her down the aisle to the altar, and after the ceremony had been conducted, relinquish her to the groom.

The origin of the bridesmaids also harkens back to marriage by capture. As that form of brutal courtship was fading into humankind's memories of ancient ways better forgotten, it remained the custom for the bride to pretend that she was being carried away against her will and wished to escape from the groom's clutches. During the transition time between courtship traditions, it was considered modest and maidenly for the bride to feign a struggle before being led down the aisle. To add to the fray, the bride's friends and family would rush the groom and his party in a mock attempt to rescue her. As the bridegroom's defending clansmen developed into the groomsmen, the bride's attacking family evolved into the bridesmaids, who remain at her side during the ceremony.

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The question, "Who gives this woman to this man?" asked by the officiating clergyman in contemporary wedding ceremonies is a relic of marriage by purchase. It is at this point in the ceremony that the father of the bride responds to the question by offering the arm of his daughter to the groom and telling the clergyman, "I do." In recent years, some ceremonies include both the mother and father of the bride responding "we do," to the question of who gives the bride to the groom.

Custom also dictates that the bride always stands to the left of the groom during the cere-

mony. The position of the bride reflects a much earlier period when the groom needed to have his sword arm free in case he had to defend them against an attack by a jealous rival or a family member who violently objected to the union. The best man is positioned on the groom's right, immediately behind him, harkening back to those same earlier times when he might have to help the groom fight off more than one assailant while the couple were attempting to declare their marriage vows.

The gift of a small item of personal jewelry that the groom presents to his groomsmen is a survival of primitive courtship when the prospective groom set out to capture a bride with the help of his friends. If they were successful in catching a suitable wife for the groom, he would reward them with gifts. During a later time period, when the bride knights kept watch over the bride, it was she who presented the gifts, rather than the groom.

*The Wedding Ceremony.* As the methods of courtship and the subsequent marriage rites evolved in various ways, it was inevitable that an element of religion should enter into the ceremonies. As humankind progressed from the primitive stalking of a bride, to the purchase of a wife, to mutual love between bride and groom, the linking together of two lives grew in importance to the community at large. Even in the early stages of civilization, the dissolution of a marriage, especially one that had produced children, was troublesome and upsetting to the entire tribe or village. In order to help avoid a couple separating after marriage, a religious element entered the process and a divinity or a deity was invoked to help strengthen the ties that bound bride and groom.

There are many different individual denominations under the general theological umbrella of Christian and under the two main divisions of Roman Catholic and Protestant. There may be many distinctive elements involved in what may be termed a Christian wedding, but most of the ceremonies are similar. In most circumstances, the wedding takes place within about three or four months of the couple's engagement announcement. Although Christian weddings need not take place in a church before an altar, most marriage cere-

monies are performed in a church familiar to either or both the bride and groom.

On the day of the wedding, the groom arrives at the church in the company of his best man. The bride awaits them in the company of her attendants, her bridesmaids, and, on occasion, a matron of honor, perhaps an older sister or some other relative. When the ceremony begins, the groom, his best man, and his groomsmen enter at the front of the church and join the priest or pastor at the altar. Once they are in position, the organist, orchestra, or other musical accompaniment, begins to play a piece of music that signals the entrance of the bridesmaids, who one by one walk down the aisle to stand opposite the groom and groomsmen. When their processional is completed, the musicians play another selection that announces the arrival of the bride and her father.

After the bride and her father have walked down the aisle, the clergyman asks who gives the woman to the man who awaits her at the altar. Traditionally, it has been the father who designates that he is the one who gives the bride to the groom, but in recent years, the mother may also stand with her husband and say that together they give the bride to the groom.

The bride approaches the altar and stands beside the groom. The clergyman reads passages from the Bible that speak of the harmony of the marriage state and God's pleasure in the union of man and wife. The clergyman may also deliver a brief sermon that encourages the couple to remain true to one another and adhere to Christian teachings. The couple may then offer pledges to one another that they have written themselves.

In most Christian ceremonies, the bride and groom place the wedding band on one another's left hand ring finger and repeat the vows of marriage as the clergyman reads them aloud. The clergyman asks God to bless them and help them remain with one another until death parts them, then pronounces them man and wife. In some denominations, after the newlyweds have stated their vows, they and the assembled guests will celebrate mass or holy communion together.

After the wedding ceremony, the newlyweds leave the church as the guests throw rice or pieces of confetti over them. There is a reception in the church basement or in a hall where dinner is served to the invited guests and gifts are presented to the newlyweds. Depending upon the beliefs of the individual denomination or congregation, a dance may follow the dinner and the gift-giving. After the party, the couple leaves their family and friends and departs on their honeymoon.

Jewish weddings are always events of great celebration and are usually performed on Sundays. On the Sabbath before the wedding, the groom must go to the synagogue and read from the Torah. As in other traditions, the bride is attired in a white gown, symbolizing purity and joy, and the groom stands beside her wearing a dark suit. The wedding couple is attended by their parents, and the group stands before the rabbi under a canopy known as a *chuppah*, which represents the future home of the bride and groom.

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⚭ JEWISH weddings are usually performed on Sundays.

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The rabbi hands the couple a glass of wine that has been blessed. After the bride and groom share the wine, the rabbi and the groom read the marriage contract. When the reading is completed, the groom places a plain gold ring on the first finger of his bride's left hand and announces to all assembled in the synagogue that she is his wife. After making such a declaration, he moves the wedding ring to the third finger.

A second glass of wine is offered to the couple. The rabbi says the Seven Blessings and praises God for marriages and asks for the newlyweds to be happy. After both drink from it, the glass is smashed under the heel of the groom. The breaking of the glass is a reminder of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. An old tradition adds that the glass is broken to symbolize that the bride and groom will be joined in happiness and love until the glass is

made whole again, which is another way of saying forever.

Before a Buddhist wedding can occur, a Buddhist monk must check the horoscope of the prospective bride and groom to be certain that they are compatible. If the stars indicate that the couple will be able to adjust to one another's personalities throughout their lives together, the monk next determines the best day for the wedding ceremony to occur.

Buddhist weddings are not conducted in temples or in religious sites, but in hotels or public halls and are generally regarded as civil ceremonies. The bridal couple are clothed in robes and sit side by side on silk cushions beside another Buddhist couple, who serve as their sponsors. The monk performing the wedding ceremony wraps a silk scarf about the wrists of the bride and groom, and the two eat rice from a silver bowl to symbolize that they vow forever to share everything between them. They promise to love and respect one another, to be frugal with their incomes, and to welcome their friends and family to their home. There may be a brief reading from Buddhist scriptures and a period of meditation, followed by a few words from the officiating priest. After the ceremony is concluded, most Buddhist couples visit the nearest monastery to be blessed by the monks and to pay respect to Buddha.

is set by a priest who carefully examines the couple's horoscope for the most favorable day.

Before the marriage ceremony, the bride takes a ritual bath and her female friends in attendance paint distinctive patterns on her hands and feet with henna. Once the ornate designs decorate the bride, she is attired in a red sari that has been adorned with gold thread, a symbol of good fortune. Often the bride also wears gold bracelets and anklets. Just before the formal ceremony begins, representatives of the groom's family approach her and place a small dab on red paint on her forehead.

When the bride and groom arrive at the temple, hotel, or private home where the ceremony will take place by mutual agreement of their respective families, both of them have their faces hidden by veils. The ceremony begins with prayers to Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed god, who is beseeched to bless the couple with success in all their future plans. The bride's family officially gives her to the groom, and the priest introduces them to assembled guests as man and wife. The couple then sits before a sacred fire, facing each other under a canopy. A cord is placed over their shoulders to signify that they are joined together forever.

At this point in the ceremony, the couple rises, holds hands, and walks around the sacred fire seven times, promising to honor and respect one another and vowing to respect the gods. Prayers for happiness and good fortune are said or chanted by the priest, and the assembled relatives of the couple and their guests join the newlyweds in a wedding dinner provided by the bride's family.

Most traditional Muslim weddings are arranged by the parents, who indicate to their children that they have been judged suitable to marry each other. Although (especially in contemporary times) the children have a right to decline their parents' choice of spouse, many Muslims still consider open courtship as undesirable and believe that the arranged marriage is much more morally acceptable. Most Muslim families prefer that their children marry within the faith of Islam, but in such countries as the United States, unions with non-Muslims have become more accept-

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**M**OST *traditional Muslim weddings are arranged by the parents.*

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Traditional Hindus continue the ancient practice of arranged marriage and infant betrothals. The primary concern of Hindu parents is that their child marry within his or her caste or social structure. For even less traditional Hindus, the kind of dating and courtship practices that exist among Americans and Europeans are discouraged. When families have agreed upon a future marriage between their children, there follows a long period of betrothal, during which gifts are exchanged during chaperoned meetings of the engaged couple. The date of a Hindu wedding

able and common. The exchange of the dowry, the ancient custom of the bride-price, is observed in most Muslim families. Once the amount of the dowry, which the groom will pay to the bride's parents, is agreed upon, that sum becomes the property of the bride.

The *nikah* (marriage ceremony) is usually performed in private homes or in the prayer hall of the mosque. Brides often wear a traditional *khameez* (tunic) and *shalwar* (pants), decorated with a great deal of gold jewelry. The groom may also choose traditional clothing or a dark suit.

On the day selected for the wedding, the couple are kept apart, separated in different rooms, the bride with the female guests, the groom with the male guests, until the ceremony is over. Either the *imam*, the officiating priest of the mosque, or a Muslim judge, called a *qadi*, presides over the ceremony and generally offers a brief series of reflections upon the sacredness of the marriage contract. The bride says that she wishes to marry the groom, and he signs the contract. Two witnesses attest to the marriage agreement, and the union is documented in the records of the mosque and by whatever license is required by the civil authorities in the state or nation in which the marriage has been solemnized. After the ceremony, a reception honoring the couple is held, and the bride's family hosts a large wedding feast.

*The Wedding Ring.* The origin of the wedding ring may have begun in primitive humankind's belief in the magic of a circle. Social historians inform that early suitors wove a cord with their fingers and bound it around the waist of the woman they wanted. Such an action, both the man and the woman believed, allowed her spirit to enter his body and thus the two were bound together forever.

Other scholars have made the unpleasant suggestion that the earliest form of wedding rings were the fetters bound around a woman's wrists and ankles to indicate that she had been captured and become the property of a man in the tribe.

From what can be ascertained from historical records available, it would appear that the ancient Egyptians were the first to use the wedding ring in taking their marriage vows. In

hieroglyphics a circle represents eternity, and the circular form became symbolic of a marriage that would be binding throughout all time.

The early Anglo-Saxon groom gave a pledge or *wed* to his intended at the betrothal ceremony. At this time he also placed a metal ring around her right hand, where it remained until the marriage ceremony, at which time it was transferred to her left hand.

The ring was used in Christian marriage ceremonies as early as 860. When a marriage settlement had been properly sealed, rings bearing the names of the bride and groom were handed around to the guests to be approved by them.

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ANCIENT Egyptians were the first to use the wedding ring.

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In the past, wedding rings have been made of every conceivable material. In addition to various metals, such as gold, silver, iron, steel, and brass, wedding rings have been made of leather and wood.

Old traditions state that the wedding ring is worn on the fourth finger of the left hand because a certain vein of blood, passing directly from this finger, flows directly to the heart. Probably the true reason for wearing the ring on this finger is that it is the least used of all the fingers, and therefore ornaments worn on it are not inconvenient.

*The Wedding Dinner.* The simplest and most universal of all marriage ceremonies is that of eating and drinking together. Eating together, among many early people, constituted marriage. There was little or no additional ceremony.

In the Fiji Islands the marriage ceremony was considered complete as soon as the bride and groom had eaten out of the same dish. In Madagascar as well, all that was necessary to become man and wife was to eat out of the same bowl. In ancient Rome, a marriage was dignified and solemnized once the bride and groom had eaten together. The Navajo mar-

riage couple ate maize pudding together. To some extent, eating and drinking together still forms an essential part of the marriage ceremony in Japan, Russia, and Scandinavia. Until recent times, a Serbian woman ate only once in her life with a man, and that was on her marriage day, when she shared a meal with her husband.

The wedding cake is a direct descendant of a particular kind of cake used in Roman times among the highest members of the patrician families. During the wedding feast, the cake was broken over the bride's head as a symbol of abundance. All guests then partook of a portion of the cake to ensure plentifulness for themselves. This custom survives in the belief that single women who take home a piece of a wedding cake and place it under their pillows will dream of the man whom they will marry.

According to legend, the many-tiered wedding cake with which most people are familiar today originated in Old England when it was the custom to pass a basket of biscuits to the guests during the wedding feast. A Frenchman who was in attendance at such a feast got the idea to pile a number of biscuits into a mound and pour icing over the top.

According to some sources, the name "bridegroom" was given to the new husband because among various peoples it was customary for him to serve his bride a meal on his wedding day. "Groom" signified one who served in an inferior station, and the "bridegroom" was the one who served the bride.

*Throwing Rice and Tossing the Bouquet.* When wedding guests throw handfuls of rice after the bride and groom, they are enacting an ancient ritual that expressed wishes for the couple's fruitfulness and abundance. However, rice was not always the grain used to throw after departing newlyweds. Among some early peoples wheat symbolized productivity, so grains of wheat were used in the marriage rites to symbolize fruitfulness and plenty for the couple. The ancient Greeks poured flour and sweetmeats over the bride and groom to represent a wish for an abundance of all that is sweet and desirable. The Romans began the custom of throwing, rather than pouring, sweet meats at the fleeing couple.

Some authorities state that people began throwing rice after newlyweds for the purpose of giving food to the evil spirits that were always present at any festive gathering of humans. It was to appease these spirits and keep them from doing injury to the bridal pair that the custom of rice-throwing was originated.

Another old tradition states that unless somehow bribed, the soul of the bridegroom is likely to fly away at marriage and never return. To prevent this, rice is scattered over him to induce the soul to remain.

The throwing of the bridal bouquet originated with the old custom of scrambling for the bride's garter. In fourteenth-century France, it was considered good luck to win the bride's garter, and everyone rushed for it at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony.

In the fifteenth century, the garter gave way to the stocking, and brides began tossing their stockings to the wedding party. However, the removal of one's stockings in public sometimes proved to be awkward and embarrassing, so somewhere during the fifteenth century, a modest and wise bride conceived the idea of throwing her bridal bouquet. The custom has endured, along with the tradition that the fortunate maiden who catches the bouquet will be the next to marry.

#### ✦ DELVING DEEPER

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#### HOSPITALITY AND ETIQUETTE

In primitive times, hospitality most often found expression in great feasts in honor of some momentous event or to pay homage to an important visitor. The Egyptians of 4,000 years ago feasted in great halls, offering food to their gods before they themselves touched a morsel. The Egyptians were fond of elaborate dinners as a form of entertainment, the serving of food continuing for several hours. Both men and women were invited, and dining couches and small tables were provided for the guests, who regaled themselves with dishes of fowl, game, fish, bread, and wine.

In Homer's *Iliad*, the Greeks are portrayed as hosts of magnificent banquets who celebrated with sumptuous feasts all important events in their lives, such as births, marriages, holidays, and victories in warfare.

During the days when the Roman Empire flourished, the feasts in Rome surpassed any others, because the wealthy had the food products that enabled them to dine in lavish style, and what delicacies they might have lacked, they sent for, sending their representatives throughout the known world to obtain choice fruits and viands. The Romans were noted for their hospitality. Nothing was too rich or too costly for the entertainment of their guests.

The ancient Israelites gave great feasts on special occasions, but their hospitality extended to strangers and to the poor as well as to important guests and to friends who would be likely to reciprocate. "When the Holy One loves a man," states the Zohar, Genesis 104a, "He sends him a present in the shape of a poor man, so that he might perform some good deed to him, through the merit of which he may draw to himself a cord of grace." In Deuteronomy 15:11, it is written that "You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy, and to the poor in the land."

Based on a cursory examination of hospitality from the historical perspective, it may appear that for centuries there were only two strata of society—the wealthy and the powerful who entertained lavishly and the laboring

classes who could share their bread only when they had some to spare. The poorer people could celebrate their marriages and births as best they could within their own family structures, but they were too vitally concerned with the daily task of survival to develop the art of hospitality.

However, as the major world religions developed into powerful forces that shaped human society, hospitality and charity became virtues. In order to establish a more complete relationship with the Divine, according to the prophets and teachers of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Taoism, and other faiths, it is important to recognize all people as brothers and sisters and to minister to their needs when the opportunity to do so presents itself. The Forty Hadith of an-Nawawi 15 (Islam) admonishes those who believe in Allah and in the Last Day to be generous to their neighbors and to their guests. In the Apastamba Dharma Sutra 8.2 (Hinduism) it is written that the husband and wife of the house should never turn away those who come to their door asking for food. And Hebrews 13:2 (Christianity) offers the provocative suggestion that people should not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, "for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

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*In Homer's Iliad, the Greeks are portrayed as hosts of magnificent banquets.*

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Table manners, even those considered the most basic rules of etiquette, were a long time in coming to human forebears. When a meal was simply an assortment of food set before hungry individuals, men and women ate to satisfy themselves as quickly as possible—and let the bones and bits of food fall where they may.

As food and the serving thereof became more elaborate and began to assume more of a social significance, the eating manners of the diners changed also. When forks and knives and other eating utensils first made their appearance on the dinner tables of the wealthy and the powerful, the process of eating a meal entered

the early stages of becoming transformed into more of a ceremony. Soon, arbiters of fashion were instructing others how to use their eating utensils and informing those men and women who were becoming conscious of the social significance of dining that some eating practices were correct and others were incorrect.

Later, when the use of knives and forks became more general, the common people began to pattern their behavior at the dinner table after the wealthy and powerful who had grown accustomed to using the implements. Although it was much easier to eat with their hands and a knife in the primitive manner of their ancestors, the lower social classes have always wished to pattern themselves in as many ways as possible with the wealthier classes. The new ways of eating with knife and fork, dinner plates and cups, and a certain ceremony in the dining process slowly left the courts and the dining rooms of the wealthy and eventually established themselves in the humblest of homes.

*Food Kinship.* From the earliest times, eating and drinking together has provided an elementary form of hospitality. Anthropologists have recorded that even in the most primitive of tribal cultures, once people have broken bread with strangers or taken a drink with them, they considered one another on peaceful terms. Once that relationship has been established, the people are under an obligation to protect one another if they are in danger.

In many of the villages on the Philippine Islands, hospitality and friendship are expressed by eating together. On Sumatra, a large island in western Indonesia, a guest is presented with betel nut as a gesture of friendliness. On Java, the main island of Indonesia, hosts of higher social rank pay their inferiors a high compliment if they offer them their half-chewed betel nut.

Throughout Tahiti, the standard formula for hospitality is "Come and eat with us." Among the tribespeople in Kenya, visitors to villages are presented with a cup of water as a ceremonial mark of hospitality, and the welcoming salutation is, "Let us be friends."

Among all cultures, in ancient or modern times, it has never been good form to refuse

the offer of food or drink. Around the world, to accept such an offer is considered an act of common politeness, whether one wants it or not. Among the nomadic Bedouins of the desert, it has always been considered a serious breach of etiquette to ride up to the front of a family's tent without stopping and eating their bread. According to the Bedouin code of manners, the man in the tent will consider himself insulted by such rudeness and will from that time on regard the other man as an enemy.

*Courtesy Toward Guests.* Historical records indicate that all important guests at the pharaoh's palace in Egypt had their names and symbols engraved on the "guest wall," just as modern guests inscribe their names in their hosts' guest book. Among the wealthy of Egypt, lunch was served at midday and dinner at night. When invited to dine in ancient Egypt, people brought along their servants, and it wasn't considered impolite for guests to bring with them whatever items of comfort that they might need during their stay.

The Egyptian hosts anointed their guests with oil upon their arrival. The host and hostess, together with their guests, dined while seated in long halls and were served by household slaves. The Egyptian hosts supplied one whole chair for each single guest, but a married couple had to share one between them. The highest in rank among the guests sat with the host at the head of the table. Everyone dipped bread into a common dish of oil and helped themselves to other food placed in the center of the table.

As soon as guests arrived in the home of an ancient Greek host, servants brought in vases of water so they might freshen themselves. After the guests had washed their hands and feet, they were given goblets of wine and stood around gossiping until summoned to dinner.

The Greeks ate three meals daily. Their tables were uncovered, and they ate while reclining on couches, using their fingers in primitive fashion. Water was provided several times during the course of the meal for washing the hands. The highest in rank had their hands washed first; the lowest, last.

Among the Romans there was usually a place of honor at the dining table. The highest in rank sat at the head, the next in rank at the upper end, and the third highest in social position sat at the lower end. All guests washed their hands at the table before eating, a ceremonial washing that began with the highest in rank and ended with the lowest.

Wealthy Romans rarely invited guests to their homes for the midday meal, but they frequently had visitors over in the evening for the most important meal of the day, consisting of from three to seven courses. The host and hostess gave each guest an exact list of the courses and all the individual dishes of the feast, and then they led their guests into the dining hall. As they were being seated, servants draped the members of the dinner party with a wreath of flowers and offered them a goblet of wine.

After a period of Roman history when chairs or stools were used around a table, the Romans adopted the dining couch. Generally, three couches were at a table, with one side left open to receive the service. Four people could dine comfortably from one couch. They were low, without backs, and covered with rich fabrics. The host and his wife sat at the head table with the guest of honor. The rest of the guests took places at the other tables according to rank.

In many of the old Arab nations, the host and hostess welcomed their guests by pouring melted butter on their heads. While the idea might seem repugnant to modern guests arriving at a home in a hot climate, the melted butter was deemed fashionable and refreshing in earlier times.

In Europe during the Middle Ages, favored guests always sat at the right of the host and were helped to the choicest cuts of meat, the rarest fruits, the costliest wines. The custom of "coupling" guests, that is, placing them at the table in pairs of men and women, was introduced about 1455 when it became fashionable to place a gentleman and a lady together to share a single cup and plate.

Whom to serve first may be a problem of some concern for the modern hostess, but among early people it was the custom for the

host to take the first bite to prove that the food was safe or free from poison. Among the aboriginal people of New Guinea, it is a mark of courtesy and hospitality to offer water to a stranger, but before doing so, the hosts drink a little of the water themselves to prove it is not dangerous in any way. Similar customs are to be found in many tribes of Africa, where the wife of the host is assigned the position of always taking the first drink of any beverage to prove that it has no evil in it. In medieval Europe, it was also the courteous hostesses who had the obligation to serve themselves first to prove that the food and drink was safe.

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*IT was the custom for the host to take the first bite to prove the food was free from poison.*

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*The Dinner Table.* Quite likely the first dinner table was a fairly flat slab of rock on which whatever game or fish had been caught was placed by a primitive hunter to be shared with his family. If such an early table did exist in a cave occupied by early humans, they probably sat on the floor or, at best, smaller rocks for chairs. The development of the dinner table and eating utensils grew along with the culinary arts when food was no longer eaten raw without preparation of any sort.

In ancient Rome, men and women reclined on couches while eating from beautifully decorated tables. Most of these dinner tables were square with four legs or oval with three connected legs, much like modern tables, except positioned lower for the convenience of diners who were reclining. The materials used for constructing such elaborate tables were at first wood, most commonly maple, and later bronze with inlaid ivory designs. Often the carpenter or metalworker fashioning the table shaped its legs to imitate those of various animals, complete with claws. Such a peculiarity remains popular today, for tables and other items of furniture are frequently made with clawed legs, often gripping a ball.

By around 400 C.E., it was an established custom among the people of the "civilized"

European countries to eat from some kind of table. The dinner table existed in various forms, however, and often was simply a board running around the side of the house. The mantelpiece is said to have originated with this old dining board.

Even by the 1700s, the dinner table in many of the poorer homes consisted only of a long wide board that was folded down from the wall and used at meal time. Many homes owned only one decent chair, and the head of the household, the father, was the one who got to sit in it while the rest of the family ate while sitting on the floor. On special occasions when a male guest was invited to share the meal, the father would relinquish his chair to him.

Although the chair reached a high degree of development among most of the European nations, it failed to gain much of a foothold among various other peoples.

*Eating Utensils.* Humankind's first eating utensil was some form of the spoon or the ladle. Museums display spoons of wood, stone, and ivory that were found in ancient Egyptian tombs. Spoon-like implements belonging to the Paleolithic Age have been found in caves in France and other European countries, thereby indicating that early humans used such eating utensils as far back as 100,000 or more years.

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HUMANKIND'S *first eating utensil was some form of the spoon or the ladle.*

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The Greeks and Romans used spoons of bronze and silver, some exquisitely wrought by the hands of master craftspersons. During the Middle Ages in Europe, the wealthy ate with elaborate spoons of beaten silver, but the materials used for making spoons by the poorer classes were bone, wood, and tin. The Chinese, in addition to their chopsticks, ate with little painted porcelain spoons.

The use of the knife and fork did not become widespread until about 300 years ago. Even at the magnificent French court of Louis

XIV (1638–1715), forks for eating purposes were unknown.

Although both knives and forks have been in existence since early times and were used as effective tools for many different purposes, it took centuries before anyone thought of using them at the dinner table. Some authorities suggest that the first “fork” early humans used was quite likely a long, two-pronged twig that was used to hold meat over the fire while it was cooking. Later, such prongs were made of iron or bone and were used for the same purpose.

The fork was not entirely unknown in medieval France, but it was used only on occasion for bringing large chunks of hot meat from the fire to the table. In England, the fork had been used through the Middle Ages as a utensil for eating fruits and preserves, but not at the table to eat one's dinner.

Based on the evidence of primitive cutting implements in archaeological digs dating back nearly a million years, even humankind's earliest ancestors used some kind of cutting implement. Perhaps those elementary tools were originally fragments of flint or other stone, but it seems clear that the knife, or some kind of cutting tool, was one of the first implements to be devised by early humans.

The knife took many forms and was made of many materials during the course of its development. The first knives were made of flint and bone and used for all cutting purposes. For centuries, whether the knife was made of flint, bronze, or steel, both men and women carried a knife in their belts or knapsacks. Whenever large portions of food were served, they sliced off a piece for themselves with their knives, and then returned the cutting implement to their belt or knapsack. But there was no such thing as a special knife to be used while eating dinner, whether seated at a table or on the floor.

As with the development of the dinner fork, the greatest advance in the history of the table knife took place after the seventeenth century. Silver knives for table use were introduced in England and became popular. Sheffield, England, became one of the greatest cutlery manufacturing centers in the world and has retained such a position with few challengers.

The earliest dinner plates were undoubtedly formed by nature, rather than humans. Perhaps primitive humans used a broad leaf, a halved gourd, or a sea shell in the same manner that one uses a cup or bowl. However, even in early prehistory, humans discovered the vast uses of clay and made for themselves jars, jugs, and drinking vessels.

Among the Greeks, Romans, Assyrians, and Egyptians, pottery developed into a fine art, and some of the examples still in existence today are in museums. The ancient people of Mexico and Peru, the Mayans and the Incans, also made beautiful pottery.

Although the human ancestors may have boasted many pots, jugs, plates, and even cups and saucers, the use of separate dishes for each person is comparatively recent. For many centuries, among rich and poor alike, food would be brought to the table on large platters and placed on the bare table. In wealthy homes, a steward or the host used a double-pronged fork and a large knife to carve the meat on the platter, and then, whether in a banquet hall or in a home, the assembled diners used their fingers to pick up the pieces they wished. Fruit and bread loaves were placed in baskets on the floor by the tables, and people helped themselves as they liked.

Eventually, those families with money in Europe and England bought dinner plates made of pewter. However, food with a high acid content caused some of the lead used in the process of creating pewter to be absorbed into the meal, causing lead poisoning and often death. The more observant began to notice that these terrible consequences after eating from pewter plates occurred most often with tomatoes, so for hundreds of years the tomato was considered poisonous.

The poorer families could not afford pewter plates, but they used trenchers, a piece of wood with the center scooped out, as bowls to hold their food. Unfortunately, in those days hygiene was virtually unknown, so the trenchers were seldom cleaned, and often worms and mold got into the wood and spread diseases called "trench mouth" to unsuspecting diners.

*Hand Washing and Bathing.* It is known that among the early Greeks it was considered

ill-mannered to attempt to recline at the dinner table before visiting with the other guests and washing one's hands. Servants brought in vessels of water so that the custom of hand washing could be observed by all the guests, and not until they had done so were they permitted to dine.

The Romans washed their hands before and after dinner. Small basins were provided for guests for this purpose, and it was a common practice to drop a flower into the water to make it fragrant. This custom has survived today in many homes and restaurants in which a finger bowl with a flower petal in the water is brought to guests between courses of the meal or after they have finished eating.

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EGYPTIANS *servants anointed the guest's head with oil and washed their hands.*

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Egyptians were welcomed to a dinner party by a special servant who anointed their head with oil and washed their hands. Sometimes the process was repeated during the course of the dinner; and before guests left the table, their hands were washed again.

The Hebrews made of a special ceremony of hand washing, and it was strictly observed that all people washed their hands before eating a meal, after returning from a funeral, and before making a burnt offering or a sacrifice at the temple.

A combination of superstition and misapplied religious fervor concerning nudity, modesty, and the frequency of bathing made medieval Europe a place where personal hygiene almost became a forgotten practice of the ancients. Even the more well-to-do families took "all-over" baths only twice a year, in May and October.

The biannual bath would take place in a large tub filled with hot water. The father, the head of the household, would be the first to bathe, enjoying clean, warm water. The sons would be next. After all of the men, including any visiting male relatives or guests, had their

turn, the woman of the house, followed by any female children, would get to splash in water that had become quite cool and dirty. Babies of the household would be the very last to be dunked in the tub, and by then the water was so dark that mothers were warned not to throw their babies out with the bath water.

Women kept their hair covered at all times. Men shaved their heads and wore wigs, but only the wealthy could afford wigs of good quality. Rather than washing the wigs, it was fashionable to place the wig in a hollowed-out loaf of bread and bake it in the oven. The heat would make the wig puff up and become fluffy, which gave birth to the expression of “Big Wig” to describe a person of power or wealth.

Because they seldom washed their faces, many women and men had developed unsightly acne scars by the time they had reached adulthood. It became customary to spread bee’s wax over the facial skin to smooth out rough complexions.

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**E**ARLY peoples offered a prayer as an exorcism before eating to distract any negative spirits that might have infested the food.

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*Asking the Blessing.* The custom of saying a prayer before eating did not originate as an expression of thankfulness or gratitude to a deity. Early peoples offered a prayer that was a kind of exorcism before eating in order to distract any negative spirits that might have infested the food. Rather than thanking a deity for the blessing of giving them food to satisfy their hunger, the diners exhorted any negative entities to leave their food alone and to satisfy their hunger elsewhere.

Before a feast of celebration for a victory over their foes or the rewards of a successful hunt, primitive peoples often made sacrifices to their gods to be certain that the foods upon which they intended feasting would not poison them. From this custom of sacrifice and prayer before a feast, it seems likely that the practice of offering a prayer or asking a bless-

ing before every meal became a custom that would eventually be practiced by the followers of all major world religions.

The Israelites appear to have been among the first to offer prayer before eating out of gratitude for having food to eat. “Surely it is of what belongs to God that you have eaten. So praise and bless Him by whose word the world was created,” Father Abraham admonished (Talmud, Sota 10b).

Born into the Jewish tradition before his conversion to Christianity, Paul writes to the church in Ephesus that “God created foods to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth... nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer” (I Timothy 4:3–5).

In the Koran, the holy book of Islam, it is written, “Eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to God” (Koran 2:172).

*The Toast.* Most authorities agree that the custom of drinking to the health of a person originated with the practice of the host or hostess drinking first to show that the drink was not harmful. As the tradition progressed, it came to indicate a gesture of friendship and good will to the guest.

The Roman and the Greek hosts drank to the health of their guests, and both customs were likely to have originated as a means of proving that the wine was not poisoned. Neither a Greek nor a Roman gentleman would pass a cup of wine to a friend without having first tasted of it to prove its safety. It was such a custom that developed through the ages into the tradition of men drinking together as a pledge to friendship, fraternity, and good cheer. It was also a custom among the young men of Rome to drink as many glasses of wine as there were letters in their sweethearts’ names.

Controversy exists over how the gesture of taking the first drink to prove it was safe or to salute one’s friendship to a guest became known as a “toast.” Some believe that sometime during the reign of Charles II of England (1630–1685; reigned 1660–85), a piece of toasted bread was accidentally dropped in a large pitcher of wine while guests were being served at a royal ban-

quet, and a witty courtier remarked that although he was unable to drink any more wine, he could at least have the toast.

Others believe that the word, in connection with drinking to one's health, originated in eighteenth-century England in the custom of gentlemen sitting around a fireside, drinking and toasting bread on the hearth. A sip of drink and a bite of warm toast combined to offer a gesture of good will, friendship, and good health to one's companions.

Drinking toasts from a lady's slipper dates back to the eighteenth century. In certain parts of Hungary it was the custom for a groom to drink a toast to his bride out of her slipper on the wedding night. The slipper was removed from the bride's foot in front of all the assembled guests, filled with wine, and given to the groom. He made a toast to his bride, drank the wine, and threw the slipper to the guests.

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#### BURIALS AND FUNERALS

No one can possibly derive an exact date when early humans first began to bury their dead. Controversy continues on the question of whether or not certain skeletal remains found in the caves of Neanderthals indicate that some kind of burial ceremony was conducted for the dead around 200,000 years ago.

Neither can anyone pinpoint for certain when the concept of an afterlife first occurred to primitive humans. It might be conjectured that when early humans had realistic dreams of friends or relatives who were dead, they might have awakened convinced that the departed somehow still existed in some other world. Such an idea, whenever it first occurred, was undoubtedly taken as reassuring and comforting. The belief that there was something within them that survived physical death was an exciting promise that eventually spread to humans everywhere throughout the planet.

Anthropologists and other scientists of human evolution relate that the early humans' concept of the soul or the spirit was often that of either a miniature or a full-sized reproduction of the person who had died. The Huron, a Native American tribe, believed that the spirit had arms, legs, head, and torso just like the person from whom it had been released by death. The Nootka, a tribe that occupied Vancouver Island, British Columbia, conceived of the soul as a tiny person who lived within a person's head and who was set free when its host body succumbed to death.

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Many native people in Peru, Brazil, and other South American countries think of the soul as a birdlike entity that can fly from the body at will and often does so during sleep. When the soul returns, the sleeper awakens. Should the soul neglect to return, the sleeper enters the long sleep of death.

As more members of the early human communities began to believe that the spirit was to continue in another life and might some day return to the body it had once occupied, it began to occur to many cultures that it was necessary to take every precaution to protect their dead from being desecrated either by humans or by animals. There have been many kinds of coffins, just as there have been many customs of burial. Clay, stone, wood, even iron coffins have been used to protect the body from predators and grave robbers.

One of the earliest types of coffin was a tree that had been cut down and hollowed out to accommodate the body. Depending upon the people and the environmental conditions under which they existed, tree coffins bearing the dead were sometimes set adrift in a river, sometimes left upon the ground, sometimes buried in the ground. For many ancient peoples, the custom of placing the dead in a tree trunk was symbolical of being returned to the Great Mother, the tree of life.

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*In Africa, many native people smoke their corpses to preserve them.*

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As the belief in a spirit and in an afterlife grew, people began to develop fixed concepts about where it was exactly that spirits went to dwell after their life on Earth was completed. In the ancient Greek afterlife beliefs, the dead were ferried over the river Styx by Charon, who charged a fee for his services. If the dead did not have the fee, they would be detained for a hundred years before being permitted to proceed. Therefore, when the Greeks buried their dead, they placed a small coin in their hands so they might be able to pay Charon. A similar idea of the dead needing some ready currency for their advent to the other world is found among the Chinese, who furnish the dead with paper money and passports.

The religious service associated with many modern funerals quite likely originated in the belief that death is but a journey to another world and that certain ceremonies may be per-

formed by the living to expedite the spirit's travels and to lessen the dangers of the journey. Among the earliest type of structured burial observances are people dancing for purposes of stamping upon the ground to frighten away evil spirits and to keep them from harassing the soul of the dearly departed. Great feasts were given to please the spirit of the deceased, who watched over the lavish dinner given in his or her honor and who was able to absorb the energy of the food. Large fires were built around the place of feasting in order to present an additional barrier to evil spirits that might wish to seize the soul of the dead.

The fear of evil spirits also gave rise to the universal dread of cemeteries and the belief that burial grounds are haunted. As shall be shown in this section, many early funeral observances were transformed into aspects of religious ceremonies that still exist today.

*Preserving the Body.* As early religions began to teach that there was a spirit within each person who died that might some day wish to return to its earthly abode, it became increasingly important that efforts be made to preserve the body. Burial ceremonies, which had at first been intended solely as a means of disposing of the dead, came to be a method of preserving the physical body as a home for the spirit when it returned for a time of rebirth or judgment.

Today, in many countries such as the United States, Canada, Great Britain, and the European nations, bodies are embalmed and every effort is made to preserve the body as long as possible. Coffins are sold to the bereaved families as dependable containers that will be able to preserve and protect the body of their beloved for centuries. Crypts and vaults to contain family coffins are placed above ground and constructed of concrete or granite.

Embalming the body of the deceased was practiced in ancient Egypt where the warm, dry climate assured its success. The Egyptians anointed, embalmed, and buried their dead, and made mummies of the men and women of power, rank, and importance.

To mummify, the Egyptians extracted the brain and the intestines, cleaned out the body through an incision in the side, and filled the body cavities with spices. The body was then



sewn up and set aside to lie in salt for a period of 70 days. Then it was placed in gummied mummy cloth and fastened into its ornamental case. The poorer classes were not mummified but merely salted.

In Africa, many native people smoke their corpses to preserve them. In the Congo, tribes build fires above the graves of the dead and keep the fires burning for a month. After that period, the bodies are unearthed, smoked, and wound in great swaths of cloth. The smoked corpse is placed upright in the hut where the person died and remains there for years.

*Laying the Body to Rest.* The followers of Tao, a Chinese belief system, envision the soul of the deceased crossing a bridge to the next life. Ten courts of judgment await the new soul, and if it passes this series of trials, it may continue on the path to heaven. If it fails because of bad deeds during the person's lifetime, the soul must be punished before it is allowed to go to a better place.

The family and friends of the deceased place the body in a wooden coffin and carry it to the graveyard. Well aware of the trials awaiting the soul of their friend or relative in the afterlife, they pound drums, clang cymbals, and shoot off fireworks to frighten away any evil spirits that might attempt to catch the soul even before it reaches the 10 courts of judgment. Beside the grave as the coffin is being lowered into the ground, paper representations of houses, money, and other material objects are burned, symbolically providing the soul of the deceased with property with which to pay the judges.

After 10 years have passed, the coffin is dug up, and the remains are cleaned and placed in an urn, which is then sealed. A Taoist priest assesses the home of the person's immediate family and decides the most harmonious spot for the urn of bones to be placed. It is of utmost importance that the priest find a place where the spirit of the deceased will be happy among its surviving family members, or the spirit may return to punish those it deems disrespectful of its physical remains.

For Buddhists, funerals are happy occasions, for they believe in reincarnation. Death in the present life frees the soul from *Dukkha*

(worldly existence) and returns it to the path that leads to nirvana, where all misery and karma cease. The coffin of one who has died in the Buddhist belief system is taken to the funeral hall in a brightly decorated carriage. The coffin is carried three times around the Buddhist temple or funeral hall and then brought in where it is set down in the midst of the flowers and gifts that friends and family of the deceased have placed around it.

A Buddhist monk leads the people in a prayer known as the Three Jewels that helps the soul find refuge in the Buddha, the dharma (the true way of life that a devout Buddhist seeks to lead), and the sangha (the unified faith of the Buddhist monks). Together with the people in the funeral hall, the monk recites the Five Precepts, the rules by which Buddhists strive to live.

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FOR Buddhists, funerals are happy occasions, for they believe in reincarnation.

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Throughout the ceremony, food is served and music is played. There are few tears of mourning, for the family and friends are reminded by the monk that the soul will be reborn many times in many bodies. After the service, the body is cremated, and the ashes are buried or kept in the temple in a small urn.

Because Christians believe that Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.—c. 30 C.E.) is the son of God who died on a cross on Good Friday and who rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, the followers of this religion believe that if they have faithfully followed the teachings of Jesus, they, too, will be physically resurrected on a future day of judgment. Generally, the body of the deceased is embalmed in a funeral home, then taken in a coffin to a church for a religious service before burial or cremation. In many churches, the deceased is displayed for mourners to pay their last respects until the formal service begins.

The minister or priest conducts a service during which selections from the Bible that speak of the resurrection of the dead are read,

prayers are offered, and hymns are sung. If it is a Roman Catholic funeral, the priest will celebrate the Mass in remembrance of the last meal that Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion. After the service is concluded, pallbearers carry the closed coffin to a hearse, which carries it to the place of burial. Family and friends follow on foot or in automobiles in a funeral procession to the cemetery where the coffin is lowered into the ground.

During an earlier period of Christianity, the priest used to place a pass to the next world on the chests of those who had died in the faith as they lay in the coffin. Such a pass also provided the deceased person's Christian name, the dates of birth and death, and a certificate of baptism, piety of his or her life, and a testimonial that the person had taken the sacrament of communion before death.

There is an old legend that Jesus was placed in the tomb facing toward the west. While some Christian traditions bury their dead facing west, many other churches within Christianity place their dead looking toward the east, because of the old custom of facing the east when praying. Interestingly, the aboriginal people of Australia believe that the sun will rise late in the morning if the dead are not buried with their faces to the west. The people of the islands of Samoa and Fiji bury their dead with their faces directed toward the west, where, according to custom, their souls have preceded them.

Many scholars believe the Christian minister's tradition of throwing handfuls of dirt on the coffin lid while intoning "from ashes to ashes, from dust to dust," is a survival of a custom in ancient Egypt in which relatives and friends of deceased persons ceremonially cast sand three times upon the body before it was entombed or buried.

The coffin has taken many shapes and forms in its evolution as a final resting place for the deceased. Many authorities attribute the presence of trees in the churchyard or cemetery to ancient notions concerning a hollowed-out tree as a dwelling place for the spirits of the dead. In Babylonia, great boxes of clay were baked to form a kind of coffin in which the dead were buried.

The first actual coffins, as they are known today, probably originated in ancient Egypt where the people believed that the body of the deceased must be kept safe until a future time of resurrection. The Egyptian word for "coffin" is from *kas*, which means "to bury." Another form of the word became *kast*, indicating the receptacle into which the body is placed, the coffin.

In the Hindu faith, the deceased are given a ceremonial washing; then the body is wrapped in a burial cloth and placed in a coffin. If at all possible, within one day of death, the coffin is to be carried to a place of cremation by six male relatives. The coffin is placed on a stack of wood and covered with flowers. Melted butter is poured over the coffin to help it to burn, and the eldest son or nearest male relative of the deceased lights the funeral pyre.

Traditionally, the cremation takes place outdoors and the ashes are collected and scattered in the waters of a holy river, such as the Ganges. In other countries, Hindu dead are taken to a crematorium. Followers of the Hindu religion believe that the soul, the *atman* of each individual, is reborn many times in a cycle of spiritual evolution before it can become one with God.

Those who follow the path of Judaism bury their dead in a plain coffin after the body has been washed and dressed. If possible, the funeral takes place on the day after the death has occurred. The coffin containing the deceased is taken first to the synagogue and then to the place of burial. Mourners often cut a portion of their outer clothes as a sign of grief; but no flowers are allowed, for it is tradition that the service should be kept as simple as possible.

At the grave site, the rabbi says a few words of remembrance about the deceased, and the coffin is placed in the grave. The closest male relative of the deceased says a prayer called the *Kaddish* to help the soul travel to the *Olam Ha'ba*, the world to come, and the family of the dead person fill in the grave with earth.

Muslims prefer not to use coffins for their dead unless they are residing in a country that requires such a containment for the deceased.

If it is possible to do so, the dead are buried on the day following their death. The deceased is washed, perfumed, and wrapped in three cotton burial cloths.

Those who follow the religion of Islam believe that the soul of the deceased is guarded by the angel of death in a place called *Barzakh* until the Day of Judgment. If at all possible, friends and relatives gather around a dying person and read verses from the Koran. With his or her last breath, the dying person always tries to say the *Shahadah*: "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger."

Large graves and headstones are not permitted to mark a Muslim burial site, but the grave itself is to be raised above ground level. As the body is being taken to the burial ground, the *Salatul Janazah*, a prayer for the deceased, is read. The body is buried facing Mecca, the sacred city toward which all Muslims turn when they pray.

In times of death, the human tendency seems to be to relieve in some way the tension caused by fear, superstition, and the dread of the unknown. Among the most well known of such traditions of holding a celebration to honor the deceased is the Irish wake. According to an old legend, when St. Patrick (fifth century) was dying he requested his weeping and lamenting friends to set aside their grief and to rejoice at his comfortable exit from a world of sadness, sin, and confusion. In order to better shift the emotions from sorrow to joy, St. Patrick is said to have instructed each person gathered around his deathbed to take a drop of something to drink. This last request of the saint is observed in deep reverence at every Irish wake.

The charming story of St. Patrick aside, some authorities believe that the Irish wake was intended originally to prevent the dead person's restless soul from prowling around the homes of the surviving family members. Friends and relatives would gather in the family home as the body of the deceased lay in its coffin awaiting burial. Once respects were said and memories of the deceased were shared, the mourners would eat, drink, and dance to relieve the tensions and fears of the bereaved.

The party would last until dawn so there would always be someone who was awake to watch the body and keep the soul from doing mischief.

Yet another theory of the origin of the wake has it that because lead cups were often used to drink ale or whiskey, the potent combination would sometimes literally knock a person out for a couple of days. A friend walking along the road from the tavern might come upon an unconscious person and assume that he was dead. The apparently deceased would be carried home and laid out on the kitchen table for a day or so before being prepared for burial. Family and friends would gather around the body, eating, drinking, and talking, as they waited to see if the corpse on the table was going to "wake up."

*Marking the Burial Place.* The marking of graves goes back into remote antiquity. Paleolithic humans (c. 250,000 B.C.E.) placed stones and other markings on graves, but it cannot be determined for certain whether they did so to keep evil spirits from rising from the burial place or to be able to distinguish one grave from another for the purpose of mourning. In the Neolithic time period (c. 8000–9000 B.C.E.) humans set up great stone megaliths above burial mounds; these protected the dead from desecration and quite likely had certain religious significance.

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## A Muslim's body is buried facing Mecca.

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The ancient Hebrews buried their dead and used stone pillars to mark the graves. The Greeks often placed gravestones and various kinds of ornate sculpture on their burial sites.

Not everyone who died in ancient Egypt was buried in a tomb. Although the Egyptians believed firmly in an afterlife, they were also of the opinion that only the powerful and important in the earthly life would have any notable status in the world to come. According to rank and wealth, those who were great in Egypt and therefore likely to be important in the next life

were laid to rest in magnificent tombs with treasure, servants, food, and weapons to accompany them and the ordinary people were buried in rude stone compartments.

The rulers of the ancient city of Thebes, once capital of upper Egypt (1580–1085 B.C.E.), and their subjects never constructed massive pyramids to house their coffins, but cut their tombs from rock. As soon as a pharaoh would ascend the throne, his loyal subjects began the preparation of his tomb. Excavation went on uninterruptedly, year by year, until death ended the king's reign and simultaneously the work on his tomb—which also became a kind of an index revealing the length of his reign. These tombs, cut from the rock in the mountains in Upper Egypt, are still to be seen.

The Assyrians (c. 750–612 B.C.E.) dug huge excavations that sometimes reached a depth of 60 feet into which they cast the bodies of their dead, one upon the other. Even when they began to place their dead in coffins, the Assyrians continued to pile one above the other in great excavations.

The Iberians, the original people who inhabited the peninsula where modern-day Portugal and Spain exist, buried their leaders with great pomp and ceremony in chambers made of huge stones, covered over with earth. The bodies were placed in these megalithic chambers in a sitting posture. The Aryans, an Indo-European people, burned their dead and placed the ashes in urns shaped like rounded huts with thatched roofs.

Decorating graves with flowers and wreaths is an old custom that appears to date back to the earliest human burial observances. Wreaths made of thin gold have been found in Athenian graves during archaeological excavations. The Egyptians adorned their mummies with flowers, and paintings on the walls of tombs depict the mourners carrying flowers in their hands.

A custom in sixteenth-century Europe was to make wreaths of flowers from ribbon and paper and give them to the church in memory of the deceased. These artificial wreaths of long ago evolved into the contemporary mourning wreath of living flowers, usually brought by friends or relatives of the deceased and placed upon the grave.

*Cremation.* Because early humankind so feared the evil spirits that caused death and believed that they continued to dwell in the corpse awaiting new victims, it is not surprising that cremation, the burning of the body, became one of the earliest methods of disposing of the dead. Cremation appears to have been practiced widely in the ancient world, except in Egypt, in China, and among the Hebrews.

In ancient Greece only suicides, infants who had not yet grown teeth, and persons who had been struck by lightning were denied the privilege of cremation and were buried. When cremation was conducted, the ceremonies were elaborate and solemn and the ashes of the deceased were placed in urns of burned clay and buried. Later, when burial became the custom in Greece, the bodies were enclosed in elaborate stone caskets, similar to the Roman sarcophagi.

The Vikings of old Scandinavia sometimes buried their kings and queens in their ships, but the traditional Viking funeral was to set the dragon-headed longboat afire and send it out to sea to burn. On the Danish colony of Greenland, the Vikings who settled on its shores believed that there was danger of pollution from the evil spirits that lurked around the corpse until the smell of death had passed away. They burned the dead body almost before it became cold and tried to avoid inhaling any of the fumes from the fire. They also burned every object in the dead person's house.

The Zulu tribe of Africa always burns the property of the dead to prevent evil spirits from remaining in the person's home. Many Native American tribes followed the same custom of burning the possessions of the deceased, and it is not uncommon to hear of contemporary men and women who, after the funeral of a relative, superstitiously burn the individual's clothes and other belongings.

Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs employ cremation as a standard method of disposing of the dead. In India the body is cremated on a funeral pyre whenever possible, and in ancient times widows were sacrificed alive on the burning pyres with their husbands.

For many centuries, the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body discouraged the

custom of cremation. The early followers of Christianity feared that if the body were to be burned after death there would be nothing but ashes to be resurrected on Judgment Day. Although cremation is not popular among contemporary Christians, many theologians have argued that the same power of Christ that can resurrect the body that has decomposed in the grave could also resurrect the body that has been cremated and reduced to ashes.

*Remembering the Dead.* Among the original people of Patagonia in South America, it was the custom to open the coffins of the dead and redress them each year on the anniversary of the person's death. The same custom is found among the Eskimo, who annually take new clothes as a gift to the dead. Among many Native American tribes in earlier times, the widow was obligated to remain beside the tomb of her deceased husband for a year, while other family members brought food daily for her and for the spirit of the dead man.

The ancient Egyptians shaved their heads in time of mourning, and for a certain period abstained from mixing with any other than their immediate family. When it came to looking after the needs of their deceased in the afterlife, the Egyptians provided weapons, food, drink, furniture—all went into the tomb with the mummy. Wealthy Egyptians were buried with their slaves so they might be certain of good service in the next life. Frequently, a child was buried alive with a dead parent so the parent would not miss the child left behind on Earth.

In ancient Rome, those who had lost a loved one to death remained at home and avoided all feasts and amusements. The men cut neither their hair nor their beard. For several weeks, those who mourned did not socialize with friends or relatives, remaining only with their immediate family.

Today, black is considered the universal color of mourning, because of the age-old traditions of somberness associated with it. However, in Japan and in China, pure white is worn when mourning. In some sections of Africa, red is the color of mourning, with red paint applied to the naked body.

Among various tribes of equatorial Africa, tattooing and mutilating of the bodies of family

members are practiced for purposes of indicating that one of their loved ones has been taken by death. The people of the Andaman Islands, in the eastern part of the Bay of Bengal, disinter the body after it has been buried long enough to decompose, then wear the bones of the dead to indicate mourning. While they wear these bones, it is considered taboo to approach them and to interfere with their grief.

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**BLACK** is considered the universal color of mourning.

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In earlier times, it was customary for the Hindu widow to throw herself upon her deceased husband's funeral pyre. Today, she may shave her head, give away her valuable possessions, retire from social life, and spend the rest of her life performing menial duties for the family of her late husband. Among some Native American tribes of North America it was customary to cut the hair of widows and forbid them to remarry until the hair had grown again to its original length. The Chickasaws decreed that the widow was obliged to live a single life for three years. Navajo beliefs stated that a widow must live in retirement for a certain period before she could marry.

Although many early humans in various societies around the world observed the responsibility of providing the necessities of life for their dead until they felt the soul had become accustomed to its new spiritual environment, there are a number of religions and cultures today that continue to remember their dead by conducting certain rituals that extend far beyond a few weeks of bringing food and drink to the grave.

On the day after a follower of the Hindu faith has been cremated, friends bring various gifts to his or her relatives. On the 11th or 12th day after the cremation, all those who attended the funeral service gather once again to offer a meal of rice balls and milk to the spirit of the deceased. This custom is a form of reciprocity to the departed for all the acts of kindness that he or she performed during life.

For the next week after a member of the Jewish faith has died, the family mourns, "sitting *shiva*," conducting religious services in the home. During this time, friends bring them food and express their condolences. The next month, a period known as *sheloshim*, the family does not go out to any type of entertainment. For the next 11 months (*shanah*), they say the prayer of *Kaddish* every day. Each year on the anniversary of their loved one's death, they pray the *Kaddish* and burn a candle for 24 hours in memory of the deceased.

Muslim people mourn for their dead for three months after the burial service. It is customary for families to read aloud from the Koran and to pray for the deceased loved one.

Each year the Taoist Chinese hold the festival of Ching-Ming to honor the memory of the dead. Many Christian Hispanic nations celebrate an annual Day of the Dead, and in the United States, All Hallows' Eve, Halloween, rather than a night of trick-or-treat, is traditionally a time to pray for those loved ones who are deceased.

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## URBAN LEGENDS AND BELIEFS

Urban legends are unverifiable stories about outlandish, humorous, frightening, or supernatural events that have achieved wide circulation. In some instances, the stories are based on actual occurrences that have in their telling and retelling been exaggerated or distorted. Other urban legends have their origins in people misinterpreting or misunderstanding stories that they have heard or read in the media or heard from actual witnesses of an event. The one commonality that all urban legends share is the claim that the story always happened to someone else, most often "a friend of a friend."

On March 30, 2002, the Pennsylvania State Police issued a warning to citizens of that state, advising them to question unsubstantiated allegations and accounts of various criminal acts, because a large number of hoaxes had achieved wide circulation due to e-mail, various websites, and faxes. The police illustrated their point by showing how the urban legend of the "Knock-Out Perfume," which originally told of several women who had been rendered unconscious and robbed as a result of criminals giving them phony perfume samples, became transformed after September 11, 2001, into terrorists having killed women by sending poison perfume samples through the mail. The poisonous perfume story eventually became accounts of anthrax that was supposedly being sent by terrorists to Pennsylvania residents on a mass scale.

Folklorists and other experts who collect urban legends point out that such accounts of allegedly true occurrences differ from actual

news stories or historical events in that they have a completely developed storyline—an actual beginning, middle, and end. Urban beliefs are most often accusations, claims, or frightening assertions that are directed at individuals, religious groups, corporations, or political organizations.

To illustrate the difference between an urban legend and an urban belief, take the example of the terrorists and the poisonous perfume. An urban legend would begin by affirming that the story is true and that it happened to a woman who was known by a friend. It would go on to give her name and describe how she innocently opened a package sent to her through the mail and how she sampled the perfume that she found inside. The story would conclude with a recounting of the tragic demise of the victim. An urban belief, rather than providing an illustrative anecdote, would simply state that all women must be suspicious of any package sent to them by a perfume company, because it is known to be true that terrorists are targeting American women with poisoned perfume.

The Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation issued certain guidelines to aid people in detecting an urban legend:

- If the story has a beginning, middle, end, and a punchline, it is likely to be an urban legend.
- If the story begins with the affirmation that it is true and happened to a friend, it is probably not an account of an actual event.
- If one has heard the same or similar story from several different sources, but with different names and details, it is probably an urban legend.
- If there is no real evidence to support the story or its allegations, it is likely to be false.

While most urban legends and Internet myths are basically a nuisance to law enforcement officers who are often called to investigate the truth of such accounts, such false stories and hoaxes do consume time, energy, and finances. Although spokespersons for the Federal Bureau of Investigation have stated that no statistics are maintained on how many

hoaxes are investigated, in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, nearly every story concerning poisons, anthrax, or other noxious substances sent through the mail was taken seriously and checked.

Many urban legends are recycled stories and continually updated. A story that was in wide circulation in the 1950s will achieve a new birth in the twenty-first century and fool people all over again. Barbara Mikkelson, who maintains the Urban Legends Research Centre, theorizes that such revisions of old stories are done by people who heard them years ago and were frightened or amused by them and thereby wish to retell the old legends in a way that puts their own imprint upon the stories. In other instances, she comments, many legends were originated by people who wished “to appear more knowledgeable or more informed on a subject than might truly be the case.”

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Mentioned here are the more familiar urban legends and beliefs, all of which have been told and retold as true occurrences that happened to real people.

#### **DEADLY REPTILES IN THE IMPORTED CARPETS**

*The story:* A woman went shopping in a new department store that had recently opened near her home. As she was admiring the vast display of imported carpets and running a hand over the fabric, she felt a sudden sharp prick in the hand that was holding the bunched material. Thinking the small wound on her hand to have been caused by the bristles of the new carpet, she continued to examine the display. A few moments later, she felt dizzy and faint and collapsed in the carpet department. Judging by her wan color and her difficulty in breathing, the store called an ambulance, fearing that she suffered a heart attack.

Fortunately for the stricken woman, a doctor at the hospital had experience in Asia and recognized her symptoms as having been caused by a poisonous snake indigenous to that part of the world. When employees of the department store cautiously checked the new shipment of imported carpets, they discovered a number of the deadly snakes that had somehow unknowingly been shipped with the merchandise. The woman recovered from the bite and sued the department store for negligence.

A variation of this urban legend has the woman handling some imported baskets that have just arrived at the department store. She screams and drops to the floor. She is rushed to the hospital but is dead upon arrival. The doctors recognize the symptoms of snake bite, and when the employees of the store investigate, they find a deadly poisonous snake coiled at the bottom of the last basket the woman was examining.

Yet a third version of the snakes at the department store has a woman trying on some clothes that have just arrived from an Asian nation. She pulls on a coat and stands before the mirror, evaluating the fit. Deciding against the purchase, she places the coat back on the hanger and returns home. That night, she experiences a strange swelling on her shoulder and begins to feel ill. When her husband takes her to the emergency room, the wound is diagnosed as a bite from an unknown kind of snake. The next day she returns to the store, picks up the same coat that she had tried on the previous evening, and in the presence of the store manager finds a small snake nestled in a shoulder pad.

This urban legend was first circulated in the early 1970s and has continued to be repeated in its several versions. Some believe that the myth was begun as a way of discouraging shoppers from patronizing the large discount department stores that featured merchandise imported from overseas markets.

#### THE FABULOUS COOKIE RECIPE

*The story:* A woman and her daughter finished their salad at a Neiman-Marcus cafe in Dallas, Texas, and because they were both such cookie lovers, they decided to try the “Neiman-

Marcus” cookie. The cookie was so excellent that the woman asked if she might have the recipe. The waitress rather haughtily informed her that the recipe could not be given away freely, but it might be bought for two-fifty.

The woman was thrilled, considering “two-fifty” to be \$2.50 and a great deal. However, when she received her credit card statement, she was shocked to see that the Neiman-Marcus charge was \$285.00 with “Cookie Recipe: \$250.00” clearly marked on the bill.

The woman called the Neiman-Marcus accounting department to complain, and she was soundly rebuffed. She was told that the waitress had duly informed her that the recipe could be bought for “two-fifty” and she was naive to think that such a treasured list of ingredients could be purchased for \$2.50. She was warned not to call the Better Business Bureau or the Texas Attorney General’s office, and not even to think of trying to get even or to get her money back.

“All right,” the woman told them, hatching a scheme to get revenge for such an exorbitant bill, “you’ve got my \$250.00, now I’m going to have \$250.00 worth of fun. I’m going to send your famous cookie recipe to every cookie lover in the United States who has an e-mail account.”

An alleged recipe for Neiman-Marcus cookies is then provided to the e-mail recipient with the instructions that it should be sent on to every person he or she knows who has an e-mail address.

While many recipients of such an e-mail undoubtedly follow the recipe included and produce a good-tasting cookie, the recipe does not come from Neiman-Marcus. There is no “Neiman-Marcus cafe” at any of the famous department store’s three Dallas-area outlets. In its restaurants, named the Zodiac, Zodiac at North Park, and The Woods, the staffs do not sell recipes, but give them away free to any customer who may inquire about a particular item on the menu.

There wasn’t even a “Neiman-Marcus cookie” until quite recently when, in a good-natured response to the widespread urban legend, the company developed a chocolate chip cookie and freely gives away its recipe.



This popular urban legend of an ordinary woman getting revenge on a corporate giant has been around in one form or another since the late 1940s. It began shortly after the end of World War II (1945) with a woman being charged with an exorbitant bill after requesting the recipe for fudge cake from a railroad diner car. In the 1960s, the legend evolved to a woman customer receiving a bill for \$350.00 from New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel for a dessert known as "Red Velvet Cake." In the 1970s, Mrs. Fields became the villain for having sold the recipe for chocolate chip cookies to a customer for \$250.00. The story regarding Mrs. Fields became so widely circulated that in 1987 the company issued a public denial, insisting that all of their cookie recipes remained trade secrets. In each of the fictional instances, the urban legend had it that an ordinary person who had been taken advantage of by a haughty big business had gleefully taken her revenge by distributing the once-sacrosanct recipes to whomever wished to use them.

Sometime in the 1990s, the story shifted from Mrs. Fields as the malefactor to a cafe in a Dallas-area Neiman-Marcus store. The advent of the Internet caused the story of the vengeful woman and her defiant distribution of the cookie recipe to become one of the most popular of all the widely circulated urban legends.

#### GREEN M&MS

*The story:* Mars, Inc., the makers of M&Ms, was brought into court and heavily fined when it was discovered that the candy coating on the green-colored M&M chocolate candies contained an aphrodisiac. The candy company was involved in an insidious plot to stimulate innocent children sexually with the substance in the green M&Ms and drive them into the hands of pornographers. In addition to the aphrodisiac in the candy coating, Mars, Inc., had launched a series of television commercials featuring scantily clad models whose poses were designed to arouse the children even further and suggest how they themselves might pose for the child pornographers. Conscientious consumers were urged to cease supporting a candy company that was in league with the manufacturers of child porn, and par-

ents were advised to write their congresspersons and demand that the product be taken off the market.

It is difficult to trace the origins of this urban legend about the green candy with the bizarre erotic stimulant mixed into its coating, but it appears to have begun sometime early in 1993 on the Internet with e-mails informing parents to insist upon legal action against Mars, Inc., for becoming participants in the insidious child porn business. Some researchers have theorized that the rumor may have begun when Mars, Inc., actually did appear in court in 1992 to obtain a cease and desist order against Cool Chocolate, Inc., a competitor that had started to manufacture a green-coated chocolate that it was calling "The Green Ones." The attorneys for Mars, Inc., argued that the product was too similar to M&Ms, and the court ruled in favor of the long-established makers of the popular colored-coated chocolate. Cool Chocolate, Inc., was ordered to cease producing its rival line of candies. Since the urban legend began shortly after the court case had concluded, it is possible that the purpose of Mars, Inc.'s, day in court became woefully distorted into an outrageous accusation associating the candy company with child pornography.

The origin of the claim that Mars, Inc., also created a series of erotic commercials to promote further the ingestion of the aphrodisiac-coated green M&Ms among children remains a mystery. True to the tradition of urban legends, no one can actually recall seeing any scantily clad models in the familiar commercials promoting the candy that "melts in your mouth, not in your hands," except, of course, for a "friend of a friend."

#### THE HOOK ON THE CAR DOOR

*The story:* A young couple were parked on a lonely lovers' lane by a river, listening to dreamy, romantic music on the car radio. Suddenly the mood was shattered by a news bulletin. An escapee from a hospital for the criminally insane had escaped. People are told that they should be on the lookout for a tall, gaunt man with a pronounced limp and a hook instead of a left hand. The announcer concluded the bulletin by warning the radio audi-

**M&M Candies.**  
(THE GALE GROUP)



ence that the man with the hook was a serial murderer and was last seen making his way out of town.

The thought of a mass murderer with a hook for a hand coming upon them as they sat there in lovers' lane completely destroyed the romantic interlude for the young woman, and she asked to be taken home. Her boyfriend was decidedly displeased with her decision. He argued that the murderer was undoubtedly far away and would certainly never wander out to a lovers' lane. Although he persisted and tried to dissuade his frightened sweetheart, she once again repeated her wish to leave the dark and lonely place at once.

Angered and frustrated, the young man started the engine and roared out of the parking place by the river. Pouting and disappointed, he refused even to speak to his girlfriend as he drove directly to her home. Stubbornly, he remained seated behind the wheel and silent while she got out of the car to walk to her front door.

Just as she was about to slam the car door, she screamed in horror. Jolted from his pique, the young man got out to see what had caused his girlfriend to go into hysterics.

As he walked to the passenger side of the car, he, too, is startled to see a prosthetic forearm dangling from the door handle, a steel hook gleaming in the light from a street lamp. The murderer had been about to open the door on the passenger's side of the car when the young man had given into his girlfriend's

demands and peeled out of the parking place, tearing off the killer's hook in the process.

This is a classic urban legend, dating back at least to the 1940s. The familiar tale is most often told as having happened to a friend's college roommate or high school classmate, and the story of the murderer's hook on the car door has long been a favorite at slumber parties and around campfires.

**IF YOUR COLLEGE ROOMMATE  
COMMITS SUICIDE....**

*The story:* It is a standard regulation at all colleges that a student whose roommate commits suicide will automatically receive a 4.0 grade point for the current school term.

Although this myth has become popular enough to be the subject of two motion pictures (*Dead Man on Campus* and *Dead Man's Curve*, both 1998), it is not true. Nor will any of the variations of this legend—such as a roommate being murdered, killed accidentally, or dying from a terminal disease—earn the surviving roommate a 4.0 grade point.

Persistence has led to other versions of this story becoming a bit more believable, with versions stating the death of a parent, a close relative, or a betrothed guaranteeing a straight "A" report card. While many academic institutions do offer some kind of bereavement considerations to those students who suffer the loss of someone deemed especially important to their

Every Filipino family knows someone who has been killed by the “bangungot.” In Filipino folklore, bangungot is personified as a fat man who creeps into the bedroom of sleeping men and sits on their faces to suffocate them.

It isn't a fat man that kills them, but an unexplained illness that kills young, healthy Asian men and was first reported in the Philippines in 1917 and has since been identified in Thailand, Japan, India, and Singapore.

Known as Sudden Unexplained Nocturnal Death Syndrome (SUNDS) by medical researchers, the victims of the disease have been males in 99 percent of the cases, and 80 percent of those men were between the ages of 22 to 45. The death usually occurs during the first third of the sleep cycle and results from a myocardial infraction in the lower left ventricle of the heart, thereby causing a heart attack. The victims are found lying on their backs in bed, often with a frozen expression of what appears to be terror on their faces, thus giving rise to the folktale of the fat man having smothered them.

## ASIAN MEN KILLED BY FAT MAN

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lives, no college is known to award grade points for such tragic circumstances.

### JESUS ON THE FREEWAY

*The story:* A couple was driving across the United States on vacation when they spotted a long-haired, bearded hitchhiker standing at the side of the road. Although he appeared somewhat disheveled and his clothes were a bit ragged, they decided to take a chance that he was not a serial murderer and they picked him up.

After they had driven for a few miles, the hitcher, in answer to their inquiries regarding his destination, began to speak of heaven. His words touched their hearts and the relieved couple realized that they had picked up a very spiritual fellow.

The hitchhiker then shifted his comments to issue a number of warnings concerning the

day of judgment that will soon be at hand for all of humankind and the entire world. The backseat became a makeshift pulpit as he advised the couple that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ was at hand.

At this point in the narrative, the story has two equally popular endings:

1. The couple looked around and discovered to their astonishment that their passenger had disappeared. Then they realized that the man was Jesus himself, warning them to prepare for Judgment Day.
2. Just before he disappeared before their astonished eyes, the hitchhiker revealed himself to be Jesus, who left them with a blessing and a final warning to be prepared for his return.

The stories of Jesus on the freeway seem to be a variation of the urban legend of the **phantom hitchhiker** combined with the gospel

account of the risen Christ appearing to Cleopas and another disciple as they walked on the road to Emmaus, about seven miles northwest of Jerusalem. At first the two do not recognize Jesus—and when they do, he disappears.

The tale of the contemporary hitchhiking Jesus is still repeated, but it was in very wide circulation in 1998–99, just before the year 2000 and the period of time that many Christian fundamentalists believed would be the advent of the end times, **Armageddon**, the last great battle between the forces of Good and Evil. From their perspective, it seemed to be in the order of things that Jesus could return in disguise, then reveal himself to certain individuals so that they might be prepared for the opportunity of the **Rapture**, which they believe will deliver all true believers from the planet.

#### THE PHANTOM HITCHHIKER

*The story:* A college student was driving on a lonely country road late one rainy night when he was startled to see a young woman walking along the shoulder. Immediately he pulled over, leaned across the front seat to open the passenger door, and asked her if she wanted a ride.

Without a word, she got inside. It was obvious that she was cold and soaked to the skin. The college student reached behind him, grabbed his sweater from the backseat, and offered it to the lovely hitchhiker.

She smiled her thanks and draped the warm sweater over her shoulders, informing him that she had to get home that night to see her parents.

In the light from the dashboard, the student noticed for the first time that her face and hands were scratched and bleeding. When she caught him looking at her injuries, she explained that her car had slid off the road and into a ditch. She had stood there for what had seemed like hours, hoping for help; then she decided to walk the rest of the way to her parents' home.

The student told her that there was no problem taking her right to her parents' front door. In spite of her bedraggled appearance, it was becoming apparent to him that she was a

very beautiful young woman, probably about his own age. She gestured into the darkness ahead and said that the house was only a few miles ahead.

As he was getting up his courage to ask her for her name, she pointed to a house down a very short lane. She asked him to stop, and she got out of the car. He protested that he would be happy to drive her the rest of the way, but she was already running away into the night. As he drove on, he berated himself for not asking her name, but then he remembered that she still wore his sweater. That would be his excuse to drive back to her parents' home and formally make her acquaintance.

Two days later, after his afternoon classes had ended, the student drove to his mystery girl's home and knocked on the door. He was surprised when an elderly woman opened the door and invited him to step inside. As he looked about the interior of the front parlor, he noticed a framed portrait of the beautiful young girl, and he asked the woman if her granddaughter was home.

Following the student's gaze to the portrait, the woman began to weep. Her darling daughter, she said, was still trying to come home. The student listened incredulously as the woman told him that her daughter had been killed in an automobile accident more than 40 years before.

By the time he managed to leave the old woman, he had concluded that she must be crazy. The hitchhiker he had picked up that night was no more than 19 years old. And she was very much alive.

As he passed a small rural cemetery, something blowing in the wind caught his eye. When he entered the graveyard to investigate, he found his sweater draped over a tombstone that marked the final resting place of a young woman who had died 40 years ago.

Some version of the above account of a phantom hitchhiker has been told and retold with variations for at least the past 70 years. In many areas, there are no shortages of witnesses who say that they themselves have stopped to pick up the ghost—nearly always a lovely young woman—and they swear that their encounter is true.

Chicago's "Resurrection Mary" has been hitching rides and spooking motorists since the 1930s. Said to be the spirit of a beautiful, blond Polish girl, Mary has been picked up by smitten young men at dances and asked to be taken home. The problem is, "home" always turns out to be Resurrection Cemetery on Archer Avenue on the South Side of Chicago. On occasion, Mary has been bold enough to open car doors and get in, explaining to the startled driver how she desperately needs a ride into the city. Once again, as the car approaches the cemetery on Archer, Mary bolts from the car and vanishes at the gates.

For many years, taxi drivers in Naha, Okinawa, have claimed that an attractive woman in her 20s, with short-cropped hair and dressed in black slacks, often hails them for a ride on the road to the U.S. Marine Camp. When the cab drivers turn to ask for a specific destination, she disappears. The phantom has been dubbed the "Nightwalker of Nago," because she most often appears on the mountain road leading from the fishing village of Nago to the marine camp.

Since 1965, dozens of drivers have slammed on their brakes to avoid hitting a pretty young woman in a flowing white dress standing in the road on Blue Bell Hill in Maidstone, England. The phantom is said to be that of a woman who was to have been a bridesmaid for her best friend when she died in a car crash the night before the wedding. Her spirit appears still dressed in her flowing bridesmaid's gown, still attempting to get to the wedding on time.

Stories of phantom hitchhikers constitute a category of urban legends that have been reported around the world and show no signs of ceasing. Motorists, truckers, and taxi drivers by the hundreds have a "friend of a friend" who *really* did give a ghost a ride.

**PROCTOR & GAMBLE IS A  
SATANIST COMPANY**

*The story:* Sometime in the 1960s, when many people were announcing that the Age of Aquarius was dawning and New Age beliefs were beginning to receive wide circulation, the rumor started that the logo Proctor & Gamble



had applied to their products for generations. It was rumored that the Proctor & Gamble logo of the moon and stars was a satanic symbol. The logo pictures the moon with a smiling face and 13 stars, representing, according to the urban belief, the number of satanists in a coven, the negativity of the number 13, and the devilish activities that evildoers commit in the moonlight.

It was rumored that the Proctor & Gamble logo of the moon and stars was a satanic symbol.  
(AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

Representatives of Proctor & Gamble had issued disclaimer after disclaimer, assuring the public that none of its executives or employees were satanists, but in 1994, a call to action was issued by alleged Christian fundamentalists demanding that all good Christians boycott all P&G products. According to the manifesto that was widely circulated, the president of P&G had appeared on the Phil Donohue television program on March 15, 1994, and announced without hesitation that he was a satanist. What was even more upsetting to the author of the pronouncement was that the president of P&G had openly declared that he had been using the products of his company to raise money to support his charity, The **Church of Satan**. Then, defiantly, the president stated that there weren't enough Christians in all 50 states combined that would make any difference to him or to his company's profits.

The anonymous author of the declaration that went out over the Internet and in postal mailings titled his piece, "You Can Make a Difference," and he challenged all Christians to show the president of Proctor & Gamble that he was wrong. They could make a difference by ceasing to buy any P&G products. "Let him know what Christians think of his kind," the e-mail demanded. "Stop buying his products! Now! Today!"

No president of Proctor & Gamble ever appeared on the Donohue television talk show. No one from the firm has ever claimed to be a satanist or commented on the number of Christians residing in the United States.

The accusations of satanic allegiance and worship levied at Proctor & Gamble are completely fabricated. Yet, in spite of P&G's legal representatives winning nearly a dozen court decisions declaring that the rumors had no basis in truth, the urban legend about Satan profiting from Proctor & Gamble's many products continues to rear its horned head.

#### THE SCUBA DIVER IN THE TREE

*The story:* While assessing the damage done by a forest fire in California, authorities were startled to discover the body of a man dressed in a wetsuit, complete with a dive tank, flippers, and face mask, in the branches of a tree. The strangely placed victim had suffered severe burns from the forest fire, but an autopsy revealed that he had not died from the flames, but from massive internal injuries. Dental records provided the victim's identification, and investigators contacted his family in an attempt to learn how a man who was dressed for scuba diving could possibly have ended up in the branches of a tree in the midst of hundreds of acres of charred forest.

According to the horrified family, the victim had been diving in the ocean some 30 miles away from the forest on the day that the fire had gotten out of control. As the investigators pieced together the grim details of the man's death, it became apparent that he had been accidentally scooped up along with thousands of gallons of water by one of a fleet of helitankers that had been called in to help the firefighters. Caught up in one of the

huge buckets, the unfortunate scuba diver had been dumped along with the sea water in an attempt to put out the forest fire as quickly as possible.

While this story has been told many times since the late 1980s, there has never been a record of a diver in a scuba outfit being accidentally dumped by helicopter tankers on a forest fire. Authorities point out that while water is sometimes taken from lakes and ocean areas in an effort to extinguish forest fires as rapidly as possible, the helitankers suck up the water by means of a hose only a couple of inches in diameter. No one could be drawn into such a small opening and pulled into the tank.

#### SNAKES IN THE TOILET

A fear of snakes is among the oldest of all of humankind's basic fears, so it is likely that this urban legend grew out of the ancient warnings of primitive people to be cautious about the places they selected to relieve themselves when obeying a call of nature. As civilization progressed, the outdoor toilet was a place that often harbored snakes that would scare or bite a person, which would possibly lead to death. With centuries of apprehension about snakes it seems a natural progression to bring such primitive fear into man's modern plumbing and toilet facilities.

*The story:* Perhaps the most common version of this urban legend has someone with an enormous pet python moving into an apartment building. In order not to alarm his neighbors, the individual keeps the nature of his pet a secret from everyone. (Sometimes the story states that he or she is with a traveling circus and is only staying in the apartment for a few nights.)

One day, the snake fancier carelessly leaves the toilet lid up in his bathroom, and the big serpent wiggles its way into the bowl, enters the drain pipe, and emerges in the toilet of the next door apartment. The startled individual is horrified to see a monstrous snake suddenly rear its head from the toilet bowl, and as he runs from the bathroom, the mammoth python begins to slither its way into his apartment. This account usually ends with the frightened apartment dweller calling

the zoo or the animal control center and a crew of men arriving to wrestle the monster python of 15 to 20 feet out of the building.

Another popular version of the story has a big snake somehow making its way into the plumbing system of an apartment house and moving through the pipes until it comes up for air in someone's toilet just as the person is about to use it. In some legends, the victim either dies of a heart attack or is bitten to death by the deadly reptile.

#### SPIDERS IN THE HAIRDO

As man watches primates grooming one another in the zoo or in a nature film, one can clearly see that the process of checking one's hair for insects is a procedure that has been inherited from the most primitive ancestors. Combine this instinctual grooming practice with the fear of poisonous insects and there is the likely origin of the urban legends about the spiders in the hairdo.

Although tales of the unwanted presence of bees, wasps, and other annoying insects in someone's long hair had been popular since at least the late 1800s, the urban legend of the poisonous spider in the hair continued through the twentieth century. This legend started up again with the introduction of the popular beehive hairdo in the early 1960s. Because women sprayed their hair to create a rounded "beehive" appearance, it seemed possible—and terrifying—to those wanting such a fashionable style that a spider could take residence in the raised hair atop their heads.

*The Story:* As the legend goes, a woman, wearing a beehive hair style, walks into a beauty shop and asks for a trim. She tells the beautician that she has not touched her hair for days—other than to add spray—because she felt she had achieved the perfect shape to her hairdo. As the beautician begins to shampoo the woman's hair, the customer screams in awful pain. She grimaces, gasps, and collapses.

The beautician, horrified and confused, calls an ambulance as the other customers look on in disbelief. As the paramedics are lifting the woman onto a stretcher, a black widow spider crawls from the woman's hair. The poisonous insect had been nesting in the

woman's sprayed hair and had bitten her when the beautician began to shampoo her hair.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, male "hippies," who wore their hair shoulder-length or longer, became the most oft-cited victims of the "spider in the hair" folktale. The long hair made it possible by the suspicions of the general public that "hippies" seldom bathed, thus allowing a deadly spider to remain undetected in their hair until somehow provoked.

The Internet continues to resurrect both the female victim with her beehive hairstyle or the poisoned hippie with his uncombed, unwashed shoulder-length hair. However, sometime in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the urban legend was updated by substituting a man or woman with dreadlocks as the unsuspecting host for the poisonous spiders. In some versions, the victim is bitten when he or she attends a barbershop or beauty parlor and the barber or beautician uncovers the insect. In other legends, both the wearer of the dreadlocks and the hair-stylists are bitten by a nest of spiders.

#### ❖ DELVING DEEPER

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## MAKING THE CONNECTION

**barter** The exchange or the process of negotiating certain goods or services for other goods or services.

**Bedouin** A nomadic person who is an Arab from the desert areas of North Africa and Arabia. Via Old French *beduin*, ultimately from Arabic *badw*, or desert, nomadic desert people.

**betrothal** The act of becoming or being engaged to marry another person.

**birthstone** Each month of the year has a particular precious gemstone or a semi-precious stone associated with it. It is believed that if a person wears the stone assigned their birth month, good fortune or luck will follow.

**deity** A divine being, god, or goddess or something or someone that is treated like a god. From the ecclesiastical Latin *deitas*, meaning divine nature.

**Deity** When capitalized refers to God in monotheistic belief or religions.

**exorcism** The act, religious ceremony, or ritual of casting out evil spirits from a person or a place.

**omen** A prophetic sign or occurrence or something that gives an indication of the course of future events.

**oracle** Either someone or something that is the source of wisdom, knowledge or prophecy. Can also refer to the place where the prophetic word would be given. Via French from the Latin *oraculum*, from *orare* to speak.

**Passover** The seven or eight days of a Jewish festival that begins on the fourteenth day of Nissan and commemorates the exodus of the Hebrews from their captivity in

Egypt. From the Hebrew word *pasa*, meaning to pass without affecting.

**pharaoh** An all-powerful person in a position of authority and who expects unquestioning obedience, such as the ancient Egyptian rulers of Egypt. From the Hebrew *paroh* and Egyptian *pr-o*, meaning great house.

**predator** Any organism or animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals. Can refer to a ruthless person who is extremely aggressive in harming another. From the Latin *praedator* and *praedari*, meaning to seize as plunder.

**Sabbath** A day set apart as one of religious worship and rest from work—observed on Sunday for Christians, Saturday in Judaism and some Christian denominations. From the Greek *sabbaton*, via the Latin *sabbatum*, and Hebrew *sabba*, meaning rest.

**spittle** Something that looks like or is saliva, which is secreted from the mouth.

**superstition** The belief that certain actions and rituals have a magical effect resulting in either good or bad. From the Latin stem *superstition*, and *superstes*, meaning standing over or in awe.

**taboo** Something that is forbidden. In some cases can refer to something being sacred, therefore forbidden, such as in Polynesian societies. From the Tongan *tabu*, said to have been introduced into the English language by Captain James Cook in the late eighteenth century.

**talisman** An object such as a gemstone or stone, believed to have magical powers or properties. From the Greek *telesma*, meaning something consecrated, *telein*, to complete, and *telos*, result.

**Valhalla** In Norse mythology, when the souls of heroes are killed in battle, they spend eternity in a great hall, which is called Valhalla. From the Old Norse *valhall*, literally meaning hall of the slain.

**Valkyrie** One of the 12 handmaids of Odin in Norse mythology who ride their horses over the battlefield as they escort the souls of slain heroes to Valhalla. From the Old



Norse *Valkyrja*, meaning literally chooser of the slain.

**Zoroaster** A Persian prophet (c. 628 B.C.E.–c. 551 B.C.E) and the founder of an ancient

religion called Zoroastrianism whose principal belief is in a supreme deity and of the existence of a dualism between good and evil. Derived from the Greek word *Zarat* or *Zarathustra*, meaning camel handler.

**CHAPTER 14**  
**INVADERS FROM**  
**OUTER SPACE**

*Are humans alone in the universe?  
 Throughout history, humankind's religions  
 have probed the unknown to provide an  
 answer to what occurs after death, and its  
 sciences have attempted to scan the cosmos  
 for clues to the possibility of intelligent life  
 elsewhere in the stars.*

CHAPTER EXPLORATION

**UFOs IN ANCIENT TIMES**

Space Visitors in the Bible and  
 Other Holy Books

**THE MODERN UFO ERA BEGINS**

The Air Force and Project Blue Book  
 The Condon/University of Colorado Report  
 Hangar 18  
 Roswell, New Mexico  
 Socorro, New Mexico

**UFO CONTACTEES AND ABDUCTEES**

George Adamski  
 Daniel W. Fry  
 Betty and Barney Hill  
 The Men in Black (MIB)  
 Whitley Strieber  
 George Van Tassel

**THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA**

*Close Encounters of the Third Kind*  
*The Day the Earth Stood Still*  
*War of the Worlds*  
*The X-Files*

**THE UFO MYSTERY GROWS**

Area 51 and Reverse Engineering  
 Cattle Mutilations  
 Crop Circles  
 Majestic-12  
 The Philadelphia Experiment

## INTRODUCTION

On June 24, 1947, at 2 P.M., Kenneth Arnold took off from the Chehalis, Washington, airport in his personal plane and headed for Yakima, Washington. He hadn't been in the air for more than three minutes when to the left and north of Mount Rainier he observed a chain of nine peculiar-looking objects flying from north to south at approximately 9,500 feet. He estimated the size of the objects to be approximately two-thirds that of a DC-4, and he timed the objects between Mount Rainier and Mount Adams and determined that they crossed this 47-mile stretch in 1 minute and 42 seconds. This was equivalent to 1656.71 miles per hour.

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**KATHLEEN** *May described the alien being that she and seven other residents saw as looking more frightening than the Frankenstein monster.*

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In an interview subsequent to the sighting, Arnold described the objects as appearing like saucers skipping on water. This description was shortened to “flying saucers” by newspapermen and resulted in the popular use of that term. It was the U. S. Air Force’s conclusion that the objects of this sighting were due to a mirage, but for many individuals around the world, the mysterious objects that Arnold sighted that day were extraterrestrial spacecraft.

On the night of July 2, 1947, eight days after Kenneth Arnold’s sighting of mysterious unidentified flying objects, another UFO was reported to have crashed on ranchland about 60 miles north of Roswell, New Mexico, and the air force had recovered the wreckage. The next day, however, those startling media pronouncements were suddenly transformed into puzzling accounts that the air force had been mistaken. The supposed UFO was merely the scattered debris from a fallen weather balloon.

For many people reading the stories of the air force’s denial of having captured a flying saucer, the matter was ended with a wry smile

at the inefficiency of the military. Others, however, wondered how highly trained air force personnel could possibly mistake a few thin sticks and scraps of cloth for any kind of aeronautical vehicle, to say nothing of an extraterrestrial craft capable of traversing the universe. Thus was born the seed of nearly every UFO government cover-up conspiracy theory that still thrives today. From the moment those initial startling headlines of the U.S. Air Force having discovered the debris of a crashed flying saucer, millions of people have remained convinced that humankind is being visited and/or invaded by aliens from outer space.

In many ways, the year 1947 provided the ideal time for such theories to grow. It had been almost exactly two years since the Japanese had surrendered and the days of World War II (1939–45) had at last come to a close amid the fiery destruction of the nuclear bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Atomic power frightened the great majority of Americans, and many doomsayers were frightening newly attentive audiences with their grim message that the world was about to come to an end. Adding to the stress was the fact that the Soviet Union had erected the so-called Iron Curtain, and the free nations of the world had to start worrying about the Communist menace before they had really had time to recover from the Nazi’s Third Reich. In fact, some people said that the flying saucers were a new secret weapon launched against the United States by diehard Nazis hiding in South America. Other people in “the know” claimed that the bizarre circular craft were new weapons that had been created by the German scientists who had been kidnapped by the Soviets during the last days of the war. Paranoia ran rampant and while some scientists laughed at the notion of spaceships, others who seemed to be just as knowledgeable made convincing arguments for an invasion from outer space. It wasn’t long before people were seeing alien invaders on the silver screen in such motion pictures as *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), *The Thing from Another World* (1951), *Invaders from Mars* (1953), and *It Came from Outer Space* (1953)—and then they were seeing them in their own backyards.

Kathleen May described the alien being that she and seven other Flatwoods, West Virginia, residents saw on September 12, 1952, as looking more frightening than the Frankenstein monster. May had her attention called to the saucer by a group of excited boys, including her sons, who were at a nearby playground when they sighted a flying saucer emitting an exhaust that looked like red balls of fire. According to the boys, the UFO had landed on a hilltop in back of the May house.

May later told reporters that she kept telling the boys that it was just their imagination, but they continued to insist that they had seen a flying saucer land behind the hill. Finally, a husky teenaged boy found a flashlight and said that he was going to investigate. At the urging of her son, May agreed to accompany him, and the other boys fell in behind them. About halfway up the hill, she began to change her mind about whatever the boys had seen being in their imaginations, for she could see a strange, reddish glow emanating from somewhere near the top. After about half an hour of tramping through the brush, their flashlight beam spotlighted an immense, humanlike figure with a blood-red face and greenish eyes that blinked out from under a pointed hood. Behind the monster was a “glowing ball of fire as big as a house” that grew dimmer and brighter at intervals. The intrepid band of flying saucer-hunters fled in panic from the sight.

Later, May described the monster as having “terrible claws.” Estimates of the monster’s height ranged from seven to ten feet, but everyone agreed about one characteristic of the alien—it had emitted a sickening odor, like sulphur.

On the evening of August 21, 1955, a UFO touched down in a rural area outside of Kelly-Hopkinsville, Kentucky, and set loose alien invaders on the eight adults and three children who had gathered for some Sunday evening fellowship. Representatives of the air force, local police, and area newspapers conducted an extensive and well-documented investigation of what has become a classic encounter in the annals of UFO research. The adults involved in the incident were found to



be rather conservative, reserved individuals, the kind of people unlikely to have invented such a wild and incredible adventure for the sake of sensational publicity.

**Kenneth Arnold with a drawing of a UFO.**

(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

According to the Sutton family, when their teenaged son, Billy Ray, left the farmhouse that Sunday evening to get a drink from the well he saw a bright object land about a city block away from the farmhouse. Billy Ray’s report of the strange aerial phenomenon was met with a pronounced lack of interest by the others until they saw little men, less than four feet tall with long arms and large, round heads approaching the farmhouse. The smallish invaders looked like monsters with their nickel-plated jumpsuits, their glowing, yellow eyes, and their otherworldly appearance.

Fearing for their lives, the farmers picked up the Suttons’ rifles and shotguns and began to fire upon the alien creatures. But they told investigators that such a counterattack on the monsters was to no avail. The bullets just seemed to bounce off the little beings’ nickel-plated armor. Although the Suttons and their neighbors were positive that they had made direct hits on the creatures, the little mon-

sters just jumped right up and ran off into the darkness, only to regroup for another charge toward the farmers in the house. According to the farmers' observations to various investigators of the shootout, the alien beings' extremely large eyes appeared to be very sensitive to light. In retrospect, they all felt that it had been the farmhouse's outside lights, rather than the farmers' bullets, that had truly prevented the invaders from advancing into the home.

The Suttons and their neighbors battled the seemingly invulnerable little monsters for nearly four hours before they managed to get into their motor vehicles and drive in panic to the Hopkinsville police station to get reinforcements. Chief Greenwell was convinced by the hysteria of the three children and the obvious fear of the eight adults that they had definitely been battling something very strange out there in the country.

With Chief Greenwell in the lead, more than a dozen state, county, and city law enforcement officers arrived to investigate the farmers' claims and, if necessary, do battle with the alien invaders. On the way to the farm scene, the officers noticed what appeared to be a peculiar shower of meteors coming from the direction of the Sutton farmhouse. One officer later said that the meteors had made a "swishing sound" as they passed overhead.

Although the small army of law enforcement officers found no traces of extraterrestrial aliens or their spaceship, they found several "peculiar signs and indications" that something mighty strange had taken place that evening on the Suttons' farm. For one thing, the teetotaling, conservative Suttons and their neighbors had thought that whatever they perceived to be real was threatening enough to cause them to put bullet holes in the walls of every barn and outbuilding on the place. Sutton claimed that he had blasted one of the beings point-blank with his shotgun, only to have the creature simply do a somersault and roll off into the darkness. Taylor, one of the other men at the Sutton place that night, told investigators that he had used up four boxes of shells on the little men.

Stories such as these fueled the fears of men and women across the United States that they would be powerless in the face of an alien invasion from outer space. In the late 1960s, Harold D. Lasswell, professor of law and political science at Yale University, offered his speculations on what would happen if human civilization were to be confronted by extraterrestrial aliens. If that alien culture were technologically superior to human culture—which it would be if it had successfully conquered space to land on Earth—Lasswell stated that the human race would be in the same relationship to another planet that folk societies in human history had often occupied when faced by an industrialized nation of western Europe or an empire that possessed advanced weaponry. He went on to say that human religions, arts, and sciences would be judged inferior to whatever doctrines and formulas were held by the invaders, and in such an event as an extraterrestrial invasion, there would be the grim possibility that the superior culture might select the brightest, healthiest, and most promising Earth children and separate them from their families so they might be reared in the aliens' greater intellectual and technological environment. However, such a culture might also be somewhat benign and paternal and force humans to abandon all aggressive pursuits and devote their time to aesthetic endeavors.

If the invading extraterrestrial culture should be generally comparable to human culture in scientific advancement and technological development, perhaps superior only in the area of space flight, for example, then Lasswell saw earthlings in a situation similar to the Cold War rivalry, as various Earth nations would strive to win the favor of the new dominant civilization on the scene. If the extraterrestrial invaders arrived on Earth as unified and powerful, Lasswell concluded, then earthlings would be at a great disadvantage.

Millions of fearful men and women around the world feel that humans are at a great disadvantage when it comes to dealing with the strangers in the skies. Although there is no proof that any of the mysterious craft seen by these concerned people originate from an extraterrestrial source, a large percentage of the

population believe that alien invaders circle the planet Earth.

In June 1998, a CNN/Time poll found that 27 percent of all Americans believe that aliens have already visited Earth, and 80 percent maintain that the government is conducting a cover-up to keep the truth of extraterrestrial visitation from the general population. On June 8, 1999, a National Institute of Science/Roper Poll surveyed a nationwide sampling of men and women and found that 25 percent believed UFOs to be alien spacecraft and another 12 percent thought them to be vehicles of a secret government agency. When the pollsters asked the respondents how they felt the general public would deal with the matter if it were proved that UFOs were extraterrestrial craft, 25 percent felt that the majority of people would panic; 10 percent feared their fellow citizens would behave irrationally; 14 percent guessed the general public would act in strange ways; 36 percent believed that vast numbers of citizens would be concerned about the prospects of an imminent alien invasion; and only 13 percent estimated that most U.S. citizens could deal with the confirmation of alien visitation in a calm and rational manner.

Thousands of men and women are handling the prospect of alien visitation by insisting that they have been abducted and physically examined by extraterrestrial beings. In the opinion of many UFO researchers who believe that such abductions are truly occurring, the aliens are attempting to use their advanced technology to accomplish an intergalactic experiment in species crossbreeding. The beings responsible for such physical examinations are referred to as the "Grays," and are smallish beings somewhat reptilian in appearance. The abductees and contactees who have encountered these UFO-nauts stated that they stood between four and a half to five feet tall and their skin color was gray or greenish-gray. Their heads were round, large, disproportionately oversized by human standards, and their facial features were dominated by large, lidless, staring eyes, often with reptilianlike pupils. They had no discernible lips, and where one might expect to see a nose, the witnesses cited only nostrils, nearly flush against the smooth texture of the face.

In addition to the fear of invasion or abduction by extraterrestrials, many individuals fear the terror on the ground, the infamous **Men in Black** (MIB), threatening strangers who appear to have a great deal to do with the UFO mystery—but nothing to do with the humorous motion picture series starring Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones. In many instances, those individuals who have been witnesses of UFO activity have claimed to have suffered a peculiar kind of personal harassment. At first, there are often sinister voices that whisper threats on the telephone and warn researchers and witnesses of unusual phenomena to terminate specific investigations or to forget entirely what they have seen. Those who have taken photographs or videos of UFOs or obtained any kind of physical evidence of paranormal phenomena have been called upon by rather mysterious men dressed in black—often claiming government affiliation—who confiscate the pictures, the negatives, the videotape, or whatever proof the witnesses may have had of their sighting.

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*A CNN/Time poll found that 27 percent of all Americans believe that aliens have already visited Earth.*

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In the majority of such instances, those who received an "unwelcome" from the MIB described their inquisitors as rather short men, often five foot six or less, with dark complexions and somewhat Asian features. When pressed for more complete descriptions and details, the witnesses have stated that the MIB usually wore dark glasses, but if the glasses were ever removed, they had large eyes that were noticeably slanted, but slanted in a manner somehow different from Asians.

Beginning in 1947, shortly after the alleged UFO crash outside of Roswell, New Mexico, and continuing into the twenty-first century, thousands of UFO witnesses, investigators, abductees, and contactees claim to have been visited by ominous strangers

dressed in black who made it frighteningly clear that they represented a powerful and everywhere-present “someone” who would violently enforce their orders to discontinue research or to surrender all artifacts, videotapes, and photographs. Often such threats have been punctuated with the allegation that such cooperation was essential for “the good of your family, your country, and your world.”

While some investigators of the UFO mystery and a good number of skeptics believe such accounts of alien invaders, extraterrestrial abductors, and Men in Black to be fanciful folklore made fearful by human paranoia, the question of invaders from outer space very much belongs in the examination of the unknown and the unexplained.

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## UFOs in Ancient Times

Since primitive humans first crawled out of their caves and gazed up in awe at the star-filled night, humankind has been intrigued by the unexplained mysteries of the universe. Early myths and legends tell of mysterious objects roaring across the heavens. Scraps of ancient documents reveal phenomenal, unexplained manifestations in the skies. Virtually every religion relates visitations from angels, demons, devils, and gods who descended to Earth in ancient times.

With the highly publicized arrival of the “flying saucers” in the earth’s atmosphere in 1947, modern humans were confronted with

what they thought was a new celestial mystery. However, in their efforts to interpret this phenomenon, a band of scholarly individuals dug through old documents and musty records and discovered that the UFO phenomenon had appeared periodically throughout history. Gradually, some UFOlogists believed humankind’s gods, angels, devils, and demons were nothing more than alien visitors from some superior civilization on some far planet in a dark corner of the universe.

The hypothesis of ancient astronauts received its most popular expression in Erich von Daniken’s *Chariots of the Gods?* (1970), which led to the formation of an international Ancient Astronaut Society in 1973. While many find the premise that “gods” from outer space may have guided developing humankind in its evolutionary ascent, critics find fault in the propensity of such theorists to attribute any ancient, unexplained mystery to extraterrestrials who supposedly seeded, propagated, and still maintain watch over the planet. Despite these shortcomings, certain researchers have amassed an impressive stack of evidence to support their beliefs that ancient astronauts visited Earth in prehistory, and old historical accounts, ancient legends, and myths are brought forth and given fresh interpretations.

The possibility of ancient space visitations was explored by Dr. Carl Sagan (1934–1996) as early as the 1966 convention of the American Astronautical Society. “Our tiny corner of the universe may have been visited thousands of times in the past few billions of years,” Sagan stated in *Intelligent Life in the Universe* (1966), coauthored with I. S. Shklovski. “At least one of these visits may have occurred in historical times.” Sagan, both an exobiologist and an astronomer, theorized that Earth may have been visited by various galactic civilizations many times during prehistoric times and that it is not out of the question that artifacts of such extraterrestrial visits might still exist, or even that some kind of alien base is maintained within our solar system to provide continuity for successive expeditions.

Such a hypothesis coming from a respected scientist encouraged many UFO researchers to theorize that *Homo sapiens* may have been



seeded on Earth, for despite the many theories put forth by conventional scientists, it is still not known how humans originated on this planet. The Darwinian theory of evolution remains a fascinating, yet unproved, hypothesis, simply because the elusive “missing link” remains undiscovered. The alleged link between humans and their anthropoid cousins may have been provided by visitors from another world.

Some believe that not only did the ancient astronauts carefully guide the evolution of humankind, they also assisted early builders in erecting great monuments as testimony to their presence. For instance, there is the Cheops Pyramid, the tallest structure in antiquity, which, discounting a number of skyscrapers in the United States, still ranks as the ninth tallest architectural marvel in the world today. It has been estimated that more than 2,300,000 stone blocks of an average weight of two and one-half tons went into the construc-

tion of this last resting place for the pharaoh Cheops, c. 2800 B.C.E. The Pyramid of Khafre, near Cheops, stands 442 feet high and covers 12 acres. The third pyramid in the massive triumvirate, Mycerinus, is 215 feet tall and 346 feet wide on each side. Those researchers who favor the ancient astronaut hypothesis protest that the classic picture of teams of men roped together and tugging away at moving the massive stone blocks up the ramps, tier by tier, may be feasible, but such a method of construction would call for such unlikely figures as 100,000 slaves struggling in torment for 20 years to shape one pyramid. It seems illogical to such theorists that any governing agency, no matter how tyrannical and all-powerful, could ever conscript that many workers over that long a period of time without causing a revolt or draining off too much manpower from other tasks, such as raising food. In addition, it seems unlikely that the government would be able to convince the populace that the pyramid was necessary in the first place.

**Alien footprint.**  
(ARCHIVES OF  
BRAD STEIGER)





**Petroglyph allegedly identified as an "astronaut." (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)**

Would supplying tombs for dead pharaohs be considered a worthy task on which to expend so much time and manpower? Would ancient Egypt, with a population of only a few million, stand such a drain of numbers for long periods of 10 or 20 years?

To those who espouse the ancient astronaut theory, such massive works as the pyramids of Egypt were built by intervening extraterrestrials, who used the power plants of their flying saucers to hoist such tonnage into place. Spaceships of vast proportions may have brought extraterrestrial colonists to various parts of Earth and may also have supplied the heavy lift power for erecting great stone works before returning to the home planet.

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*SOME UFOlogists believed humankind's gods, angels, devils, and demons were nothing more than alien visitors.*

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The earliest civilization of which contemporary science has any records flowered among the Sumerians of ancient Mesopotamia. For many years the reason for this sudden onset of culture in Sumer had remained a mystery. It wasn't until the 1980s that science determined just how such a miracle of seemingly instant progress had occurred. Now it is known that

this quantum leap in humankind's intellectual development occurred in Sumer 6,000 years ago when cuneiform writing was developed to record a dramatic starburst. Literally overnight in evolutionary terms, the Sumerians gave the world the first love song, the first school system, the first directory of pharmaceutical concoctions, a law code, and the first parliament. The roots of the Judeo-Christian religious beliefs grew from the "tree of knowledge," the Garden of Eden, which tradition places in that same area. The origins of Western culture were nursed in Sumer, and it has come to be acknowledged as the cradle of civilization—all because of a starburst.

Astronomers recognize that the nearest and brightest supernova that has ever been witnessed by humankind was Vela X, now a faintly flashing pulsar about 1,300 light-years from our solar system. George Michanowsky, a specialist in Mesopotamian astronomy, saw how the first and most fundamental symbol of Sumerian script was one which represented "star." He went on to show how the very first word ever written by a human hand soon became linked with the symbol for "deity," thus communicating "star god." Michanowsky saw the death-blaze of Vela X to have been such a dramatic sky show that it became a profound cultural organizing principle that forced human knowledge to take a giant leap forward. But was there something more that took place at that time?

The Babylonian priest-historian Berossus chronicled the coming of Oannes, an entity described as being half-man, half-fish, who surfaced from the Persian Gulf to instruct the early inhabitants of Mesopotamia in the arts of civilization. Before the advent of Oannes, Berossus stated, the Sumerians lived like beasts in the field, with no order or rule. The Sumerians lived exactly as their primitive forefathers had existed until Oannes, the bizarre "beast with reason" appeared in their midst. The gifted alien entity was endowed with superior intelligence, it is written, but its appearance was frightening to behold. Oannes had the body of a fish with humanlike feet—and a head that combined the features of fish and human.

Berossus explained that the Fishman walked about on land during the day, counsel-

ing the Sumerians, but returned to the ocean each evening. Oannes gave the Sumerians insight into letters and sciences and every kind of art. He taught them to construct houses, to found temples, to compile laws, and explained to them the principles of geometrical knowledge. He made them distinguish the seeds of the earth, and showed them how to collect fruits. In short, he instructed them in everything that could tend to soften their manners and humanize them.

Sumerian astronomers became so accurate in their science that their measurements on the rotation of the Moon is off only 0.4 from modern, computerized figures. One pictograph depicts the planets revolving around the Sun—something that Copernicus and Kepler postulated only 500 years ago. At the height of the Greek civilization, the highest known number was 10,000. After that sum, the Greek mathematicians could only fall back on “infinity.” A tablet found in the hills near ancient Sumer some years back contained a 15-digit number: 195,955,200,000,000.

Many ancient cultures have legends of amphibians or serpent people who, like Oannes, the half-human, half-fish, instructed the early inhabitants of Mesopotamia in the arts of civilization. There was Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent of the Aztecs, who descended from heaven in a silver egg, and there are the Nagas, the handsome, semidivine Serpent People with supernatural powers who figure in the Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Throughout the dim corridors of history, there are frequent mentions of legendary “sky people,” who were considered to have been emissaries of the “flying serpent.” The snake-worshipping Aztecs and Mayans are not far removed from the Chinese, who worshiped a celestial dragon. Both cultures may have been contacted by emissaries from another world, a highly advanced extraterrestrial reptilian species that has been observing the evolution of Earth for millions of years and has returned in the “Grays,” the UFO-nauts of modern times, who are described by contactees and abductees as reptilian in appearance.

If, as those researchers who champion the ancient astronaut hypothesis believe, extrater-

restrials constructed so many of the architectural wonders of the ancient world and may even have guided the evolutionary path of humankind, the great question remains whether the “gods” of old have returned in their chariots as our benefactors or our owners.

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MAN<sup>Y</sup> ancient cultures have legends of amphibians or serpent people.

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#### SPACE VISITORS IN THE BIBLE AND OTHER HOLY BOOKS

One of the most beloved stories in the Christian tradition concerns the Star of Bethlehem that hovered over the stable where lay the infant Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.—c. 30 C.E.). In recent years, some UFO researchers have suggested that the “star” was actually a spaceship from another world, thus raising the controversial question of whether the Holy Bible, the most revered book in the Western world, contains references to UFOs and alien visitors. Provoking even greater controversy are those researchers who make reference to the Christian Apocrypha, books banned by church censorship from services and religious reading, and the claim that Jesus was brought to Earth in the Star of Bethlehem, which is described in the ancient texts as being winged, with various colored rays shooting out from behind it.

According to those UFO researchers who scour the Scriptures for descriptions of extraterrestrial visitations, the writers of bibli-

cal times were at a disadvantage in describing sophisticated spacecraft. For lack of a better term, they resorted to their own known word for a vehicle of transportation—"chariot." Those UFO researchers who have conducted a careful analysis of biblical texts have found three types of cosmic conveyances employed as vehicles of transportation for celestial beings:

1. The wheel, or disc-shaped object described by Ezekiel;
2. the chariot of fire mentioned in the second book of Kings;
3. the cloudy chariot found in the writings of Moses, Daniel, David, Matthew, Paul, and John.

In II Kings 2:11–12, 6:17; Psalms 68:17; and Habakkuk 3:8, the Old Testament writers describe cosmic craft identified as a "chariot of fire" powered by engines called "horses of fire" with "charioteers" (pilots). The chariot's lift-off is described as a "whirlwind." In II Kings is written: "And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal...and...behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven..."

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## THE *Hebrew word to describe demigods, or men of great renown, is Nephilim.*

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In Zachariah 6:1–7, four cosmic pilots are dispatched in as many chariots (spacecraft), which come out from between two mountains. The prophet Zachariah is informed that each charioteer had flight orders to go to a different part of the country. According to the Scripture, the four UFO-nauts had been ordered to "walk to and fro through the earth." The Confraternity Version of the Bible reports that the orders were to "Go patrol the Earth."

Moses frequently mentioned the presence of the cloud chariots: "The Lord descended in the cloud"; "The Lord came down in a cloud"; "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar

of cloud to lead them the way and by night in a pillar of fire." The prophet Daniel was another who described the use of a cloudy chariot for cosmic transportation.

Other UFO researchers say that if one were to read the creation story in Genesis from the historical perspective of our current awareness of genetic engineering, the interaction between the Sons of God and the fair daughters of men assumes a rather different interpretation: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men were fair; so they took them wives of all whom they chose....There were giants on the earth in those days; and also after that, for the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them, and they became giants who in the olden days were men of renown" (Genesis 6:1–4).

If those fallen angels of Genesis should actually have been extraterrestrial scientists conducting experiments on female members of the developing strain of *Homo sapiens*, they were carrying out a directive of the Star Gods to provide early humankind with a genetic boost. The Hebrew word to describe demigods—or men of great renown, those who were said to be the offspring of the Sons of God and the daughters of men—is *Nephilim*. Interestingly, the word used to denote true giants, as far as great stature was concerned, was *rephaim*. The Israelites found such giants among the Canaanite inhabitants of Palestine. Among these were the Anakims of Philisa and the Emims of Moab. Goliath was a Gittite, a man of great stature and bulk, but he was not a Nephilim.

In the apocryphal Book of Enoch (7:12), one learns more of the nonterrestrial entities who desire the daughters of men for their own interests: "It happened after the sons of men had multiplied in those days, that elegant, beautiful daughters were born to them. And when the angels, the sons of heaven, beheld them, they became enamored of them, saying to each other: Come, let us select for ourselves wives from the progeny of men, and let us beget children."

Those researchers who believe that the Bible contains many passages relating to

extraterrestrial visitations often state that “gods” from other worlds may have prompted the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, suggesting that the two cities were devastated by an ancient nuclear blast. They also mention other ancient texts that describe flying machines, advanced technology, and awesome weapons wielded by the gods.

The sacred Hindu hymns, the Rig-Veda, constitute some of the oldest known religious documents. The splendid poetry tells of the achievements of the Hindu pantheon of gods, and one passage tells of Indra, a god-being, who was honored when his name was turned into “India.” Indra, who became known as the “fort destroyer” because of his exploits in war, was said to travel through the skies in a flying machine, the *Vimana*. This craft was equipped with awesome weapons capable of destroying a city. The effect of these weapons seems to have been like that of laser beams or some kind of nuclear device.

Another ancient Indian text, the Mahabharata, tells of an attack on an enemy army: “It was as if the elements had been unfurled. The sun spun around in the heavens. The world shuddered in fever, scorched by the terrible heat of this weapon. Elephants burst into flames....The rivers boiled. Animals crumpled to the ground and died. The armies of the enemy were mowed down when the raging elements reached them. Forests collapsed in splintered rows. Horses and chariots were burned up....The corpses of the fallen were mutilated by the terrible heat so that they looked other than human....”

Many old traditions speak of a war between the forces of light and darkness that raged in humankind’s prehistory. Perhaps there were rival extraterrestrial forces that fought for dominance over prehistoric Earth. According to some traditions, the Sons of Light vanquished certain Dark Magicians who sought to enslave developing humankind. Whatever may have caused such a violent conflict, physical evidence exists on Earth indicating that someone was exercising power of formidable energy. There are accounts of sand melted into glass in certain desert areas, of hill forts with vitrified portions of stone walls, of the remains

of ancient cities that had been destroyed by what appears to have been extreme heat—far beyond that which could have been scorched by the torches of primitive human armies. Even conventionally trained archaeologists who have encountered such anomalous finds have admitted that none of these catastrophes have been caused by volcanoes, by lightning, by crashing comets, or by conflagrations set by humankind.

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THE *Rig-Veda* constitutes some of the oldest known religious documents.

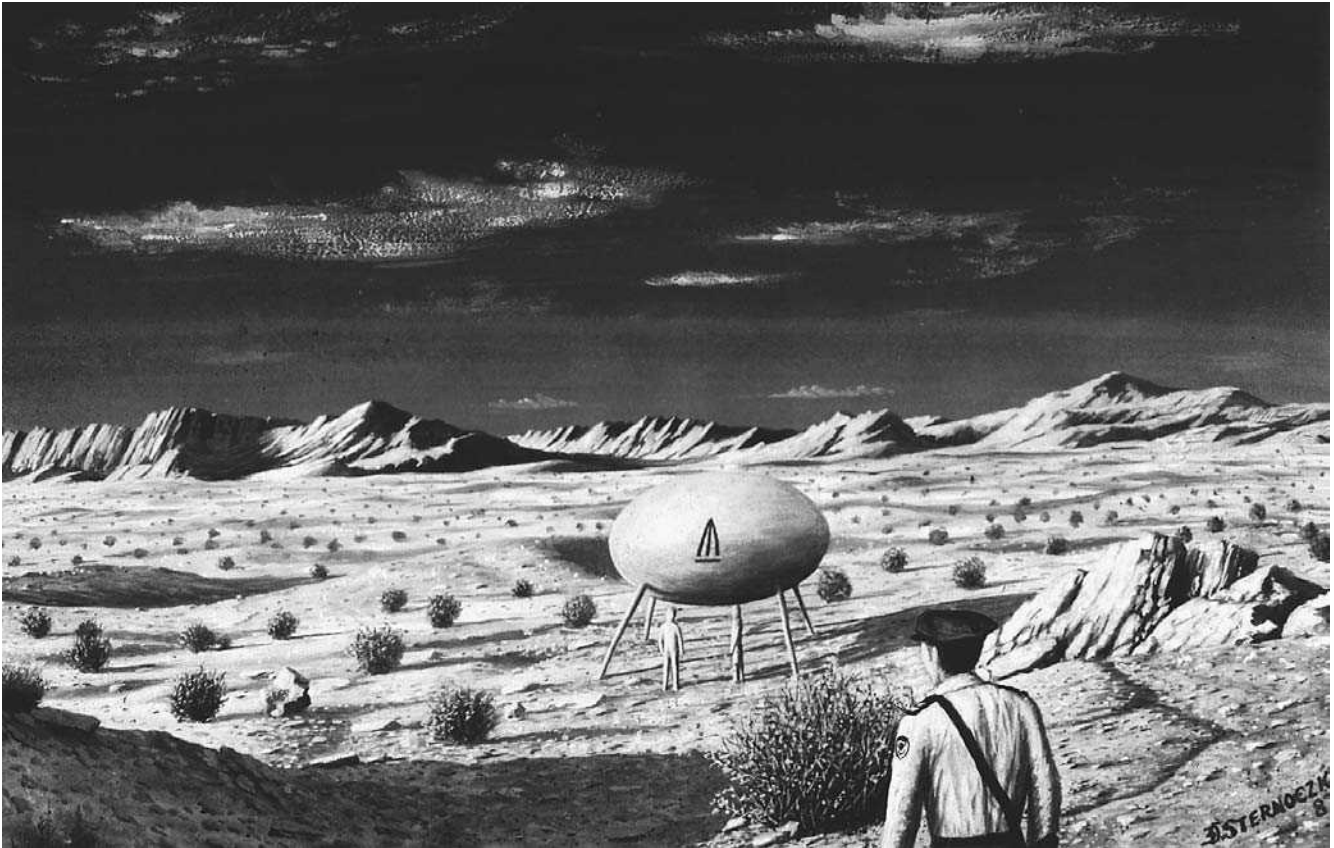
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THE MODERN UFO ERA BEGINS

After takeoff from the Chehalis, Washington, airport in his personal plane on June 24, 1947, Kenneth Arnold headed for Yakima, Washington. As he flew directly toward Mount Rainier at an altitude of approximately 9,500 feet, a bright flash reflected on his airplane. To the left and north of Mount Rainier he observed a chain of nine peculiar-looking objects flying from north to south. They were approaching Mount Rainier rapidly, and he assumed that they were jet aircraft. Every few seconds two or three of the objects would dip or change course slightly, just enough for the sun to reflect brightly off



Picture of a UFO sighting in 1964. (DEZSO STERNOCZKY/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

them. As they approached Mount Rainier he observed their outline quite clearly. Arnold stated that he found it peculiar that he couldn't find their tails, but nonetheless assumed they were some type of jet aircraft.

room rumors had classified the “foo fighters” as another of the Nazis’ secret weapons, but not a single one of the glowing craft was ever shot down or captured. Neither is there any record of a “foo” ever damaging any aircraft or harming any personnel—outside of startling the wits out of pilots and crew members.

*An alleged flying saucer had crashed outside of Roswell, New Mexico, in early July 1947.*

After numerous sightings of unidentified flying objects had been reported by commercial and military pilots and an alleged flying saucer had crashed outside of Roswell, New Mexico, in early July 1947, army air force pilots were reminded of the weird “foo fighters” that several Allied personnel had seen in World War II (1939–45). Often while on bombing missions, crews noticed strange lights that followed their bombers. Sometimes the “foos” darted about. Other times they were seen to fly in formation. Barracks and locker-

The “foos” were spotted in both the European and Far Eastern theaters, and it came as no surprise to these pilots when waves of “foos” were sighted over Sweden in July 1946. A kind of hysteria gripped Sweden, however, and the mysterious “invasion” was reported at great length in the major European newspapers. Some authorities feared that some new kind of German “V” weapon had been discovered and unleashed on the nation that had remained neutral throughout World War II. Others tried to explain the unidentified flying objects away as meteors, but witnesses said that the “ghost rockets” could maneuver in circles, stop and start, and appeared to be shaped like metal cigars.

It may have been an air force officer who remembered the “foo fighters” who gave the



order on July 26, 1952, to “Shoot them down!” when dozens of UFOs suddenly converged over Washington, D.C. Several prominent scientists, including Albert Einstein (1879–1955), protested the order to the White House and urged that the command be rescinded, not only in the interest of future intergalactic peace, but also in the interest of self-preservation: Extraterrestrials would certainly look upon an attack by primitive jet firepower as a breach of the universal laws of hospitality.

The hostile order was withdrawn on White House orders by five o’clock that afternoon. That night, official observers puzzled over the objects, visible on radar screens and to the naked eye, as the UFOs easily outdistanced air force jets, whose pilots were ordered to pursue the objects but to keep their fingers off the trigger. Although the air force was denying the Washington flap within another 24 hours and attributing civilian saucer sightings to the usual causes (hallucinations, seeing planets and stars), the national wire services

had already sent out word that for a time the air force officials had been jittery enough to give a “fire at will” order.

“Star Trek: The Motion Picture.” (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

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OTHERS tried to explain the unidentified flying objects as being meteors.

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On May 15, 1954, air force chief of staff general Nathan Twining told reporters that the “best brains in the Air Force” were trying to solve the problem of the flying saucers. “If they come from Mars,” Twining said, “they are so far ahead of us we have nothing to be afraid of.” However, the general’s assurances that a technologically advanced culture would automatically be benign did little to calm an increasingly bewildered and alarmed American public. And on December 24, 1959, after important people and politicians had begun to demand

Donald Keyhoe.

(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)



that the air force end its policy of secrecy, the much-discussed Air Force Regulation 200-2 was issued to all air force personnel.

Briefly, AFR 200-2 made a flat and direct statement that the air force was definitely concerned with the reporting of all UFOs “as a possible threat to the security of the United States and its forces, and secondly, to determine technical aspects involved.” In the controversial paragraph 9, the secretary of the air force gave specific instructions that air force personnel were not to release reports of unidentified objects, “only reports...where the object has been definitely identified as a familiar object.”

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## THE U.S. Air Force maintained a policy of officially debunking saucer stories for the press.

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On February 27, 1960, Vice Admiral Rosco H. Hillenkoetter, USN, Ret., former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, startled air force personnel when he released to the press photostatic copies of an air force directive that warned air force commands to regard the UFOs as “serious business.” The air force admitted that it had issued the order, but added that the photostatic copy that Hillenkoetter had released to the press was only part of a seven-page regulation, which had been issued to update similar past orders, and made no substantive changes in policy.

The official air force directive indicated the remarkable dual role the air force appeared to play in the unfolding UFO drama. From then on, the unidentified flying objects—sometimes treated lightly by the press and referred to as “flying saucers”—had to be rapidly and accurately identified as serious USAF business. As AFR 200-2 pointed out, the air force concern with these sightings was three-fold: “To determine if the object was a threat to the defense of the United States; to assess whether continued research in the matter of flying saucers would contribute to technical or scientific knowledge; to explain to the American people what was going on in their skies.”

AFR 200-2 stated that the responsibility for handling UFOs should rest with either intelligence, operations, the Provost Marshal, or the Information Officer—in that order of preference, dictated by limits of the base organization. In addition, it was required that every UFO sighting be investigated and reported to the Air Technical Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson AFB and that explanation to the public be realistic and knowledgeable. Obviously, in spite of official dismissals, the air force was much aware of the UFOs and was actively investigating.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, retired Marine Corps Major Donald E. Keyhoe charged the U.S. Air Force with deliberately censoring information concerning UFOs. As a director of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), Keyhoe regularly repeated his accusations that, while the air force was seriously analyzing UFO data in secret, it maintained a policy of officially debunking saucer stories for the press and ridiculing all citizens who reported sightings.

The official air force response was that the reason for the top secret and classified designations on UFO investigations was solely to protect the identities of those individuals who made reports of mysterious, unidentified “somethings” in the skies. The essence of all research, air force spokesmen insisted, was always released to the communications media. Nothing of national interest was being withheld.

But men like Major Keyhoe and the memberships of numerous additional civilian UFO

research groups (of which there were once as many as 50) never accepted the air force's claims of serving the greater public interest by releasing all pertinent details of their studies and investigations. On March 28, 1966, after a saucer "flap" in Michigan, Keyhoe was once again repeating his charges that the Pentagon had a top-level policy of discounting all UFO reports and over the past several years had used ridicule to discredit sightings.

On March 30, 1966, spokesmen for the air force called a press conference to tell the American public that they kept an open mind about UFOs and they categorically denied any "hushing" of saucer reports. In the case of recent Michigan sightings, a spokesman said, "marsh gas" had been pinpointed as the source of colored lights observed by a number of people.

But by 1966, public-opinion surveys indicated that more than 50 million Americans believed in the existence of UFOs. Perhaps in 1947 the majority of men and women had been willing to laugh along with official disclaimers and professional flying saucer debunkers, but 20 years later the UFO climate had become considerably warmer.

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#### THE AIR FORCE AND PROJECT BLUE BOOK

On June 24, 1947, when civilian pilot Kenneth Arnold sighted nine discs near Mount Rainier in the state of Washington and described the motion of the unidentified flying objects as looking like "a saucer skipping across the water," the Boise, Idaho, businessman inadvertently coined a term that would become known in most languages of the world,



Staff of Project Blue Book. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

"flying saucers." The U.S. Air Force immediately denied that they had any such craft, and at the same time officially debunked Arnold's claim of having spotted unidentified flying objects. Donald H. Menzel, Professor of Astrophysics at Harvard, who became an unyielding saucer-skeptic and debunker, said that Arnold had been fooled by the tilting snow clouds or dust haze reflected by the sun. Arnold, however, stuck fast to his story, and the item made the front page of newspapers across the nation. For UFOlogists, it was the birth of an era.

## PROJECT Grudge completed its evaluations of 244 UFO reports in August 1949.

During the period June through December 1947 there was no specific organization responsible for investigating and evaluating UFO reports. At this time everyone had an expert opinion. Even within the military structure, there were those who expressed their own feelings and beliefs as to what UFOs actually represented.

The wide news coverage of public reports of "flying discs or saucers" created sufficient concern at high military echelons to authorize the Air Material Command (AMC) to conduct a preliminary investigation into these





UFO photographed over  
Mt. Rainier. (FORTEAN  
PICTURE LIBRARY)

reports. Early belief was that the objects reported were of aircraft more advanced than those possessed by the U.S. Armed Forces.

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**DURING** *the early 1950s that the national interest in reported sightings increased tremendously.*

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A letter (September 23, 1947) from Lt. General Twining of AMC to the commanding general of the Army Air Forces expressed the opinion that there was sufficient substance in the reports to warrant a detailed study. On December 30, 1947, a letter from the chief of staff directed AMC to establish a project whose purpose was to collect, collate, evaluate, and disseminate all information concerning UFO sightings and phenomena in the atmosphere to those interested agencies. The project was assigned the code name "Sign." The responsibility for "Project Sign" was delegated to the Air Technical Intelligence Center, which was then part of the AMC. In February of 1949 "Project Sign" completed its evaluations of the 243 UFO reports that had been submitted to the project. The report concluded that: "No definite and conclusive evidence is yet available that would prove or disprove the

existence of these UFOs as real aircraft of unknown and unconventional configuration."

"Project Sign" was changed to "Project Grudge" on December 16, 1948, at the request of the director of Research and Development. Project Grudge completed its evaluations of 244 reports in August 1949. The conclusions of the Grudge reports were that the evaluations of reports of UFOs to date had demonstrated that "these flying objects constitute no threat to the security of the United States." Grudge also concluded that reports of UFOs were the result of misinterpretations of conventional objects, a mild form of mass hysteria or war nerves, and individuals who sought to perpetrate a hoax or seek publicity. Project Grudge also recommended that the investigation and study of reports of UFOs be reduced in scope.

Air force investigation of UFOs continued on a reduced scale, and in December 1951 the Air Force entered into a contract with a private industrial organization for another detailed study of the UFO cases on file. The report, which was completed March 17, 1954, is commonly referred to as Special Report Number 14. Reports one through 13 were progress reports dealing with administration. Special Report Number 14 reduced and evaluated all UFO data held in air force files. Basically, the same conclusions were reached that had been noted in both the preceding Sign and Grudge reports.

It was during the early 1950s that the national interest in reported sightings increased tremendously. With the growing volume of reports, a Scientific Advisory Panel on UFOs was established in late 1952. At a meeting held during January 14–18, 1953, all available data was examined. Conclusions and recommendations of this panel were published in a report and made public. The panel concluded that UFOs did not threaten the national security of the United States and recommended that the aura of mystery attached to the project be removed.

In March of 1952 Project Grudge became known as Project Blue Book. From this time to its conclusion in 1969, the project concerned itself with investigation of sightings, evaluation of the data, and release of informa-

tion to proper news media through the Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Information (SAFOI). The staff of Project Blue Book was assigned to carry out three main functions: to try to find an explanation for all reported sightings of UFOs; to determine whether the UFOs posed any security threat to the United States; and to determine if UFOs exhibited any advanced technology that the United States could utilize.

Blue Book officers were stationed at every air force base in the nation. They were responsible for investigating all reported sightings and for getting the reports into Blue Book headquarters at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. The bulk of the investigations, as interpreted by field officers, led Blue Book officials to decide that most people did not see extraterrestrial spacecraft, but bright stars, balloons, satellites, comets, fireballs, conventional aircraft, moving clouds, vapor trails, missiles, reflections, mirages, searchlights, birds, kites, spurious radar indications, fireworks, or flares.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who for more than two decades served as an astronomical consultant to Project Sign and Project Blue Book, had been teaching astronomy at Ohio State University in Columbus, which is not far from Dayton, where Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the home of Project Blue Book, was located. When he entered the project, the government was trying desperately to determine whether it was the Martians or the Russians who were responsible for the elusive discs being tracked in the atmosphere over North America. The air force appealed to Hynek that they needed a competent astronomer to tell them which cases arose out of the misidentification of planets, stars, meteors, and so forth. Hynek admitted later that he was certain that the UFO phenomenon was a result of postwar nerves, and he was certain that in a few years the whole strange business would be forgotten. He also prematurely concluded that the flying saucers were strictly an American fad. He never suspected that it would turn out to be a global phenomenon. But the famous sightings in Michigan in March and April 1967, the ones that got Dr. Hynek dubbed “Dr. Swamp Gas,” demonstrated to “Blue Book’s tame professor” that there was a “backlash of public sentiment.” For the first



J. Allen Hynek. (J. ALLAN HYNEK CENTER FOR UFO STUDIES)

time, Hynek said, he became aware that “the tide was slowly turning.”

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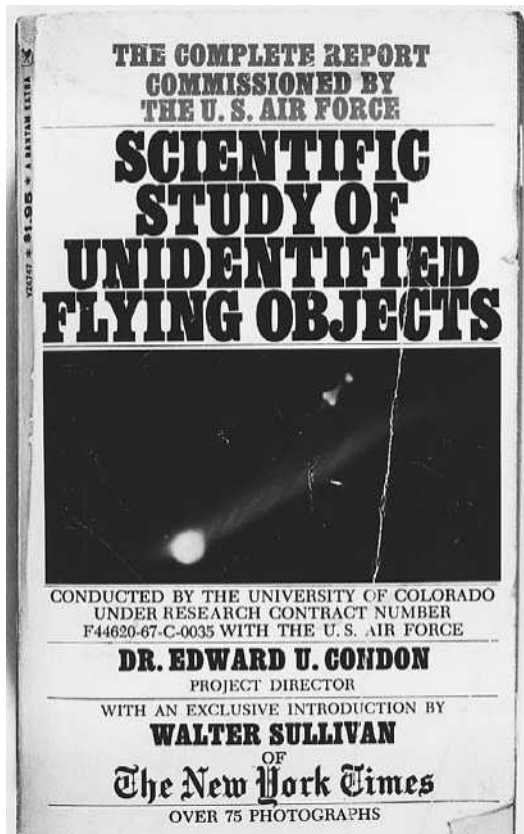
*DR. J. Allen Hynek had been teaching astronomy at Ohio State University.*

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Hynek said that two factions definitely existed in Project Blue Book. There were those individuals who were extremely concerned over the radar trackings and the close approaches made by UFOs to civilian and military aircraft. These investigators assumed that the pilots were being truthful and were not concocting weird tales. These open-minded Blue Book personnel wanted to check all the possibilities. But most of the top brass, Hynek commented, couldn’t understand for a split second why any of their colleagues would bother to take seriously the subject of UFOs. In what would become an often-quoted observation, Hynek said, “Scientists in the year 2066 may think us very naive in our denials.”

Project Blue Book, begun as Project Sign in 1947, produced what the air force considered a satisfactory explanation for most of the

The cover of the US paperback edition of "The Condon Report." (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)



nearly 13,000 sightings reported through 1969. Of the unexplained UFO incidents, the official statement is: "The description of the object or its motion cannot be correlated with any known object or phenomenon."

On the basis of Blue Book reports, therefore, the air force concluded:

1. No UFO has ever given any indication of threat to the national security.
2. There is no evidence that UFOs represent technological developments or principles beyond present-day scientific knowledge.
3. There is no evidence that any UFOs are "extraterrestrial vehicles."

The transfer of the responsibility of UFO research to the University of Colorado in 1969 served to terminate the air force's official involvement in the UFO mystery, but the residue of suspicions and outright accusations of government cover-up and censorship has never been dissipated.

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**THE CONDON/UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO REPORT**

Critics of the University of Colorado report, *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects* (1969), complain that it is neither scientific nor objective and that Edward Condon, head of the project, used the report for personal vindictiveness. Commissioned by the U.S. Air Force at a cost exceeding \$600,000, more than 50 percent of the Condon Report consists of reprints of old U.S. Air Force releases and irrelevant papers and essays on astronomical, meteorological, and other mundane phenomena. Many of the charts and graphs included date back to the early 1950s.

It would appear that little or no effort was made to collect, correlate, and present accurate data on the thousands of UFO reports received and allegedly studied by the project during the 1966–68 period. The various contributors were unfamiliar with UFO research and the report is poorly organized and appears to have been assembled by a group neither informed nor interested in the subject.

Although the Colorado Project clearly represented a conscious effort to satisfy the needs of the air force contract, in the eyes of its critics it did not indicate a sincere effort to collect and examine the basic UFO data. Its main theme appeared to be the criticism of the extraterrestrial thesis. A genuinely scientific study would have collected sufficient data to determine whether or not a phenomenon existed at all. Then all the various theories would have been studied and compared with the available data. Sighting factors of time, geography, terrestrial features, the correlative aspects in the witnesses' backgrounds and features in their reports, must all be sifted and weighed before any theory can be considered. This type of systematic study was not under-

taken. Instead, the project treated the reports individually.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek's review of the *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, which appeared in the April 1969 *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, stated that while the Condon committee avowedly was devoted in large part to exposing hoaxes or the revealing of many UFOs as misidentifications of common occurrences, the report contains the same inexplicable residue of unknowns that plagued the U.S. Air Force investigation for 20 years. In fact, Hynek observed, the percentage of unknowns in the Condon Report appeared to be even higher than in the air force investigation that led to the Condon investigation in the first place.

Two former Condon committee members, David Saunders and Roger Harkins, later wrote the book *UFOS, Yes! Where the Condon Committee Went Wrong* (1968), which depicted a group of investigators at the University of Colorado who had little confidence in the chief scientist, Condon, and who were preoccupied with strenuously avoiding any conclusion that suggested the actual existence of the flying objects sighted by so many people through the years. Saunders and Harkins also showed Condon, the principal investigator, giving statements to the press and to various lecture audiences while the project was still underway, indicating that he had little or no expectation of the investigation ever reaching anything but a completely negative conclusion as to the reality of UFOs.

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#### HANGAR 18

For many years after the alleged event in July 1947 in which a flying saucer was said to have

crashed on a ranch located about 60 miles north of **Roswell, New Mexico**, rumors of diminutive alien corpses found nearby were largely dismissed by all but the more stubborn true believers in extraterrestrial invaders. Every so often, though, stories would surface about Hangar 18 on Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, which was said to hold the remains of the crashed Roswell flying saucer and the refrigerated corpses of the alien bodies that had been found alongside the spaceship.

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**FIVE** alien bodies were allegedly found at the impact site north of Roswell.

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As UFO research enters the twenty-first century, controversy still rages over the truth of whether or not Major Jesse Marcel and his men collected pieces of debris from a flying saucer along with the bodies of two to five extraterrestrial crew members. Many accounts from both civilians and military personnel who claim to have been eyewitnesses to the events at Roswell speak of five alien bodies found at the impact site north of Roswell and state that four corpses were transported to Hangar 18 at Wright Field, with the fifth going to the USAF mortuary service at Lowry Field. Two years before his death in the late 1990s, pilot Oliver "Pappy" Henderson swore at a reunion of his World War II bomber crew that he had flown the remains of four alien bodies out of Roswell Army Field in a C-54 cargo plane in July 1947.

Don Schmitt and Kevin Randle, in their book *UFO Crash at Roswell* (1991), include an interview with Brig. Gen. Arthur Exon in which he states that, in addition to debris from the wreckage, four tiny alien cadavers were flown to Wright Field: "They [the alien bodies] were all found, apparently, outside the craft itself.... The metal and material from the spaceship was unknown to anyone I talked to. [The event at] Roswell was the recovery of a craft from space."

In his subsequent research, Randle has determined that most accounts of eyewitnesses



**Hangar 18 was where the US Air Force kept the alleged wreckage of the UFO crash. (PETER BROOKSMITH/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)**

speak of five alien bodies found at the impact site north of Roswell. His investigations confirm the claims made previously by other researchers that four corpses were transported to Wright Field and the fifth to Lowry Field to the USAF mortuary service. There are, however, numerous secondary accounts that maintain that one of the aliens survived the crash and was still alive when Major Marcel and his retrieval unit arrived on the scene. Some UFO researchers believe that as late as 1986 the alien entity was still alive and well treated as a guest of the air force at Wright-Patterson.

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#### ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO

Although differences of opinion exist on the specifics, there is a tentative consensus among researchers that an extraterrestrial space vehicle crashed on a ranch located about 60 miles north of Roswell, New Mexico, during the time period July 2–4, 1947.

Major Jesse Marcel, recipient of five air combat medals awarded in World War II (1939–45), intelligence officer for the 509th Bomb Group, was ordered to handpick a top-security team and go to the ranch to salvage the

debris of the unknown aircraft that rancher Mac Brazel had discovered on his spread. The strange, weightless material discovered by the 509th Bomber team was difficult to describe. The pieces varied in length from four or five inches to three or four feet. Some fragments had markings that resembled hieroglyphics. Although the material seemed to be unbreakable, the military investigators thought that it looked more like wood than metal. Marcel put his cigarette lighter to one of the rectangular fragments, but it would not burn. Major Marcel and his crew brought as many pieces of the crashed UFO back to Roswell Army Air Field Base as they could gather.

One of the first civilians who claimed to arrive on the scene following the crash was Barney Barnett, a civil engineer from Socorro, New Mexico, who was employed by the federal government. Barnett later told friends that he had seen alien bodies on the ground and inside the spaceship. He described them as small, hairless beings with large heads and round, oddly spaced eyes. According to Barnett, a military unit arrived on the scene and an officer had ordered him off the site with the stern admonition that it was his patriotic duty to remain silent about what he had seen. Although reports of retrieved alien bodies never made it into any military release in July of 1947, accounts of civilian eyewitnesses having seen between two and five nonhuman corpses soon entered the UFO literature.

On July 8, 1947, Walter Haut, public affairs officer at Roswell, issued the famous press release stating that the army had discovered the debris of a crashed flying saucer. The news that the army had a downed saucer in its possession created a sensation around the world. However, after the flying saucer fragments were shipped to Brigadier General Roger Ramey at the 8th Air Force at Fort Worth, Texas, the story of the discovery of the bits and pieces of an extraterrestrial craft was officially transformed into the scraps of a collapsed high-altitude weather balloon.

While General Ramey is said to have been the one who decided to silence the story of the air force collecting flying saucer fragments, retired general Thomas DuBose, who

at the time of the Roswell incident was a colonel and a chief of staff to Ramey, later told quite a different story. According to DuBose, the military investigators had no idea what Major Marcel had sent them, but then the order came down from air force headquarters that the story was to be “contained.”

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◊ ONE of the first civilian who claimed to arrive on the crash scene was Barney Barnett.

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DuBose said that the men came up with the weather balloon story. A balloon such as the one commonly in use at the time was dropped from a couple of hundred feet and they used its pieces for the official debunking photograph.

Lewis Rickert, who in 1947 was a master sergeant and counterintelligence agent stationed at Roswell air field, was among those military personnel who had actually been present at the crash site, and he agreed with General DuBose in 1994 that the fragments collected from the air force had not come from any weather balloon. He recalled that the jagged, flexible fragments were no more than six or seven inches long and up to eight to ten inches wide, and they could not be broken.

In the 1980s, Kevin Randle, a former captain in U.S. Air Force intelligence, together with Don Schmitt, director of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, decided to renew an investigation of the Roswell crash. In their opinion, the Roswell incident, with its much-maligned and hashed-over stories of an alleged flying saucer and alien bodies, still bore many elements of truth. “If all this fuss was simply about a bunch of ranchers and townspeople finding the debris from a balloon, why did the military seek out those witnesses and threaten to silence them?” Randle asked pointedly. “There is no question that members of the Army were ordered never to talk about what they had seen. And there seems to be substantial evidence to support the claims that military representatives visit-



Site of the Roswell, New Mexico UFO crash.  
(ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

ed the homes of civilian witnesses and silenced them as well.”

Randle believes that he and Schmitt have found new evidence indicating that the crash occurred on July 4, 1947, rather than July 2, as is commonly stated. It was on July 5, according to Schmitt and Randle, that Mac Brazel visited Sheriff George Wilcox and informed him of the peculiar discovery he had made near his ranch the day before. The military unit under the command of Major Jesse Marcel retrieved the crash debris and alien bodies on July 5. On July 8, Walter Haut, the public affairs officer at Roswell, issued the press release that the army had captured a flying saucer. Almost immediately thereafter, the official cover story of a collapsed weather balloon falling to Earth in the desert was heavily promoted by the military.

During an interview with a granddaughter of Sheriff George Wilcox in March 1991, Schmitt and Randle were told that not only did the sheriff see the debris of a UFO, he also saw “little space beings.” According to the woman, her grandfather had described the entities as having gray complexions and large heads. They were dressed in suits of a silklike material. Later, military men visited the sheriff and his wife and warned them that they would be killed if they ever told anyone what Wilcox saw at the crash site. And not only would they be killed, but their children and grandchildren would also be eliminated.

The persistent investigations of Randle and Schmitt located a Ms. Frankie Rowe, who had been 12 years old at the time of the mysterious occurrences outside of Roswell. Her father, a lieutenant with the fire department,



had been called to extinguish an early morning fire out north of town. He told his family at dinner that night that he had seen the remains of what he had at first believed to be an airplane, but soon saw was “some kind of ship.” According to Rowe’s father, he also saw two alien corpses in body bags and a third alien entity walking around in a daze. He described the beings as about the size of a 10-year-old.

Schmitt and Randle also located Glenn Dennis, who had been the Roswell mortician in 1947. Dennis told them that he, too, had been threatened by representatives of the military concerning his knowledge of the presence of alien bodies. Dennis said that he had “blundered” into the Roswell Army Air Field hospital on the evening that the alien bodies

had been recovered. According to Dennis, a “nasty red-haired officer” confronted him and warned him that if he ever told anyone about the crash or the alien bodies, “they will be picking your bones from the sand.”

In Randle’s opinion, the results of their research prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that aliens exist. And while he and Schmitt do not know conclusively whether or not one of the alien crew survived the crash outside of Roswell, “there is no doubt that something crashed and that it held a crew.” Randle also insists that “there is no doubt that the crew was not human.”

Nuclear physicist Stanton Friedman firmly believes that a UFO exploded in the area in early July 1947 and that the retrieved pieces

**Alleged alien autopsy performed in Roswell, New Mexico. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)**



were shipped off to Wright Field (now Wright-Patterson Air Force Base) in Dayton, Ohio. He denies the official pronouncement that Major Marcel and his crew found only a downed weather balloon at the crash site. He also dismisses the theory that the debris was that of a crashed Japanese Fugo balloon bomb. It is Friedman's contention that Walter Haut, on direct orders from base commander Colonel William Blanchard, prepared the official press release that initiated the military conspiracy to conceal the truth of a crashed UFO from the public. Friedman argues that an experienced officer such as Major Marcel would have been very familiar with all kinds of weather or military balloons and that he would not have mistaken such ordinary debris for that of a downed alien spaceship. Nor would any of the military personnel have mistaken alien bodies for those of diminutive human remains.

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ACCORDING to the air force report, the alleged alien bodies were artifacts from a project begun in 1953.

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After the wreckage was properly identified as extraterrestrial in nature, Friedman contends, the official cover-up was instigated at both the Roswell base and at the headquarters of the Eighth Air Force in Fort Worth, Texas, by Eighth Air Force Commander Roger Ramey on direct orders from General Clements McMullen at SAC headquarters in Washington, D.C. Friedman has said that he and author-researcher William Moore interviewed at least 130 individuals who have firsthand knowledge of the UFO crash at Roswell.

Veteran UFO researcher John A. Keel completely discounts the allegations that an alien craft crashed near Roswell in July 1947. In his opinion rancher Mac Brazel found the remains of a Japanese Fugo balloon. The strange "metal fragments," Keel asserts, were bits of polished rice paper. The strange alien "hieroglyphics" were simple Japanese instructions, such as "insert in slot B." Remains of the more than 9,000 Fugo balloons launched by

the Japanese during the closing days of World War II were found in more than 300 sites throughout the western states from 1945 onward through the next 20 years. According to Keel, Major Jesse Marcel would have had no trouble identifying the debris as anything other than the pieces of a Japanese balloon bomb.

The United States Air Force chose June 24, 1997—the 50th anniversary of Kenneth Arnold's sighting in Washington State—to conduct a special Pentagon briefing to announce the release of its answer to the Roswell disturbance, *The Roswell Report—Case Closed*. In its explanation of the mystery, the air force claimed that the alleged flying saucer fragments were pieces of a balloon that was used in Project Mogul, a highly classified intelligence-gathering operation that had been instituted immediately after the end of World War II to spy on the Soviets and to monitor their efforts to build nuclear weapons. According to the air force report, the alleged alien bodies seen near the Roswell crash site were actually artifacts from an air force project begun in 1953 during which dummies were dropped from high altitudes in order to test parachute effectiveness. Civilian witnesses saw air force personnel collecting the dummies and mistakenly believed that they were seeing military units retrieving alien corpses. The six-year discrepancy between the Roswell event and the dummy dropping was officially explained as "time compression"; that is, the witnesses became confused about the actual time reference and compressed their memory of the Roswell UFO crash in 1947 and their recollection of the smashed dummies in 1953 into the same scenario.

In his memoirs, *Leap of Faith: An Astronaut's Journey into the Unknown*, United States Air Force Colonel L. Gordon Cooper (Ret.; 1927– ) provides his readers with the astonishing revelation that he once chased UFOs over Germany in his F-86. Cooper also claims that when he was a captain stationed at Edwards Air Force Base on May 3, 1957, he learned of a metallic saucer-shaped object that had landed and was filmed by a technical film crew that had been on assignment some 50 yards away. Although the UFO had zoomed out of sight when the startled photographers

attempted to move closer for a better camera angle, Cooper was ordered by Pentagon officials to have all the film developed—but not printed—and to ship it off to the appropriate officials at once. Cooper writes that he obeyed orders, but he also admits that he peeked at some of the negatives and confirmed that the film crew had most certainly captured a flying saucer on celluloid.

Cooper goes on to tell of an air force master sergeant friend of his who was assigned to a recovery team to retrieve a crashed UFO in a canyon in the Pacific Southwest. According to his friend, they found two human-looking beings sitting atop a metallic, disk-shaped wreckage, smiling at them. The alien pilots were hustled away, and Cooper's friend told him that he never found out what had happened to them.

On October 25, 1998, Cooper's fellow astronaut, Dr. Edgar Mitchell, astonished both UFO believers and skeptics alike when he proclaimed, "Make no mistake, Roswell [the alleged crash site of an alien craft in July 1947] happened. I've seen secret files which show the government knew about it, but decided not to tell the public" (*The People*, London).

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#### SOCORRO, NEW MEXICO

On April 24, 1964, in Socorro, New Mexico, policeman Lonnie Zamora was pursuing a speeding car north on US-85 when he heard a roar and saw flames in an isolated area where a dynamite shack was located. He decided to

abandon the chase and drive to the spot where he believed an explosion had occurred.

After he had traveled a little-used road through an unpopulated area full of hills and gullies and arrived at the site, Zamora saw what he at first thought was an overturned automobile standing on its end. At this point he was about 800 feet away from the scene of the supposed accident. He saw two figures in coveralls, whom he assumed to be the occupants of the upended car.

Later, Zamora would state in his report: "Thought some kids might have turned over. Saw two people in white coveralls very close to the object. One of these persons seemed to turn and look straight at my car and seemed startled—seemed to quickly jump. At this time I started moving my car towards them quickly, with an idea to help. The only time I saw these two persons was when I had stopped...to glance at the object. I don't recall any particular shape...or headgear. These persons appeared normal in shape—but possibly they were small adults or large kids."

Zamora radioed headquarters to report the accident, then proceeded to drive closer to the automobile and its occupants. When he was about 150 feet from the gully, he stopped his patrol car to continue on foot. By now he could clearly see that he had found something far more bizarre than an upended automobile. He saw a white egg-shaped object supported on girderlike legs that had smoke and flame issuing from its underside. He heard a loud roar and feared the object was about to explode. He turned and ran to shield himself behind the patrol car, bumping his leg and losing his glasses on the way.

In his report, he wrote: "It was a very loud roar...Not like a jet...It started at a low frequency quickly, then the roar rose in frequency and in loudness—from loud to very loud...Object was starting to go straight up—slowly up. Flame was light blue and at bottom was sort of orange color."

Crouching behind the patrol car and shielding his eyes with his arm, he watched the object rise to a point about 15 to 20 feet above the ground. The flame and the smoke had ceased swirling around the object, and

Zamora could see a design on its side. The markings were red and shaped like a crescent with a vertical arrow and horizontal line underneath. The UFO remained stationary for several seconds, then flew off in a southerly direction following the contour of the gully.

Within minutes, Sergeant Chavez of the New Mexico State Police arrived in response to Zamora's earlier radio call. He saw no object, but he did take notice of some slight depressions in the ground and some burned brush in the area where Zamora had sighted the object.

The U.S. Air Force sent investigators from their project office at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. The investigation disclosed the following facts:

There were no unidentified helicopters or aircraft in the area. Observers at radar installations had observed 770 unusual or unidentified blips....There was no evidence of markings of any sort in the area other than the shallow depressions at the location....Laboratory analysis of soil samples disclosed no foreign material or radiation above normal....Laboratory analysis of the burned brush showed no chemicals which would indicate a type of propellant....

In his report of the Socorro case to arch UFO skeptic Dr. Donald H. Menzel, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, scientific consultant for Project Blue Book, the U.S. Air Force's official investigation of UFOs, wrote: "I wish I could substantiate the idea that it was a hoax or hallucination. Unfortunately, I cannot. I have talked at length with the principals in the sighting, and unless my knowledge of human nature is utterly out of phase, I would feel that [Lonnie Zamora] is incapable of perpetrating a hoax. He is simply a good cop...he resented the whole thing because it prevented him from getting his quota of speeders that day. He is not imaginative, sticks solidly to business, and is far from talkative...."

"Major [Hector] Quintanilla [Air Force officer in charge of Project Blue Book at that time] is convinced that the Socorro sighting is neither a hoax nor a hallucination, but he

feels that perhaps some sort of test object (war games, etc.) might have been going on. However, there is no record of such an event though he has tried to track this down through White Sands, Holloman Air Force Base, and a few others. I would like to go along with the hallucination idea if it weren't for the marks and burned patches."

The once-skeptical Hynek was not the only one convinced of the authenticity of the Socorro, New Mexico, sighting by Zamora. The case remains one of the most solid in Project Blue Book files and in the annals of UFO research.

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## UFO CONTACTEES AND ABDUCTEES

The UFO contactees are men and women who are convinced that they encountered alien "space intelligences" and that they remain in direct communication with them through telepathic thought transference. In many cases, UFO researchers have observed that there does seem to be a heightening of what one would normally consider manifestations of **extrasensory perception** after the contact experience with an alleged benevolent space being. Along with psychic abilities, the contactee is often left with a timetable of certain predictions of future events.

In spite of such setbacks as unfulfilled prophecies, a good many of the contactees continue to be instilled with an almost religious fervor to spread the message that has been given to them by the space beings. A distillation of such messages would reveal concepts such as the following:

1. Humankind is not alone in the solar system and now brothers and sisters from

China entered the twenty-first century with a rash of more than 3,000 UFO sightings across the nation, and according to Sun Shili, head of the Beijing UFO Research Organization.

In the summer months of 2002, it was announced that a group of nine Chinese scientists would visit the western region of Qinghai Province to examine relics allegedly left there by extraterrestrial beings. The site, known to local inhabitants as the "ET relics," is on Mount Baigong, about 28 miles to the southwest of Delingha City.

Yang Ji, a research fellow at the Purple Mountain Observatory of the Chinese Academy, stated that the area is high in altitude with thin and transparent air, an ideal place to practice astronomy. While conceding that the extraterrestrial hypothesis as an explanation for the mysterious relics is worth examining, Yang stressed that scientific analysis is necessary to prove whether or not it is true.

## CHINA AND UFO RESEARCH

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outer space have come to Earth to help those humans who will listen to their promise of a larger universe.

2. The space beings want humankind to become eligible to join an intergalactic spiritual federation.
3. The space beings are to assist the people of Earth to lift their spiritual vibratory rate so they may enter new dimensions. (According to the space beings, Jesus, Krishna, Confucius, and many of the other leaders of the great religions came to Earth to teach humanity these same abilities.)
4. The citizens of Earth stand now in the transitional period before the dawn of a New Age of peace, love, and understanding.
5. If the earthlings should not raise their vibratory rate within a set period of time, severe Earth changes and major cataclysms will take place.

How do the flying-saucer contactees encounter the space beings? A synthesis of such experiences reveals the following.

They first saw a UFO on the ground, hovering low overhead, or heard a slight humming sound above them that drew their attention to a mysterious craft.

Next, a warm ray of "light" emanated from the craft and touched the contactees on the neck, the crown of the head, or the middle of the forehead. They may have lost consciousness at this point and, upon awakening, may have discovered that they could not account for anywhere from a minute or two to an hour or two of their time. Those contactees who later claim direct communication with space beings generally state that they have no recollection of any period of unconsciousness, but they maintain that they "heard" a voice speaking to them from inside their own heads.

Many contactees are told that they were selected because they really are aliens, who were planted on Earth as very small children.

After the initial contact experience, nearly all contactees seem to suffer through several days of restlessness, irritability, sleeplessness, and unusual dreams or nightmares.

After a period of a week to several months, the contactee who has received a message from the space beings feels prepared to go forth and share it with others.

None of the flying-saucer contactees seem to feel any fear of their solar brothers and sisters and most of them look forward to a return visit from the space beings.

Family and friends of the contactees report that they are different and changed persons after their alleged experience with the space beings.

Most UFO contactees agree that the space beings' most prominent characteristic is wisdom, and they seem to take their scientific knowledge for granted. After all, contactees reason, if they have traveled through space from other worlds to Earth, then they must be extremely intelligent.

actively trying to protect it and the people in it. Both the space beings and the angels are powerful entities who appear to have control over the physical limitations of time and space—yet they are benevolent in their actions toward stumbling, ineffectual humankind. It seems that space beings have deliberately placed themselves in the role of messengers of God, or that humans hope that there exist such beings who can extricate humankind from the disasters of its own making.

Although most of the contactees claim an initial physical contact with a space being, the operable mechanics of the experience seem reminiscent of what can be seen in **Spiritualism** as the **medium** works with a **spirit guide** or a control from the “other side.” In Spiritualistic or mediumistic **channeling**, the sensitive individual enters the **trance state** and relays information through the guide, who contacts various spirits of deceased human personalities. The mechanism in the **Flying Saucer Movement** is often that of the contactee going into some state of trance and channeling information from space beings. George King, **George Van Tassel**, Gloria Lee, George Hunt Williamson, and several other contactees have been members of psychic development groups.

It is impossible to estimate how many men and women claim to receive messages from space beings. Groups continue to rise from dynamic contactees, each with their variations of previous revelations and their own occasional individual input. There is also the category of revelators that UFO researchers term the “silent contactees”—men and women who have not gathered groups about them, but who have established contact with what they feel to be entities from other worlds and who have directed their lives according to the dictates of those space beings. Many of these men and women continue to work in conventional jobs, confiding their experiences only to close associates and family members.

While the number of UFO contactees remains nebulous at best, estimates presented at a conference on the alien-abduction phenomenon at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in June 1992 suggested that as

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**UFO** *contactees are instilled with an almost religious fervor to spread messages given to them by space beings.*

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Hard-nosed Earth scientists, however, remain singularly unimpressed with the specific technical information that has been relayed by the contactees. Those sympathetic to the contactees might argue that the UFO crews deem their science to be incomprehensible to humankind at this point; other theorists suggest that the contactees are not communicating with alien entities at all, but rather, with a higher aspect of their own psyches.

Some researchers have observed that the space beings appear to function as do the angels of more conventional theologies. Both beings are concerned about Earth; they seem to be

many as several hundred thousand to more than three million adults in the United States alone have had abduction experiences with UFO beings. While such a figure seems mind-boggling to say the least, some UFO researchers say that the true figure would be much higher.

Dr. R. Leo Sprinkle, formerly on staff at the University of Wyoming in Laramie and now in private practice, has speculated that there may be hundreds of thousands of people who have had a UFO encounter but who were not even aware of it at the time. Sprinkle lists several characteristics common among people who have had such experiences:

1. An episode of missing time. Under hypnosis many people remember driving down the road and then being back in their car. They know that “something” happened between the two points of consciousness, but they can’t fill in the missing time.
2. Disturbing dreams. The abductee will dream about flying saucers, about being pursued and captured, and being examined by doctors in white coats.
3. Daytime flashbacks of UFO experiences. While they are doing tasks in their normal daytime activities, abductees will flash back to some kind of UFO image or UFO entity.
4. Strange compulsions. Sprinkle told of one man who for seven years felt compelled to dig a well at a particular spot. Under hypnosis he revealed that a UFO being had told him they would contact him if he dug a well.
5. A sudden interest in UFOs. The abductee may suddenly give evidence of a compulsion to read about UFOs, ancient history, or pyramids and crystals, without knowing why.

In 1976 Carl Higdon, a 41-year-old Wyoming oil-field worker, claimed to have been kidnapped by alien beings while he was hunting elk in a remote wilderness area. Higdon said that he was lifted aboard a spacecraft and taken millions of miles to another planet where he saw other earthlings living with alien beings. It was Higdon’s impression that the aliens had been taking people from Earth for many years—as well as a sizable stock of various animals and fish. Higdon was given a

physical examination by the extraterrestrials, told that he was unsuitable for their needs, and returned to Earth.

Sprinkle hypnotized Higdon a number of times and gained remarkable details of the experience. Higdon had gone to the north edge of the Medicine Bow National Forest to hunt wild game. About mid-afternoon, he walked onto a rise and spotted five elk grazing in a clearing a few hundred yards away. He picked out the largest buck, lined it up in his telescopic sights, and pulled the trigger. He could not believe his eyes when the powerful bullet from his magnum rifle left the barrel noiselessly and, in slow motion, floated like a butterfly for about 50 feet, then fell to the ground.

Higdon heard a twig snap, and he turned to face a strange-looking entity more than six feet tall, about 180 pounds, with yellowish skin color. The being possessed a head and face that seemed to extend directly into its shoulders, with no visible chin or neck. The humanoid had no detectable ears, small eyes with no brows, and only a slit of a mouth. Two antenna-like appendages protruded from its skull.

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*A conference on alien-abduction suggested as many as several hundred thousand to more than three million adults have had abduction experiences with UFO beings.*

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The alien being raised its hand in greeting to Higdon and floated a package of pills in his direction. Higdon remembers that he swallowed one of the pills upon the direction of the entity, and the next thing he knew, he was inside a cube-shaped object with the being, at least one other alien, and the five elk. Higdon was strapped to a seat with a football-like helmet on his head. Then he underwent a bizarre trip through space in a small, transparent craft.

Most of the details of Higdon’s fantastic journey were gleaned during the hypnosis sessions with Sprinkle. Higdon told the doctor that he witnessed portions of what appeared to be a futuristic city of tall spires and towers

and revolving multicolored lights. After a physical examination, he was returned to the space vehicle. When he looked out of the transparent sides, he observed five other beings who appeared to be humans.

The UFO set down again in Medicine Bow National Forest. Higdon was placed back in his truck, his rifle was returned, and he was relieved of the pills that the being had given him. Dazed by the strange experience, Higdon managed to radio for help. Then he apparently blacked out until he was found several hours later. Higdon spent three days in the Carbon County Memorial Hospital at Rawlins, undergoing extensive tests and rambling and shouting about four-day pills and men in black suits.

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**UNEXPLAINABLE** *recoveries from ailments often occur among people who claim to have been examined by alien beings.*

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Higdon apparently experienced a miraculous healing of a tubercular-type scar on his lung. A problem with kidney stones also disappeared after his trip to outer space. Dr. Sprinkle has observed that such unexplainable recoveries from ailments often occur among people who claim to have been examined by alien beings.

David Webb, an Arlington, Massachusetts, solar physicist, cochair of the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), a top UFO research organization, believes that space aliens have abducted one out of every eight people who have reported seeing UFOs. In Webb's research, in many cases the victims undergo some kind of examination, but they usually remember nothing of the onboard experience.

In the course of the numerous hypnotic regressions that he conducted with UFO abductees, Dr. James Harder said that he had found much evidence to support the theory that alien abductors return to find and to reexamine abductees at various intervals, sometimes throughout a person's lifetime and sometimes without his or her being aware of

it. Harder observed that it is as if some sort of extraterrestrial group of psychologists is making a study of humans.

Harder and other researchers have discovered that a high percentage of people who have been abducted have undergone multiple experiences with UFO entities. Most abductees who have had more than one experience with UFO aliens usually undergo the first encounter between the ages of five and nine. These abductees remember the alien as friendly and quite human in appearance. Upon further hypnotic regression and careful probing, however, the investigators have learned that the entity did not look human at all.

In most cases, the entity usually tells the children that it will be back to see them throughout the course of their life. It also admonishes the children not to tell their parents about the encounter.

Harder has also discovered that during the adult abductee experience, those men and women undergoing the encounter will often report having a vague memory of their abductor, and they will later say that they feel as though they have seen the entity before. In Harder's opinion, the multiple UFO abduction is not a random occurrence.

The abductees speaking at the Mutual UFO Network's Washington, D.C., conference in June of 1987 reported frightening and disorienting aspects of their UFO experiences. They said that they often remembered the events only in fragments and flashes until they underwent hypnotic regression. For the abductees speaking on the panel, the interaction with the UFO entities had seemed primarily to be negative. They told of the frustration of being partially paralyzed and taken without their consent to undergo medical examinations.

**Whitley Strieber**, author of the best-selling book *Communion* (1987), said that he had attempted to deal with his tension and anxiety over having undergone an abduction experience by writing about his encounter. Strieber told the group assembled for the abductee panel at the Washington, D.C., conference that when he first realized what had happened to him, he was suicidal. Then he

began to investigate some UFO literature and discovered that others had had similar experiences. He sought out the services of a hypnotist, thinking that perhaps that would be the last of the ordeal. It wasn't, of course, and he wrote the book hoping that the memories and the feelings would go away. Regretfully, the memories returned.

Strieber went on to say that he had received thousands of letters from other abductees—people who do not welcome publicity, including entertainers, political leaders, and members of the armed forces in high positions. According to Strieber, all of these abductees had reported a basic progression of emotions, moving from uneasy, fragmented recollections to a clear memory accompanied by fear. If the abductees consented to undergo hypnotic regression, they usually became even more terrified. Instead of attempting to glean more and more information about the abductee through hypnotic regression, Strieber suggested that concerned researchers should be trying to help these individuals with their fright and helping them gain more understanding about what had happened to them.

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#### GEORGE ADAMSKI (1891–1965)

George Adamski was the first of the New Age UFO prophets, and just as the prophets of old went out into the desert to receive their revelations directly from God or the angels, Adamski went out into the night near Desert Center,

California, on November 20, 1952, and received his first revelatory encounter with Orthon, a Venusian space brother. Through telepathic transfer, Adamski learned that the space traveler was benign and greatly concerned with the spiritual growth of humankind. Adamski's desert encounter with a Venusian and Robert Wise's motion picture *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), with its warning that Earth had better clean up its act delivered by an alien messenger, were probably the two most contributive factors in birthing the UFO contactee movement in the United States.

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GEORGE Adamski was the first of the New Age UFO prophets.

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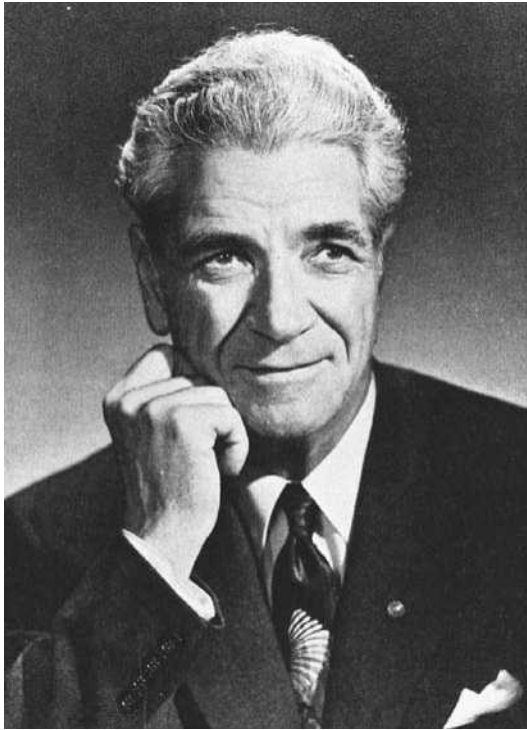
After Adamski published *Flying Saucers Have Landed* (1953), coauthored with Desmond Leslie, he became popular as a lecturer and had little difficulty establishing himself as the best known of all the contactees, who were now springing up around the world. Flying saucer mania was rampant in the early 1950s with a cautious public wanting to know who was piloting the mysterious craft in the sky, where they were from, and what they looked like. Adamski had the answers. Orthon, the Venusian, was smooth-skinned, beardless, with shoulder-length blond hair, stood about five feet six inches tall, and wore what appeared to be some kind of jumpsuitlike apparel. Orthon had come in peace, eager to warn earthlings about radiation from the nuclear tests that were being conducted. There were universal laws and principles established by the Creator of All, and the people of Earth would do well to begin to practice those laws at once. All these messages were transmitted telepathically to Adamski to relay to his fellow earthlings, but later, after he had been taken for a trip into outer space, Adamski was able to communicate verbally with such entities as Firkon, the Martian, and Ramu, from Saturn.

The death of George Adamski on April 12, 1965, by no means terminated the heated controversy that had never stopped swirling



**George Adamski.**

(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)



around the prolific and articulate contactee. Throughout his career as a contactee, Adamski's believers steadfastly declared him to be one of the most saintly of men, completely devoted to the teachings of universal laws. It appears that after his death, certain of his followers found it necessary to provide their disciple of intergalactic peace with a kind of instant resurrection. In the book *The Scoriton Mystery* (1967) by Eileen Buckle, a contactee named Ernest Bryant claims to have met three spacemen on April 24, 1965, one of whom was a youth named Yamski, whose body already housed the reincarnated spirit of George Adamski.

According to Desmond Leslie, George Adamski had an audience with Pope John XXIII (1881–1963) just a few days before the pope passed away. Leslie said that he met Adamski at the airport in London just after he had flown in from Rome. He drove Adamski straight to his little river cruiser at Staines, where several people interested in UFOs had been spending the weekend.

Sometime during the next few days, Adamski showed Leslie a memento that he said no one would ever take from him, and he produced an exquisite gold medal with Pope

John's effigy on it. Later Leslie checked and found it was a medal that had not yet been released to anyone.

When Adamski was asked how he had received it, he answered that Pope John had given it to him the day before. Adamski went on to say how he had arrived at the Vatican according to the space people's instructions and had been taken straight in, given a cassock, and led to the pope's bedside. It was here that Adamski had handed Pope John a sealed package from the space brothers. It was said that Pope John's face had beamed when he received the package, and he said, "This is what I have been waiting for!" The pope then presented Adamski with a special medal, and the papal audience ended.

Leslie said that he later checked with Lou Zinsstag, who had allegedly taken Adamski to the Vatican. Zinsstag reported that when they had approached the Vatican and neared the private entrance, a man with "purple at his throat" (apparently a monsignor or a bishop) appeared.

Adamski had cried out, "That's my man!", greeted the papal official, and was led in for an audience with the pope. Zinsstag said that when he reappeared about 20 minutes later, Adamski appeared to be in the same state of excitement and rapture as witnesses had described him being in after his desert contact with the space brothers in 1952.

When Leslie later asked an abbot what he knew about the medal, the clergyman was amazed and said that such a medal would only have been given to someone in the most exceptional circumstances, and that no one, so far as he knew, had yet received this particular medal.

Leslie admitted that he had initially disbelieved that Adamski had received such an audience with the pope, but this confirmation from the abbot with regard to the medal had overcome his former disbelief. When Leslie asked Adamski what the space brothers' package had contained, the contactee said that he did not know. He related that the package had been given to him by the space brothers before he left for Europe and that he had been given instructions to present it to the pope.

He was also told that all arrangements had been made inside the Vatican for such an audience to take place. This suggested to Leslie that the space brothers have a “fifth column” in St. Peter’s seat as well as everywhere else.

Later, Adamski told Leslie that he thought the package had contained instructions and advice for the Second Ecumenical Council. It is possible that the package also contained a message to St. Peter’s successors that chided them about certain lax measures and encouraged them to get on with the serious work required on Earth.

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#### DANIEL W. FRY (1908–1992)

Daniel Fry’s initial contact with beings that he claimed were space people took place on July 4, 1950, near the White Sands Proving Grounds (now Missile Range) near Las Cruces, New Mexico. Fry described himself as “an internationally known scientist, researcher, and electronic engineer” and as one who was “recognized by many as the best-informed scientist in the world on the subject of space and space travel.” While he may have been the most technically sophisticated of the early UFO contactees, skeptical researcher Philip J. Klass (1919– ) claimed in *UFOs Explained* (1974) that Fry’s doctoral degree from “St. Andrews College of London, England” was issued by a small religious organization that awarded doctorates to whomever submitted a 10,000-word thesis and paid a fee. While the validity of his Ph.D. may be in doubt, Fry was employed as an

engineer with Aerojet General at the time that he claimed to have met the space people.

According to Fry, he missed the bus that would have taken him into town to observe the traditional July Fourth fireworks, so he decided to take a walk in the desert. What he had at first believed to be a strangely behaving star landed about 70 feet away from him and revealed itself to be a flying saucer. A friendly, but invisible, space traveler named A-lan (Alan) invited Fry on board and, while explaining some of the technical aspects of the spacecraft, whisked him to New York City and back to White Sands in 30 minutes. Fry estimated the speed of the UFO to be at least 8,000 miles per hour.

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THE space people, according to Fry, were descendents of the lost continent of Lemuria.

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Although Fry later changed the date of his initial contact to 1949, he claimed to have been contacted by Alan three more times between 1950 and 1954. The space people, according to information received by Fry, were descendents of the lost continent of **Lemuria**, which had destroyed itself in an atomic war with **Atlantis** about 30,000 years ago. Because Lemurians had achieved space flight, a few survivors managed to escape in four vehicles before the final destruction occurred. One ship was lost on the flight to Mars, but three of the Lemurian craft landed safely and began to fashion a new society on that planet. Eventually, the descendents of Lemuria, the immigrant Martians, had truly become space people, traveling independent of any planet in self-sustaining ships, moving through space wherever they chose.

Fry established Understanding Incorporated in 1955 as a means of better spreading the teachings of Alan, who had told him that he had been chosen to act as the liaison between Earth and the planetary members of the Galactic Confederation. The space people warned that humans must learn to live in peace, or they were likely to destroy themselves with nuclear power, thereby replicating the disaster



**Frank Scully and Daniel Fry in the May/June 1995 issue of *International UFO Reporter*. (J. ALLEN HYNEK CENTER FOR UFO STUDIES)**

that had occurred in prehistoric times to Lemuria and Atlantis. Alan urged Earth people to build a firmer spiritual relationship with one another and with the Infinite Intelligence that pervades and controls the universe. Fry remained active as a lecturer in the Flying Saucer Movement until his death in 1992 and directed one of the largest of the UFO groups, comprising more than 60 units.

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**BETTY (1920– ) AND BARNEY HILL (1922–1969)**

The case of Betty and Barney Hill has become the prototype for the “interrupted journey,” the classic case of humans abducted and examined by aliens from another world. Their story was covered extensively by John G. Fuller in the book *Interrupted Journey* (1966), and there was even a made-for-television movie (1975) with James Earl Jones and Estelle Parsons playing Barney and Betty.

On September 19, 1961, Betty, a social worker, and Barney, a mail carrier, then in their 40s, were returning to their home in New Hampshire from a short Canadian vacation when they noticed a bright object in the night sky. Barney stopped the car and used a pair of binoculars to get a better look at it. As he studied the object, its own illumination showed a well-defined disklike shape, moving in an irregular pattern across the moonlit sky.

Fascinated, Barney walked into a nearby field where from that perspective he could perceive what appeared to be windows—and,

in the windows, beings—looking back at him. The feeling that he was being watched frightened Barney, and he ran back to the car, got in, and began to race down the road. Then, as if obeying some internal directive, he drove down a side road—where the Hills found five humanoid aliens standing in their path. Suddenly unable to control their movements, Betty and Barney were taken from their car and, in a trancelike condition, led to the UFO by the humanoids.

The sensational details of the Hills' story were recalled later while under hypnosis, for the couple had a complete loss of memory concerning the nearly two hours that they were abducted by the UFOs. According to information later retrieved under hypnosis, Betty and Barney were returned unharmed to their car with the mental command that they would forget all about their abduction experience. The UFO then rose into the air and disappeared from sight, leaving the Hills to continue their journey home, oblivious to the whole event.

Perhaps the remarkable encounter would never have been brought to light except for two factors: they began to experience strange and disconcerting dreams that they could not understand, and they could not explain the unaccountable two missing hours in their journey home from Canada.

Betty decided to seek the help of a psychiatrist friend, who suggested that the memory of those lost hours would return in time, perhaps in only a few months. But the details of that unexplained "interruption" remained in a troubled limbo of fragmented memories until the Hills began weekly hypnosis sessions with Dr. Benjamin Simon, a Boston psychiatrist.

Under Simon's guidance, the couple revealed an astonishing pastiche of bizarre physical and mental examinations at the hands of an extraordinary group of extraterrestrial medical technicians. The individual accounts of Betty and Barney agreed in most respects, although neither was made aware of what the other had disclosed until later. In essence, both told of being treated by aliens from space in much the same manner as human scientists might examine laboratory



**Betty and Barney Hill** claimed they were abducted by UFOs. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

animals. Although the couple had been given hypnotic suggestions by the aliens that they would forget their experience, their induced amnesia was apparently penetrated when they were rehypnotized by Simon.

Much has been made of the Hills alien medical examinations, and their much-publicized experience may have provided the prototype for thousands of other individuals who have claimed alien abductions with their requisite physical and sexual exams. However, the single aspect that may be most essential in giving the Hills' story credibility is the star map that Betty said she was shown by the extraterrestrials while on board the UFO.

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**THE** *existence of two stars, Zeta I and Zeta II Reticuli, were not confirmed by astronomers until 1969—eight years after the Hills' abduction experience.*

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Under hypnosis in 1964, three years after their alleged alien abduction, Betty, with little or no understanding of astronomy, drew her impressions of the map with a remarkable expertise that concurred with other, professionally drawn, star maps. As an important bonus, Betty's map showed the location of two stars called Zeta I and Zeta II Reticuli, allegedly the home base of the space travelers who abducted

them. Interestingly, the existence of the two stars was not confirmed by astronomers until 1969—eight years after the Hills' abduction experience and five years after Betty remembered seeing the star map aboard an alien spaceship. As an added bit of data to support Betty Hill's claim that her recollection of the map was an actual memory of having been shown an artifact created by an extraterrestrial intelligence, the two fifth-magnitude stars, Zeta I and Zeta II Reticuli, are invisible to observers north of the latitude of Mexico City.

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#### THE MEN IN BLACK (MIB)

Ever since organized flying saucer research began in the early 1950s, a number of UFO investigators have claimed that they have suffered personal harassment, unusual accidents, and even mysterious deaths due to the visitations of three mysterious men in black. In some cases, according to UFO researchers, sinister voices whispered threats over the telephone and warned them to terminate specific investigations. By the mid-1960s, percipients of alleged UFO activity continued to protest that they had been visited by ominous strangers who made it clear that their orders to remain silent about what they had seen would be violently enforced.

Official disclaimers by the U.S. Air Force, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and

the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have served only to intensify the mystery of the bizarre incidents that have instilled fear among those who witnessed flying saucer phenomena and have prompted accusations of government cover-ups by members of civilian research groups for over 50 years.

The legend of the three Men in Black, the MIB, began in September 1953 when Albert K. Bender, who had organized the International Flying Saucer Bureau, received certain data that he felt provided the missing pieces concerning the origin of flying saucers. Bender wrote down his theory and sent it off to a friend he felt he could trust. When the three men appeared at Bender's door, one of them held that letter in his hand.

The three Men in Black told Bender that among the many researchers he had been the one to stumble upon the correct answer to the flying-saucer enigma. Then they filled him in on the details. Bender became ill. He was unable to eat for three days.

Bender went on to say that when people found out the truth about flying saucers there would be dramatic changes in all things. Science, especially, would suffer a major blow. Political structures would topple. Mass confusion would reign.

In 1962, Bender decided that he would at last tell his story to the world in *Flying Saucers and the Three Men*. This perplexing volume served only to confuse serious researchers, as it told of Bender's astral projection to a secret underground saucer base in Antarctica that was manned by male, female, and bisexual creatures. Many questions remained to plague UFO investigators. Were Bender's experiences really of a psychic nature? Was his book deliberately contrived to hide the true nature of his silencing? Had the whole experience been clothed in an extended metaphor that might yield certain dues to the perceptive researcher?

In the opinion of many UFO investigators, the Men in Black are representatives of an organization on the planet Earth, but they are not from any known bureau in the U.S. government. According to some researchers, both these men and the UFOs come from some civilization that has flourished in a remote area of



Earth, such as the Amazon, the North Gobi Desert, or the Himalaya Mountains.

Within a few months after Bender had been silenced, Edgar R. Jarrold, organizer of the Australian Flying Saucer Bureau, and Harold H. Fulton, head of Civilian Saucer Investigation of New Zealand, received visits from mysterious strangers and subsequently disbanded their organizations.

John H. Stuart, a New Zealander, picked up a piece of metal that had fallen from a UFO during a close sighting in February 1955. The next night he received a visit from a man dressed in black who announced that he had more right than Stuart did to the piece of grey-white metal. The man in black told Stuart a lot about flying saucers and left him feeling frightened.

"I have a feeling that some day there will come a slow knocking at my own door," Gray Barker (1925– ) wrote in *They Knew Too*

*Much About Flying Saucers* (1956). "They will be at your door, too, unless we all get wise and find out who the three men really are."

UFO and paranormal investigator John A. Keel's (1930– ) pursuit of the flying saucer silencers in the late 1960s led him to uncover some extreme cases of personal abuse in which certain contactees or investigators had been kidnapped by three men in a black car. Keel noted that it was nearly always three men who subjected the victims to some sort of brainwashing technique that left them in a state of nausea, mental confusion, or even amnesia lasting for several days. The investigation of many of these cases never get beyond local police departments, Keel found. Neither the FBI nor any other central government agency was engaged in collecting information on such stories of mistreatment by the mysterious three Men in Black.

Responding to accusations from civilian researchers who demanded an investigation

**Actors Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones in the sci-fi movie "Men in Black." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)**

and who suggested that the air force was somehow behind such silencings, Colonel George P. Freeman, Pentagon spokesman for Project Blue Book, was quoted as saying that the three Men in Black were not connected with the air force in any way. Nor would any other United States security group claim them. It has never been within the line of duty of any government agency to threaten private citizens or to enter their home without a search warrant. No government agent is empowered to demand surrender of private property by any law-abiding citizen. Freeman went on to say that by posing as air force officers and government agents, the silencers were committing a federal offense.

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## THE legend of the three Men in Black, the MIB, began in September 1953.

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Broadcaster Frank Edwards (1908–1967), who became well known for his best-selling *Flying Saucers—Serious Business* (1966), made much of what he believed to be an official plot that had been set to silence him. Before becoming interested in UFOs, Edwards had been conducting a highly successful radio show sponsored by the American Federation of Labor (AFL). He was warned to abandon the subject of flying saucers, and when Edwards persisted, he was given his walking papers.

In spite of thousands of letters protesting the firing of Edwards and the silencing of his UFO reports, his ex-sponsor stood firm. When reporters asked George Meany, president of the AFL, why Edwards had been dropped, Meany answered that it was because he had talked too much about flying saucers. Edwards claimed that he later learned that his constant mention of UFOs had been irritating to the Defense Department and that the department had brought pressure to bear on the AFL.

Edwards was only temporarily silenced, and he soon had in syndication a radio show that dealt almost exclusively with flying saucers and other strange phenomena. But his sudden death on June 24, 1967, the 20-year

anniversary of Kenneth Arnold's sighting of the flying saucers near Mt. Rainier, Washington, sparked immediate concern among UFO researchers that Edwards had been silenced for good. And it certainly added to the paranoia that he had died on the day before he was scheduled to address the Congress of Scientific Ufologists assembled at the Hotel Commodore in New York City.

Stories of the Men in Black have continued unabated since their origin in the early 1950s. In 1997, the motion picture *Men in Black* starring Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith became a smash box office hit by portraying the sinister "three men" as two men who worked for a secret government agency that patrolled the action of aliens living secretly on Earth. The concept that originated in fear and distrust of the government or of some nefarious secret organization of aliens or agents was played for laughs, and the motion picture used state-of-the-art special effects to create astonishing outer space creatures. A sequel to the successful film was released in 2002, and the legend of the frightening Men in Black knocking at the doors of those who had witnessed UFO activity to threaten and to silence them continued to be seen as a vehicle for comedy.

If the UFO silencers are a hoax, no one has yet answered who is perpetrating it and why. Whoever comprises this persistent silence group either knows, or gives the impression of knowing, a great deal more about the universe than the current scientific community does.

Many researchers of UFO phenomena continue to believe that the Men in Black are agents from another world who labor to spread confusion and fear among Earth's serious UFO investigators and those witnesses of UFO activity. Others maintain that in spite of official denials, the Men in Black are agents from a top-secret U.S. government agency, which knows the answer to the flying saucer enigma and has been commissioned to keep the truth from the American public. Still others claim that they are agents from another terrestrial political system that endeavors to guard its secret of advanced technology just a bit longer.

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**WHITLEY STRIEBER (1945– )**

When he published *Communion* in 1987, Whitley Strieber transformed himself from a well-established horror writer into the world's most famous UFO contactee/abductee. The author of such popular novels as *The Wolfen* (1978) and *The Hunger* (1981), both of which were made into successful motion pictures, Strieber startled readers and researchers alike when he wrote a first-person account of his encounters with the “visitors” and detailed his abduction experiences.

According to Strieber, on December 26, 1985, he underwent the first of a series of close encounter experiences with alien beings that he would go on to describe in his books *Communion*, *Transformation* (1988), and *Confirmation* (1998). As millions of readers followed his accounts of extraordinary occurrences, Strieber went on to tell of being abducted in his childhood, undergoing physical examinations at the hands of the “visitors,” and suggesting mind control and government involvement in the UFO mystery.

Reflecting upon his encounters in his “journal” on his website (*Whitley Strieber's Unknown Country*, 12/15/2001), he wrote that he had struggled through his ordeal with “genuine knowledge and good questions” and had seen “an absolute terror” change within a few years to a “sublime journey” on which he was still embarked. The visitors, Strieber observed



Whitley Strieber. (DENNIS STACY/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

from this perspective, were “a very complicated presence among us” and that not all of them were to be “trusted or accepted.”

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ACCORDING to Strieber, on December 26, 1985, he underwent the first of a series of close encounter experiences with alien beings.

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Strieber has stated that he believes the evidence of the UFO, if properly examined by science, may provide humankind with “wonderful new discoveries and information.” But, he adds in his position statement in *The Extraterrestrial Encyclopedia* (2001), to accept such evidence also means that it is necessary to face the facts that “there may really be aliens here—aliens who are creating an extraordinary theater in the sky while at the same time entering the personal lives of many people in extremely bizarre ways.”

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#### GEORGE VAN TASSEL (1910–1978)

George Van Tassel established a reputation as an accomplished flight test engineer for both Lockheed International and Douglas Aircraft in the 1930s, and spent World War II (1939–45) flying for business magnate/aviator Howard Hughes (1905–1976.) In 1947, Van Tassel moved with his wife and three daughters to the land around Giant Rock, California, and reopened the airfield near what had been declared by many as the largest boulder in the world.

After the family had lived near Giant Rock for a time, Van Tassel became intrigued by stories of UFO contactees, and he theorized that the huge boulder’s piezo-electric composition could intensify meditation and the power of the human mind to establish communication with alien intelligences. When he began holding weekly meditations under the rock, others who felt drawn to the rock and the desert soon joined him. In 1951, Van Tassel went into trance and said later that he had been taken out of his body to meet with a group of discarnate beings who inhabited a spaceship orbiting Earth.

In August of 1952, Van Tassel stated that aliens from Venus had landed near Giant Rock and invited him to enter their spacecraft. When word spread of his dramatic encounter, the first Space Convention was held at Giant Rock in the spring of 1953. In the years to come, thousands would attend these conventions, drawn to the rock, the desert, Van Tassel, and the promise of experiencing personal alien contact. In 1959, over 11,000 followers of the charismatic contactee came from all over the world to hear him channel messages from the space brothers and to take advantage of the opportunity to share stories of their own alien encounters with the media.

Van Tassel introduced the world to Ashtar, commandant of station Schare. “Schare” was one of several space stations in “Blaau,” the fourth sector of “Bela,” in which our solar system is moving. “Shan” was the name that Ashtar gave for Earth, and he said that the universe was ruled by the Council of Seven Lights, which had divided the cosmos into seven sectors and systems. Ashtar proclaimed that the space intelligence’s main purpose was to save humankind from itself. Once that great obstacle had been met, then the minor problem of how to deal with nuclear fission would right itself through the harmony that would then be extant on Earth.

Ashtar and his fellow space intelligences also gave Van Tassel instructions for the construction of the “Integratron,” a four-story-high, 16-sided dome of wood and concrete, which was supposed to rejuvenate human cells by utilizing the natural energy found in the dry desert atmosphere of Giant Rock. Thousands of believers came to pass through the Integratron and to receive antiaging electrostatic charges.

Van Tassel founded the Ministry of Universal Wisdom in 1953, basing its precepts on revelations from the space brothers. The ministry taught the universal law that operates on humankind in seven states: gender (male and female); the Creator as Cause; polarity of negative and positive; vibration; rhythm; relativity; and mentality.

Van Tassel maintained his headquarters at Giant Rock, California, for many years, making it a gathering place for both the curious and the true believers. He was the author of *I Rode a Flying Saucer* (1952) and *The Council of Seven Lights* (1958).

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## THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA

Since many Americans learn their history through the dramatic presentations provided by motion pictures and television, it is rapidly becoming generally accepted “history” that a secret branch of the U.S. government has conducted a massive cover-up since the Roswell incident of 1947 so scientists could work unhindered to employ knowledge gained through alien technology to accelerate the pace of human scientific accomplishments. The fact that a poll conducted in 1998 by CNN/Time, a major news-gathering agency, found that as much as 80 percent of the U.S. public believed that an organized government conspiracy has attempted to cover up the truth about UFOs demonstrates that such long-held and oft-repeated accusations by thousands of researchers and witnesses of aerial phenomena have grown deep roots in the mass consciousness.

While numerous science-fiction films and television series have used the theme of alien invaders, certain motion pictures and series seem to have impressed the mass psyche of their audiences far more than those with simple plots dealing with bug-eyed monsters terrifying the inhabitants of Earth. In 1951, Howard Hawks’s *The Thing from Another World* told the story of a small group of U.S. Air Force personnel and scientists stationed at an isolated outpost near the North Pole who must deal with an alien that needs their blood in order to survive. The film was a thriller that steadily built tension and frighteningly portrayed how helpless humans might be at the hands of a single powerful alien life-form.

In that same year, Robert Wise released the classic *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951), which presented a wise and peaceful alien who came to warn Earth’s politicians

Steven Spielberg and E.T.  
(ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)



**Sigourney Weaver and Winona Rider in the film *Alien Resurrection*. (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)**

and scientists that they must cease their experiments with nuclear power or risk annihilation from extraterrestrials who will not tolerate unbridled human aggressiveness. Actor Michael Rennie's portrayal of the soft-spoken alien "Klaatu" provided a model extraterrestrial emissary for generations of **UFO contactees**.

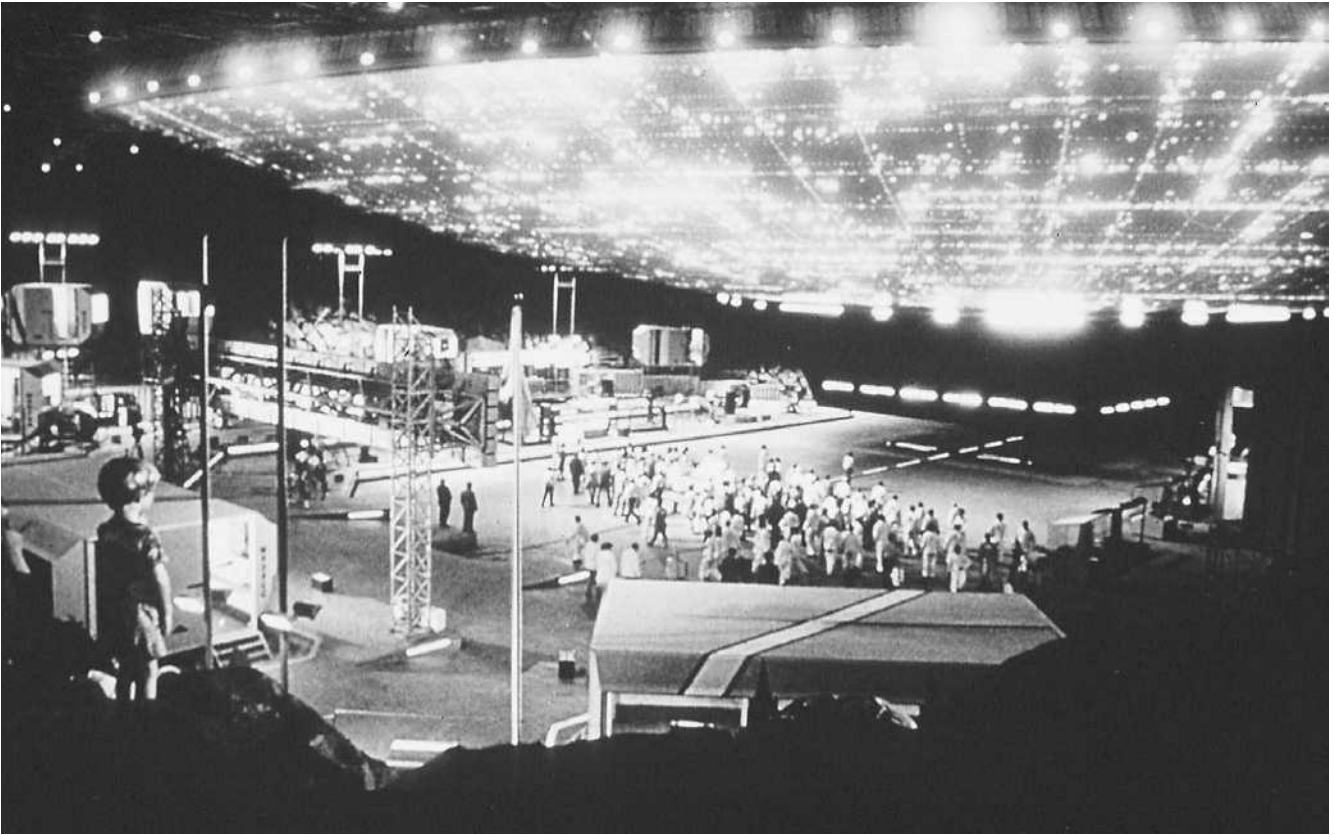
#### **CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND (1977)**

In the character of Roy Neary (Richard Dreyfuss), director Steven Spielberg expresses the dilemma faced by an ordinary man who experiences a close encounter with a UFO and is given a mental summons to meet with the aliens at a future time. The film explores the range of emotions and inner stresses faced by a **UFO contactee**, including the confusion of his family, the reluctance of the authorities to

recognize his experience as genuine, and the obsession of the contactee to respond to the "invitation" that the aliens have somehow impressed in his psyche.

Forced by an inner compulsion to seek reunion with the aliens atop Devil's Tower, Wyoming, Neary must leave his tearful and distressed wife (Teri Garr) and children behind as he continues his rendezvous with space intelligences. He is soon joined by an ally (Melinda Dillon), whose son was abducted from their farm home, who also is receiving telepathic messages about where he will be returned to her.

Spielberg claimed that he had adapted many actual stories of UFO contact for the screenplay, including accounts from the files of Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the astronomer who had been employed by the U.S. Air Force in its official research of the UFO mystery, **Pro-**



ject **Blue Book**. Hynek was even given a cameo in the film, and he can be seen among the scientists gathered to welcome the aliens when the massive mothership sets down on Devil's Tower. In numerous interviews, Spielberg said that he had always been fascinated by the subject of flying saucers and alien contact, and he liked to remind interviewers that he was born in 1947, the first year of the modern era of UFOs.

The alien beings, when they are at last revealed on screen, appear to be childlike, benevolent entities, seemingly so innocent as to be incapable of interstellar travel. And when Neary is selected to return with them to their world, many moviegoers were touched vicariously and felt their spirit prepare to lift off with them.

Such a positive portrayal of alien life-forms as that depicted in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* was in sharp contrast to the monsters and the invaders that had populated so many science fiction motion pictures, and the way was paved for the arrival of Spielberg's *E.T.—The Extraterrestrial* (1982).

In this film, an amphibian/reptilian entity so lived on the love vibration that audiences could not resist its charm. The evil alien appeared banished from the screen and television sets, and talk of government cover-ups was forgotten by all but a small number of diehard UFO investigators. Even those aliens who looked human, such as Robin Williams on the series *Mork and Mindy* (1978–82), were not at all threatening.

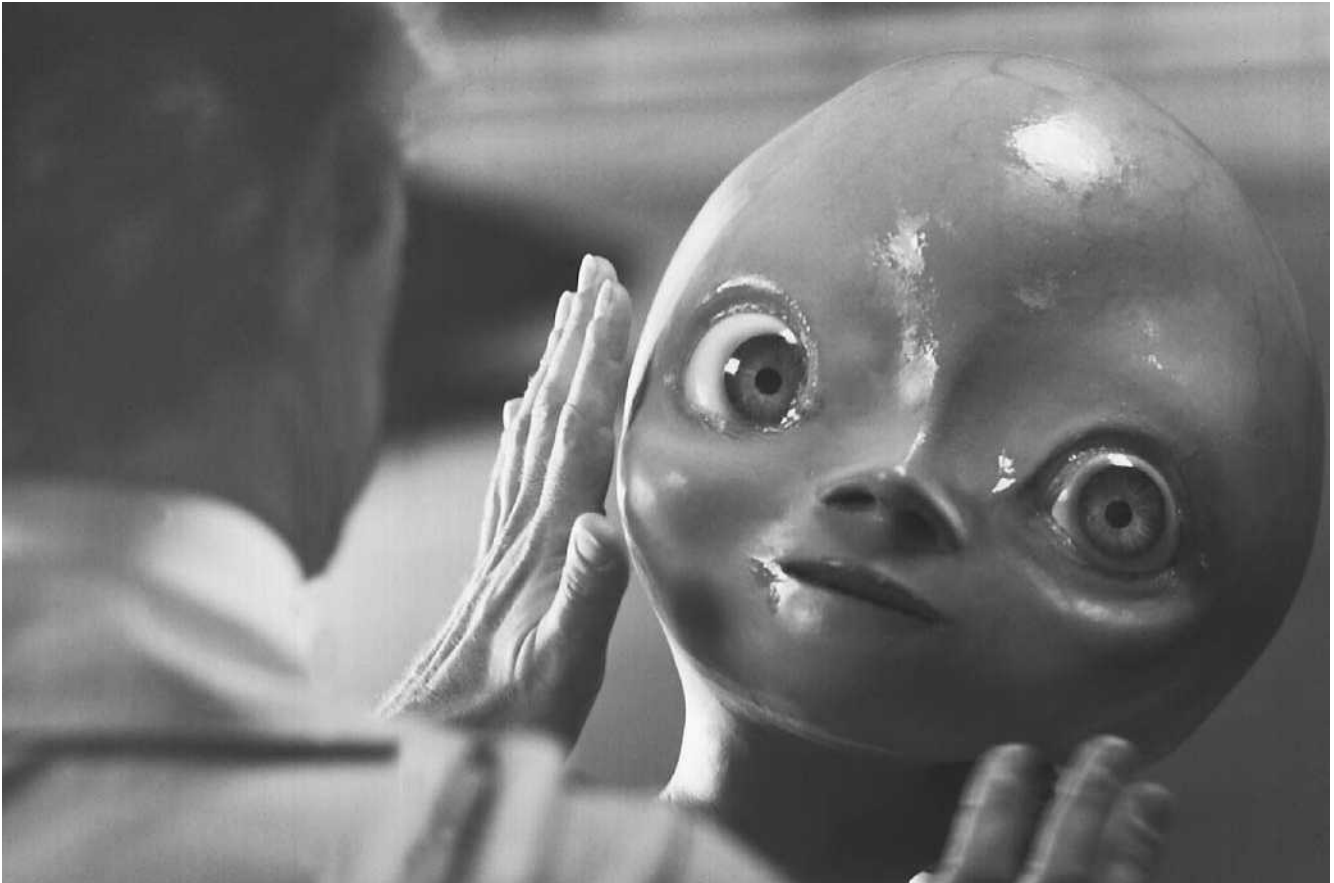
UFO hovering over a group of people in the film "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

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“**C**LOSE Encounters” explores the range of emotions and inner stresses faced by a UFO contactee.

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Sinister aliens didn't return to the general public consciousness until stories began circulating of humans claiming to have been abducted by extraterrestrial crews for purposes of undergoing bizarre medical examinations. In 1986 **Whitley Strieber** (1945– ) told of



**"Close Encounters of the  
Third Kind." (THE  
KOBAL COLLECTION)**

his abduction in the best-selling book *Communion* and later translated the work into a motion picture in 1989, with Christopher Walken portraying the author. UFO investigator Budd Hopkins (1931– ), who earlier had authored *Missing Time* (1981), produced *Intruders* (1987), expanding upon the theory that aliens were abducting Earth men and women for the purpose of creating a hybrid mix of ET and human DNA. In 1992 *Intruders* became a television miniseries starring Richard Crenna, Mare Willingham, and Susan Blakely. The television version of Hopkins's book chillingly portrayed military and political figures covering up the truth about alien abductions while issuing official denials that such events were taking place. Once again, aliens and the entire UFO mystery were things to be feared, and thousands of people around the world began to recall abduction scenarios that allegedly had been repressed until such scenarios as those presented in *Intruders* and *Communion* caused terrible memories to surface.

#### **THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL (1951)**

Regardless of whether or not this film was ever acknowledged as the source of numerous UFO contactees' messages from outer space, it seems likely that at least on the subconscious level, the stately, silver-suited figure of Klaatu (Michael Rennie) and his warning to earthlings to cease their aggressive behavior and live in peace was echoed in countless sermons from alleged space intelligences. As the film opens, a flying saucer does, indeed, land near the White House lawn, in a baseball field in Washington, D.C. Within minutes, the craft is surrounded by armed military personnel and armored tanks. Klaatu emerges, and as he holds up a gift he has brought for the president, he is shot and wounded by a soldier who misinterprets the alien's gesture as a hostile movement. At this point, Gort, Klaatu's eight-foot robot, leaves the spaceship and fires a kind of laser beam at the assembled military and instantly melts all weapons and armaments. Klaatu halts Gort before it destroys anything—or anyone—else, and the alien's

peaceful intentions convince the officers that he has come in peace. Klaatu is taken to a military hospital where his wound can be treated and he can be placed under guard.

Klaatu makes it clear that he has come as an ambassador from an intergalactic federation of planets that has been keeping Earth under surveillance for centuries. Now that Earth's science has advanced to the nuclear age and the planet's influence may soon be extended beyond its own atmosphere, he has been sent to deliver a message of utmost importance to all the heads of state. When Klaatu perceives that his request will be refused, he escapes from the hospital and moves anonymously into a rooming house, posing as a man named Carpenter.

The alien emissary becomes friends with Bobby (Billy Gray) and his mother, Helen (Patricia Neal), and the boy leads him to Professor Barnhardt (Sam Jaffe), a physicist, who is impressed, rather than frightened, by Klaatu's superior knowledge. The scientists in the film are depicted as dedicated individuals who are trying their best to live outside the political bickering and backstabbing of the Cold War era and who are willing to arrange for Klaatu to address an international assemblage of the leaders of world science. Realizing that Earth's heads of state are too chauvinistic to set aside their petty differences and listen to his message, Klaatu arranges a demonstration that no one on the planet will be able to ignore: He shuts off all power and machinery on Earth for one hour.

Considered a threat to national security, Klaatu is killed by the military and his body placed in a cell. Before he was shot, however, he advised Helen what to do if anything should happen to him. She approaches the massive Gort and speaks the order, "Klaatu Barado Nikto," a command that enables the robot to restore life to Klaatu and brings the film to its conclusion and the alien ambassador's final message to all of Earth: "It is your choice. Join us and live in peace or face obliteration." The unsettling implication made by Klaatu before he leaves in his spacecraft is that it really doesn't matter that much to the aliens what earthlings decide.



Scene from the movie "The Day the Earth Stood Still." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

His mission is completed. Earth has been warned.

The admonitions of Klaatu were subsequently repeated in the channelings of the UFO contactees for decades to come. Some critics have made comparisons between Klaatu's mission to Earth and the messages and ministry of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.). Both came from "above"; Jesus was a carpenter, Klaatu chose the alias of Carpenter; both were killed and resurrected by a power beyond Earth's knowledge; both returned to the "heavens" when their message that humans must repent and change their ways had been delivered.

#### WAR OF THE WORLDS (1953)

In *War of the Worlds*, George Pal adapted H. G. Wells's novel of alien invasion and transformed it into a cinema classic. The film follows the struggle of two scientists (Gene Barry and Ann Robinson) as they attempt to help Earth survive a devastating attack by Martians. The suspense is intensified by their own narrow escapes, and the reality for motion picture audiences lay in seeing the major cities of

Orson Wells acting out his famous "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast.

(ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)



Earth lying strewn about in heaps of rubble. Although the horror of seemingly unstoppable aliens was a frightening theme, the film won an Academy Award for its special effects. While Earth is saved by the motion picture's end, the devastation rendered by the extraterrestrial invaders left unforgettable images in the minds of the audience.

While the film version of Wells's novel is highly regarded by science-fiction and cinema buffs and was successful upon its release, the impact it had on mass consciousness cannot be compared to the effect of the radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds* on the day before Halloween in 1938. At that time, CBS's "Mercury Theatre" presented Orson Welles

and a talented cast simulating a live news broadcast of an invasion of Earth by mechanized Martian war machines. Because the account of unstoppable alien beings landing in the New Jersey farmlands was depicted so realistically—and because many listeners tuned in after the Mercury Theatre production was already in progress—the greater part of the nation was in panic over the invaders from Mars.

Invading aliens continued to be a popular theme in a number of motion pictures throughout the 1950s. *Invaders from Mars* (1953) remains in many moviegoers' memory as the single most frightening film of their childhood. Perhaps what made the film so terrifying to young people was the premise that one's parents, teachers, and friends could be taken over by alien life forms and work toward a nationwide conspiracy. *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) developed the theme of aliens possessing family and friends to a high degree of paranoia. While in *Invaders from Mars* the extraterrestrials attached themselves to their victims' body, in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* they brought strange pods with them from their world which grew into likenesses of those humans whom they replaced.

Critics analyzing the lasting effects of these two films often point out that they were released during the paranoia of the Communist hysteria provoked by Senator Joseph McCarthy (1908–1957) and the House Committee on Un-American Activities during the 1950s. Other social historians argue that the UFO craze began when the threat of nuclear war with the Soviet Union hung like a black cloud over the world and many people were desperate to believe that some force from the skies could appear and deliver Earth from nuclear annihilation. Still other scholars suggest that it may have been the U.S. government itself that began the rumors of flying saucers in order to divert public attention from the development of its own secret weapons. Perhaps such a prevailing atmosphere of national distrust contributed to the horror of films about UFO invaders, but the unsettling concept of aliens slowly taking over Earth through the possession of human

bodies became firmly implanted in the psyches of millions of men and women who now looked even more suspiciously at the skies above them.

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WAR of the Worlds was broadcast live by CBS's "Mercury Theatre" on October 30, 1938.

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Such television series as *The Twilight Zone* (1959–64) and *The Outer Limits* (1963–65) occasionally featured episodes concerning alien invaders, but *My Favorite Martian* (1963–66) portrayed extraterrestrial visitors as friendly and funny—especially if one overlooked the antenna that sometimes sprouted from the top of the Martian's (Ray Walston) head. It was a series aptly named *The Invaders* (1967–69), starring Roy Thinnes, that focused on the paranoid concept that evil aliens might be living undetected among humans and conspiring to conquer them. Thinnes was David Vincent, an architect, who happened to be the only human witness of a UFO landing. No one believed his account, so once he discovered that the extraterrestrials had arrived with the sole intent of taking over the planet, it became his mission to stop them, alerting and enlisting whomever he could to assist him. Vincent's task became all the more difficult because whenever he managed to kill one of the invaders, their physical body disintegrated, leaving no evidence to convince the authorities that aliens were walking and plotting among them. When the series ended in 1969, Vincent had not been able to stem the tide of alien invasion, and the stories of extraterrestrials posing as humans had received more substantiation from a television series that many insisted was telling the truth disguised as a fictional presentation.

#### THE X-FILES (1993–2002)

In 1993 Chris Carter, creator of the television series *The X-Files* for Fox, fashioned a blend of UFO mythology, increasing public distrust of



David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson from the television program "The X-Files." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)



the U.S. government, and a growing interest in the paranormal that over its nine-year run usually finished as the second-most popular drama among young adults. During its peak season in 1997, *The X-Files* attracted an estimated 20 million viewers per episode. In 2002, shortly before the last episode of the series, Sandy Grushow, the chairperson of Fox Entertainment, said that *The X-Files* had made in excess of \$1 billion for the company.

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*X-Files attracted an estimated 20 million viewers per episode.*

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At the 1996 Golden Globe Awards, the categories for Best Television Drama, Best Actor in a Television Drama, and Best Actress in a Television Drama were all won by Fox network's *The X-Files*, in which FBI agents Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) regularly pursued UFOs and declared to their audience that "the truth is out there." However, because the truth was being covered up by an ultra-secret

and exceedingly ruthless government agency, they must "trust no one."

According to the mythos developed by Carter, the alien invasion had begun in pre-historic times and had been rediscovered by the U.S. military and a secret branch of the government in 1947 after the crash of a flying saucer at Roswell. Although Mulder and Scully made side excursions to investigate vampires, ghosts, and a wide variety of monsters, the UFO scenarios comprised the glue that held the series together and kept the fans returning week after week to chart the agents' progress in cracking the ultimate case that would force the secret government to admit the truth about aliens.

Mulder and Scully investigated the entire gamut of UFO phenomena—**Men in Black**, government cover-ups, alien assassins, abductions, contactees, missing time, and telepathic communication with extraterrestrials. Before the series ended in May 2002, both Scully and Mulder had themselves been abducted and Scully, earlier declared unable to have children, had borne a child under mysterious circumstances.

On June 19, 1998, the *X-Files* motion picture, *Fight the Future*, was released, allowing its small-screen paranoia about the government conspiracy to hide the truth about UFOs to spread to big-screen multiplexes across the nation. The film became number one the first week of its release, grossing \$31 million. It has since brought in more than \$100 million.

Often hailed as a cultural phenomenon and generally acclaimed as the most successful science-fiction series in the history of television, the influence of *The X-Files* on the mass audience's beliefs concerning such subjects as UFOs, abductions, and government conspiracies is incalculable.

The theme of *Dark Skies*, the lead television series in NBC's 1996 Saturday night "thrillology," was that history as the viewers learned it in school was a lie. One of the "truths" that the series revealed was that in 1947 President Harry S Truman ordered an extraterrestrial spacecraft shot down over Roswell, after an alien ambassador had demanded the unconditional surrender of the

United States. Subsequently, whatever resources could be recovered from the scraps of the demolished alien craft were doled out to various giants of American industry to be freely incorporated into the current technology—and a sinister and ubiquitous super-secret government agency known as **Majestic-12** was created to monitor any undue alien interference in U.S. political and social structures.

Before the series was cancelled, viewers learned that the aliens had the ability to possess human bodies with their larvae, thus allowing them to pass undetected and to accomplish an incredible number of negative historical events—from the assassination of John F. Kennedy to the conflict in Vietnam, from the murder of certain celebrities to popularizing the use of recreational drugs among young people.

The summer blockbuster *Independence Day* (1996) followed a *War of the Worlds* (1953) plot line in which aliens blow up half the nation, including the U.S. capital, and are about to destroy the world. A tough U.S. president (Bill Pullman) and two heroes (Will Smith, Jeff Goldblum) manage to pilot the spaceship that a clandestine branch of the government has been hiding in a secret underground base since the Roswell crash in 1947 and save the day. *The Rock* (1996) is a straightforward Hollywood action thriller that surprises audiences at the end of the film when the character played by Sean Connery reveals that forbidden knowledge about the Roswell UFO crash was among the reasons why he had been unjustly imprisoned for so long without a trial.

In 1997 the motion picture *Men in Black* took one of the most sinister aspects of UFO research—the alleged strong-arm tactics performed on witnesses of aerial phenomena by mysterious men dressed in black—and transformed it into a special-effects comedy with Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith portraying agents of a secret government branch that keeps the aliens who walk among earthlings under surveillance. In the film—as inspired by real-life alleged victims of the Men in Black—any ordinary citizen who happened to stumble on the truth about the government cover-up



Roy Thinnes was in the "Invaders" television series, as well as the "The X-Files." (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

has all memory of the experience wiped out by a special brainwashing device.

It has been suggested that one reason why so many U.S. citizens are easily convinced that their government is hiding the truth about extraterrestrial contact is that so few people continue to trust the government after decades of cover-ups and scandals that were eventually exposed. According to a survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates for Pew Research and published in *USA Today* on September 12, 1997, only 6 percent of adults in the United States expressed trust in the federal government. The mantra of *The X-Files* has truly been put into practice: "Trust no one!"

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## THE UFO MYSTERY GROWS

In July 1997, in honor of the 50th anniversary of the alleged UFO crash at Roswell, New Mexico, *CNN/Time* magazine took a poll that indicated that 80 percent of Americans thought the government was hiding knowledge about the UFO mystery. Other interesting data included the assertion that 64 percent believed that alien life-forms have made contact with humans. Of that 64 percent, 37 percent said the ETs have abducted humans, and 37 percent are certain that the aliens have contacted representatives of the U.S. government.

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**EIGHTY** percent of Americans believed that the U.S. government is conducting a cover-up of the alien presence.

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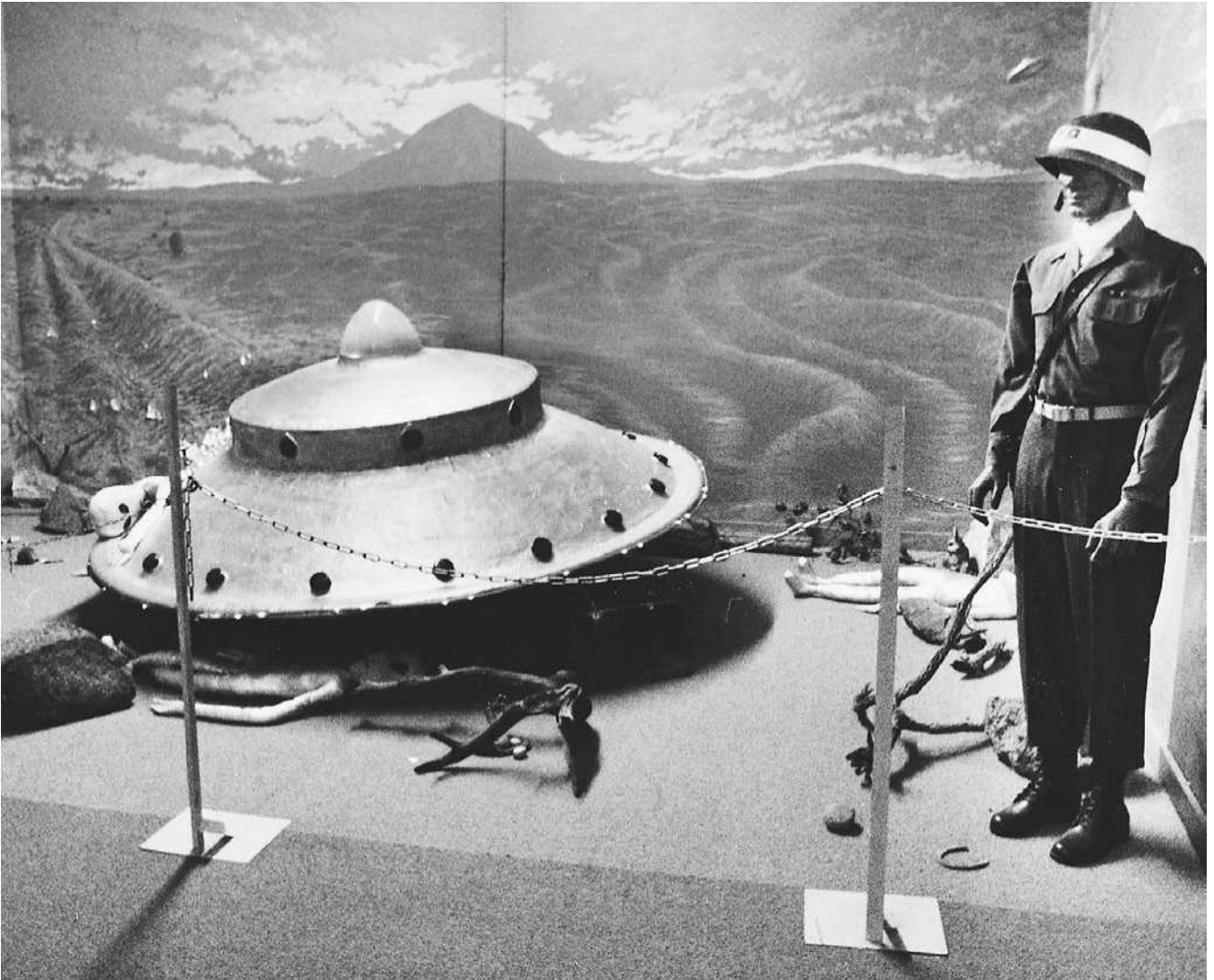
On June 10, 1998, a follow-up *CNN/Time* poll revealed that 27 percent of all Americans believed that space aliens have visited Earth and 80 percent believed that the U.S. government is conducting a cover-up of the alien presence.

The most prevalent conspiracy theory contends that the government learned the truth about UFOs at the site of the **Roswell, New Mexico**, crash in 1947 when the military recovered alien corpses. A secret group known as **Majestic-12** keeps the U.S. president and other world leaders briefed on the progress of alien activity on Earth. While the governments of Earth officially deny the existence of UFOs to prevent panic among the masses, the

chief executives are well aware of the existence of extraterrestrial involvement in world affairs. An arm of the U.S. “shadow” government, in association with the **Illuminati**, an alleged worldwide secret society, made a deal with the alien invaders to trade advanced extraterrestrial technology for such Earth resources as water, minerals, cattle—and certain of its citizenry. UFO abductions are conducted by aliens as a species-monitoring program. Physical examinations of humans and crossbreeding attempts involving preselected men and women are allowed by the government as a treaty concession.

As the year 2000 grew nearer, many fundamentalist religious sects became obsessed with fears concerning the **millennium** and **Armageddon**, the great final battle between Good and Evil. Such an obsession created a mind-set of suspicion that had many members of these religious groups identifying Satan’s minions gathering to fight the forces of Good as aliens arriving on UFOs. A number of fundamentalist Christian evangelists began to blend accounts of UFOs with the old fears of secret societies composed of top U.S. government officials, politicians, corporate chairmen, and international bankers who were seeking to bring into being a dreaded “New World Order.” Rumors spread that extraterrestrials and powerful members of secret societies had agreed that shortly before the year 2000 a carefully staged false alien invasion would convince the masses of the world that an attack from outer space was about to begin. People of all nations would believe the leaders who advised that unconditional surrender to the aliens was for everyone’s own good. Immediately following their betrayal of Earth to the aliens, the united leaders would form a One World Government, a New World Order, thus fulfilling biblical prophecies about a return to the days of Babylon. The aliens would reveal themselves as demonic entities, and the planet would be in torment until Jesus returned to deal the final blow to the armies of evil.

During that same period of paranoia in the mid-to-late 1990s, UFO believers and investigators began seeing treacherous agents of the secret government everywhere. **Men in Black** were joined by Black Helicopters, and hun-



dreds of men and women who claimed to have witnessed UFO phenomena protested that they had subsequently been harassed and spied upon by mysterious unmarked black helicopters. And the once-benign space brothers were largely replaced by nasty alien abductors who wanted to perform painful physical examinations aboard motherships and steal human ova and sperm for their genetic experiments in creating a new hybrid species.

On June 24, 1997—the 50th anniversary of Kenneth Arnold’s sighting of the flying saucers in Washington State—the United States Air Force conducted a special Pentagon briefing and announced its answer to the charges of a conspiracy at Roswell in the document *The Roswell Report: Case Closed*. This publication, stated Colonel John Haynes,

would be the Air Force’s final word concerning 50 years of accusations that the government was hiding evidence of extraterrestrial visitation. The debris found at the crash site outside of Roswell were fragments from a balloon from Project Mogul, a top-secret intelligence gathering operation, that had commenced immediately after the end of World War II (1945). Its mission had been to spy on the Soviets and to monitor their nuclear program; therefore, the cover-up had been necessary for purposes of national security.

The air force report went on to state that the alleged bodies seen around the crash site were not those of extraterrestrial beings, but were dummies, roughly the size of humans, that had been used in experiments with high-altitude parachutes. After each of the experi-

**UFO Enigma Museum in Roswell, New Mexico.**  
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

mental drops, which had begun in 1953, air force personnel would retrieve the simulated human forms. Apparently, folks around Roswell had observed some of these recovery missions and thought that they had witnessed military personnel picking up alien bodies.

UFO researchers scorned such an explanation of the alleged crash debris having been a balloon and the true nature of the alien corpses having been parachute dummies. And then there was the question of how those witnesses who claimed to have seen wreckage of a flying saucer and the bodies of its extraterrestrial crew in 1947 could have confused the event with the discovery of dummies dropped over the desert near Roswell in 1953.

Colonel Haynes explained the six-year discrepancy between the events as a manifestation of the mental phenomenon of "time compression" on the part of the witnesses. Time compression, he stated, occurs when one's memory melds events separated by many years into "compressed" segments of time. Civilians who witnessed the crash site of a weather balloon in 1947 and, six years later, saw air force personnel retrieving crash dummies dropped from the skies, recalled the two events as one in their compressed memories.

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**I**n the United Kingdom 47 percent of its citizens believed in visitations from extraterrestrials.

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The official explanation issued by the air force in its publication *The Roswell Report: Case Closed* accomplished little in quelling the accusations of a government conspiracy regarding the mystery of what really occurred in July 1947. Roswell has become a Mecca for UFO believers from all over the world, and the city hosts an annual celebration to honor the alleged crash of the flying saucer in the desert.

In March 2002, a survey conducted in the United States by the National Science Foundation yielded the results that 30 percent of those individuals polled believed that space vehicles from alien civilizations regularly visit the skies

of Earth. An extensive survey of paranormal beliefs in the United Kingdom taken in June 2002 found that 47 percent of its citizens believed in visitations from extraterrestrials.

As UFO investigations enter the twenty-first century, the mystery grows unabated. On July 26, 1952, UFOs made national headlines when they were sighted over Washington, D.C. The mysterious objects were detected on civilian and military radar screens and fighter planes were dispatched to investigate. Exactly 50 years later to the day, July 26, 2002, the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) scrambled two D.C. Air National Guard F-16 jets out of Andrews Air Force Base to investigate unknown aerial craft over the nation's capital.

Accusations of government cover-ups and conspiracies continue, and the old stories of secret agencies and aliens conspiring to deceive humankind circulate freely. The media report strange occurrences such as crop circles and cattle mutilations. Late-night radio talk shows feature bizarre accounts of the air force's Area 51 and of scientists working in underground laboratories to back-engineer the wreckage of alien space vehicles. And some individuals argue that the alien interference in the events of planet Earth may go back even to the days of World War II (1939–45) and such controversial endeavors as the **Philadelphia Experiment**.

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**AREA 51 AND REVERSE ENGINEERING**

While the government officially denies the existence of the base known as Area 51, UFO investigators are convinced that the military base near Groom Lake in Nevada is the site where the UFO that crashed near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947 was reversed engineered to create such aerial craft as the Stealth Bomber.

Area 51, also known as Dreamland, has not really been secret since the March 1993 issue of *Popular Science* brought the reconnaissance aircraft Aurora out of the dark and revealed that the Mach 6 spy plane was developed at the closely guarded U.S. Air Force facility at Groom Lake, Nevada.

In his book, *The Day After Roswell* (1997), Colonel Philip J. Corso (U.S. Army, retired) claims that he was given “personal stewardship” of various extraterrestrial artifacts recovered from the crash of a spacecraft outside of Roswell, New Mexico, in July 1947. Corso goes on to state that he distributed the objects of alien technology to select government contractors and that while the U.S. government has officially denied doing so, it has had large numbers of scientists secretly and ambitiously achieving reverse engineering from advanced alien technology. Among the results of such back engineering have been fiber optics, light amplification devices, Kevlar (lightweight, heavily resistant material for use in body armor), and a large number of advances in laser weaponry.

Corso served his country for many years. He was on General Douglas MacArthur’s intelligence staff following the Korean War in the 1950s, and he was later assigned to President Dwight Eisenhower’s Security Council, then to the Army Research and Development’s Foreign Technology Desk at the Pentagon. According to Corso, when he moved into the Foreign Technology Division, he was given a file cabinet of artifacts from the Roswell crash and instructed to begin working on a plan of action and recommendations for their use. His superiors were enthusiastic about the artifacts’ use in building spaceships that would not be able to be penetrated by radiation, cosmic activity, or gunfire.

One of Corso’s first file cabinet discoveries was a piece of metal about the size of a post-

card that was paper thin. Somehow the atoms were aligned in the metal in such a way that government scientists all failed to back engineer it. Next, according to Corso, the scientists moved on to an integrated circuit, the size of a chip, that gave rise to the transistor.

In a government program called “Applied Engineering,” Corso and his staff would find people in industry who were working in a particular area of scientific research and supplement their work with the alien technology through their Research and Development projects. In some instances, the government agency would even fund it.

Although the claims made by Colonel Corso in *The Day After Roswell* remain extremely controversial and unverified, they continue to keep alive the accusations that the government has kept the truth about the alleged alien crash at Roswell from the public.

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**CATTLE MUTILATIONS**

On October 9, 1967, the Associated Press carried an item that told of the possible role of UFOs in the killing of Snippy, a three-year-old gelding. The carcass was discovered about a quarter of a mile from the ranch house of Harry King in the desolate mountain country near Alamosa, Colorado. King notified the horse’s owners, Mr. and Mrs. Burl Lewis, who were disturbed by the condition of the carcass, which suggested that something out of the ordinary had been responsible for their horse’s demise.

A pathologist admitted bewilderment when he found the horse’s abdominal, brain, and spinal cavities to be empty. All flesh had

been stripped from the horse's head and neck, but the rest of the animal was untouched except for the openings left by the mysterious surgery. Although the carcass had lain exposed for several days, it was not unduly decomposed, nor had it begun to smell. Even more unusual is the fact that no predators, vultures, or buzzards had approached the carcass.

UFO investigators stated that they had noted a high radiation count around Snippy's remains and reported finding areas where the chico brush had been squashed to within 10 inches of the ground. Fifteen circular exhaust marks were found 100 yards from the carcass of the horse. Six identical holes, each two inches wide and four inches deep, were found in a nearby area. In addition, the investigators said that they found the imprint of a circle 75 feet in diameter, and a number of smaller areas where the chico brush had been flattened in circles 15 feet in diameter.

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*ALIENS, satanic cultists, and crews of unmarked black helicopters are named as the suspects in cattle mutilations.*

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Reports of Snippy's supposed death at the hands of alien specimen collectors received elaborate play and bold headlines across the nation. The official word was that Snippy had been killed by lightning, but UFO investigators quickly denounced such an analysis and the enigma of animal mutilations has continued into the twenty-first century.

Cattle are the most frequent victims of these mysterious mutilations, and according to forensic pathologists who have examined many of these animals, traditional surgical instruments were not used—but the incisions appear to be the result of an advanced laser technology. Most investigators have eliminated the possibility that predators or scavengers could so neatly incise and remove select organs from their victims. And the obvious problem with blaming predators and scavengers is the fact that all the rest of the animal remains

intact. A number of veterinarians and forensic scientists who have investigated the mysterious mutilations have described the blood as appearing to have been drained with no resultant vascular collapse. The known technology that could process such an accomplishment does not exist, and if it did, it would seem to have to be big and heavy to manipulate some animals weighing well over 1,500 pounds.

According to most accounts, tracks or markings of a conventional nature, such as tire imprints or human or animal tracks, have never been found near a mutilated carcass, but many farmers and ranchers have reported the indentations of a tripod nearby. And there have been numerous reports of UFOs seen in the area and in the immediate vicinity of a cattle mutilation.

Many investigators are openly skeptical about blaming cattle mutilations on aliens. In the opinion of many veterinarians, livestock association officials, forensic pathologists, chemists, and a host of county, state, and federal officers and agents, such alleged mutilations are simply the result of Mother Nature fulfilling one of her primary responsibilities of keeping the countryside clean. The true perpetrators of the mystery of animal mutilations, according to these investigators, are predators and scavengers. All the tales of bloodless carcasses, organs removed with surgical precision, and so forth, are the work of sensationalist journalists, excitable ranchers, and paranoid UFO conspiracy theorists.

Regardless of a great deal of official skepticism toward the subject of cattle mutilations, it does appear to comprise a genuine mystery. And every time that a mutilated cow is found with its tongue, eyes, ears, anus, udder, and genitalia removed without apparently shedding a drop of blood and without the culprits leaving any tracks whatsoever, aliens, satanic cultists, and crews of unmarked black helicopters are named as the suspects. One of the favorite theories of the alien/government conspiracy buffs is that a branch of the secret government made a deal with the aliens that would enable them to sustain themselves on Earth by ingesting a particular enzyme, or hormonal secretion, most readily obtained from

the tongues and throats of cattle. Further, it seems that this same type of animal mutilation occurs worldwide with the same kinds of animals every time.

Reports from Argentina in July 2002 stated that beginning with the first detected mutilation in April, more than 200 cattle had been found with their blood drained, their tongues, organs, flesh, and skin removed by angular, nearly curved, cuts. Although the official explanation centered on a carnivorous mouse, no one, from ranchers and veterinarians to biologists specializing in rodents have ever seen mice feed upon cow carcasses. Crews from UFOs were most often named by ranchers as the most likely mutilators of their cattle herds.

The most prominent researcher in the bizarre field of animal mutilations is Linda Moulton Howe, author of *Glimpses of Other Realities* (1998). Howe has documented hundreds of abnormal, inexplicable deaths of animals, mostly cattle and horses on the open range—all of which died because of bloodless excisions and the removal of eyes, organs, and genitals.

When she began her intensive research in the fall of 1979, Howe suspected that there was some sort of contamination in the environment, and that some government agency was secretly harvesting tissue and fluids for examination. But she could not fathom why any government agency working in secrecy would be so careless as to leave the carcasses of the cattle lying in the fields or ranges, thereby creating alarm and anger among the owners of the animals. Howe's early interviews were with ranchers and law enforcement officers, who reluctantly informed her of the sightings of glowing disks in the vicinity of the cattle mutilations. Some witnesses even told her of having seen nonhuman entities at the scene. Her continuing research has convinced her that something very strange is going on, which may, indeed, involve alien experimentation with Earth's animals.

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#### CROP CIRCLES

Strange circles or unusual geometric designs have been discovered in cereal crops around the world, even in the rice paddies of Japan. The designs are often hundreds of feet in diameter and length and may cover many acres. While many people believe that crop circles are a comparatively recent UFO-related phenomenon that began in the late 1970s or early 1980s, the mystery of the crop circle is hardly new. Unexplained geometric designs occurred in the fields of wheat and corn in Scotland in 1678, and rural residents of England speak of the "corn fairies" that made similar designs in the fields in the late 1800s. Researchers have discovered accounts of the discovery of so-called fairy circles in fields and meadows dating back to medieval times throughout the British Isles, Germany, Scandinavia, and France. Recent evidence indicates that Chinese farmers found crop circles in their fields as many as 3,000 years ago.

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UNEXPLAINED *geometric designs occurred in the fields of wheat and corn in Scotland in 1678.*

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In those cases of crop circles that have appeared since the 1980s, investigators have determined that the crops were biochemically or biophysically altered. Controversy rages over how these circles appear, as they are usually formed overnight and are not cut.



In 1991, Doug Bower and Dave Chorley, two retired artists in England, confessed that they were responsible for making the crop circles that had baffled the world for so long and that they accomplished the most intricate of designs with a simple board and a piece of string. While the confession of Bower and Chorley satisfied a good many skeptics and journalists, serious crop circle researchers, called “cerealogists,” asked how these two elderly gentlemen could have accomplished their hoaxes throughout the world in such great numbers. While admitting that there have been hoaxes, cerealogists pointed out that pranksters have been unable to create crop circles with the same precision and undisturbed nature as those circles thought to be of alien or unknown origin.

Regardless of general dismissal of the crop circle phenomenon by conventional scientists who remain skeptical because human beings could be perpetrating hoaxes, it would appear that there is a genuine mystery in the formation of many of the incredible designs that suddenly appear in fields around the world. Four of the principal theories regarding the origins of crop circles are the following:

1. extraterrestrial entities offering clues to their identity and intentions toward earthlings;
2. natural phenomena, ranging from insects to lightning, from plasma vortices (a kind of ball lightning) to electromagnetic anomalies;
3. hoaxsters;
4. an ancient nonhuman intelligence indigenous to Earth that is utilizing archetypal designs in order to warn contemporary humankind to be more responsible to and more respectful of the planet.

English researcher Lucy Pringle believes that many crop circle formations are due to natural causes, such as the discharge of some electromagnetic energy, but she also noted that a particular design formed around April 21, 1998, appeared close to the prehistoric mound of Silbury Hill. She likened the double-ringed circle with 33 scroll-like bands between the rings to a Beltane wheel, an ancient symbol used at Celtic fire festivals on May Day.

Pringle has not been alone in suggesting that a nonhuman intelligence is perpetrating these mysterious manifestations, perhaps a familiar nonhuman intelligence, such as that group of beings commonly called fairies, elves or devas, which has played a significant role in the myths and legends of every planetary culture for centuries.

On July 19–21, 2002, a three-day conference of leading crop circle investigators was held in Somerset, England. Andy Thomas, an organizer of the meeting, commented that his 11 years of experience in investigating the enigma had convinced him of only one thing—that not all the circles were made by pranksters. Other than that, he stated, it was hard to say whether the phenomenon was caused by extraterrestrials, some kind of super-consciousness, collective psychokinesis (mind over matter), natural forces, or something presently beyond human awareness. Most cerealogists in attendance insisted that it is relatively easy to tell the difference between circles made by hoaxers and those made by what appears to be some kind of superior intelligence, imprinting geometric designs presently beyond the capacity of human beings.

On August 2, 2002, Touchstone Pictures released M. Night Shyamalan’s *Signs*, starring Mel Gibson as a Pennsylvania farmer who discovers a crop circle in his field. The motion picture re-ignited controversy regarding crop circles and quite likely inspired numerous imitators who created mysterious designs of their own in fields throughout the United States and Canada.

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#### MAJESTIC-12

According to UFO researcher and documentary filmmaker Jamie Shandera, in December 1984 he received an anonymous packet in the mail containing two rolls of undeveloped 35mm film. The film, once developed, revealed what appeared to be a briefing report to President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969; president 1953–61), which had been prepared by a group of 12 prestigious and top-secret investigators who worked under the code name of “Operation Majestic-12” (MJ-12). The document, which appeared to be authentic, described details of the recovery, analysis, and official cover-up of the 1947 UFO crash outside of Roswell, New Mexico. The report also described the recovery of the bodies of four humanlike beings that had been found near the wreckage of the downed extraterrestrial spacecraft.

According to these documents, all four of the entities were dead, and their corpses had been mutilated by desert scavengers and were badly decomposed due to exposure to the elements. Although the creatures were humanlike in appearance, the secret report stated that the biological and evolutionary processes responsible for their development had apparently been quite different from those of humankind.

On June 14, 1987, at the 24th Annual National UFO Conference in Burbank, California, Shandera, together with Stanton Friedman and William Moore—the two prominent UFO researchers Shandera had enlisted to help him test the truth of the MJ-12 documents—made public their investigations into what purported to be documentary proof of a government cover-up of UFOs that began in 1947. According to the documents leaked to Shandera, the members of Majestic-12 consisted of the following individuals:

Lloyd V. Berkner, known for scientific achievements in the fields of physics and elec-

tronics, special assistant to the secretary of state in charge of the Military Assistance Program, executive secretary of what is now known as the Research and Development Board of the National Military Establishment.

Detley W. Bronk, a physiologist and biophysicist of international repute, chairman of the National Research Council, and a member of the Medical Advisory Board of the Atomic Energy Commission.

Vannevar Bush, a brilliant scientist who was, from 1947 to 1948, chairman of Research and Development for the National Military Establishment.

Gordon Gray, three times elected to the North Carolina Senate, succeeded Kenneth Royall as secretary of the Army in June 1949.

Dr. Jerome C. Hunsaker, an innovative aeronautical scientist and design engineer, who served as chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics.

Robert M. Montague, Sandia base commander, Albuquerque, New Mexico, from July 1947 to February 1951.

General Nathan F. Twining, commander of the B-29 superfortresses that dropped the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In December 1945 he was named commanding general of the Air Material Command headquartered at Wright Field. In October 1947 he was appointed commander in chief of the Alaskan Command, remaining in that position until May 1950, when he became acting deputy chief of staff for personnel at U.S. Air Force headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Donald H. Menzel, director of the Harvard Observatory at Cambridge, Massachusetts, a leading authority on the solar chromosphere, formulated (with Dr. Winfield W. Salisbury) the initial calculations that led to the first radio contact with the Moon in 1946.

James V. Forrestal served first as undersecretary, then secretary of the U.S. Navy for seven years. In September 1947 he became secretary of defense, responsible for coordinating the activities of all U.S. Armed Forces.

Sidney W. Souers, a rear admiral, who became deputy chief of Naval Intelligence

before organizing the Central Intelligence Office in January 1946.

Hoyt S. Vandenberg, a much-decorated U.S. Air Force officer, rose to the rank of commanding general of the Ninth U.S. Air Force in France before he was named assistant chief of staff of G-2 (Intelligence) in 1946. In June 1946 he was appointed the director of Central Intelligence.

Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter was summoned from the post of naval attache at the American Embassy in Paris to become the first director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), serving from May 1947 to September 1950.

Many UFO researchers agreed upon seeing the list of MJ-12's alleged personnel that if a UFO had crashed and been recovered in Roswell in 1947, this would have been the kind of panel that could have accomplished a thorough investigation of the craft. Each of these individuals had been at the top in their respective areas of expertise during the late 1940s and had the added benefit of government experience behind them.

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## THE authenticity of the MJ-12 documents remains highly controversial.

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The more skeptical investigators agreed that "Document A," which purported to be a letter dated September 24, 1947, from President Harry S. Truman to Secretary of Defense Forrestal, appeared to be genuine; but even though Truman did refer to "Operation Majestic Twelve" in the letter, there was nothing clearly stated that linked the group to UFO investigations.

Others questioned why Hillenkoetter, head of the CIA, listed as the briefing officer on the MJ-12 document, would remain quiet about the crashed flying saucer and the alien bodies when he became active in civilian UFO research in 1957.

The biggest shocker to longtime UFO researchers was the discovery of the name of

Donald Menzel, the Harvard astronomer, on the MJ-12 list. Menzel was well known as a passionate debunker of flying saucers and the author of three anti-UFO books.

In spite of its defenders in the UFO research field, the authenticity of the MJ-12 documents remains highly controversial. Skeptical researchers have labeled the documents as clearly false and fraudulent, pointing out that a thorough search of the records of the Truman administration reveals no executive order for such a UFO investigative group as MJ-12. Researchers who have served in the military have stated that the clearest indication of a hoax lies in the many incorrect military terms and language used in these alleged "official" documents, suggesting that the creators of the hoax have never served in the military.

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### THE PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT

According to one of the most pervasive myths in UFO research, in October 1943, the U.S. Navy secretly accomplished the teleportation of a warship from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to its dock near Norfolk, Virginia, by successfully applying Einstein's Unified Field Theory. While the experiment succeeded in causing the *Eldridge* to become invisible, a number of the crew burst into flames in **spontaneous human combustion**, and several others later lapsed into invisibility in front of their families—and, in one case, before the patrons of a crowded bar. Over half the officers and crew

members had to be committed to psychiatric wards for the rest of their lives as a result of the fantastic experiment.

The legend of the Philadelphia Experiment began on January 13, 1956, when Morris K. Jessup received the first of a series of strange letters signed by Carlos Miguel Allende—or as he sometimes signed his name, Carl Allen. The initial letter was in response to Jessup's book *The Case for the UFO* (1955). Jessup approached the UFO mystery from the viewpoint of an astronomer, a mathematician, a physicist, and an archeologist and called upon his readers to place pressure upon their political representatives to demand research into Einstein's Unified Field Theory so that humankind might discover the nature of gravity and thereby apply that knowledge to the conquest of outer space. Allende began his initial letter by taking Jessup to task for invoking the public to request research into Einstein's Unified Field Theory. Such research had already been conducted by the U.S. Navy, Allende stated, and the results were disastrous.

In October 1943, according to Allende, scientists working for the navy accomplished the complete invisibility of a destroyer-type ship and all of its crew while at sea. Allende was blunt in his assessment of the effect of the force field upon the crew members. The mysterious letter writer explained to Jessup that seamen who had been within the force field of the experiment too long went "blank," suddenly finding themselves fading into invisibility. To "get stuck," Allende explained, was a side effect that suddenly prevented a sailor from being able to move of his own volition. If two or more of his fellow crew members did not come to his aid at once and lay their hands upon him, the unfortunate sailor would "freeze." Those who had entered into this condition were like semi-comatose persons who are able to live, breathe, look, and feel, but are not aware of time and exist in a kind of netherworld. Fully as horrifying as the deep-freeze effect on the sailors involved in the experiment were the incidents of men who went "into the flame," spontaneously becoming combustive.

As cross-references for his fantastic story, Allende listed a number of personnel on

observer ships' crews and the crew of a Matson Lines Liberty ship out of Norfolk. Allende implied that he himself witnessed the experiment from aboard the *S.S. Andrew Furnseth*. Allende affixed a lengthy postscript that stated his reconsidered opinion that the navy was probably quite blameless in the incident and really did not envision the ghastly effect the experiment would have upon the crew members. Before he closed, Allende tossed one more bombshell: The experimental ship had disappeared from its Philadelphia dock and, only a few minutes later, appeared at its other dock in the Norfolk/Newport News/Portsmouth area. The ship had been clearly identified as being at that place; then the ship again disappeared and returned to its Philadelphia dock in only a few minutes.

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## THE *legend of the Philadelphia Experiment began on January 13, 1956.*

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Jessup was puzzled by the letter. It had been sent from Texas, but its author gave a home address in Pennsylvania. Jessup had brought an abundance of academic distinction to his study of the UFO. After having served as an instructor in astronomy and mathematics at the University of Michigan and at Drake University, he was awarded a Ph.D. in astrophysics and was sent to South Africa by the University of Michigan. Here he was assigned to erect and operate the largest refracting telescope in the Southern Hemisphere. The Jessup-directed research produced the discovery of several double-stars, which were catalogued by the Royal Astronomical Society.

Jessup sent Allende a letter requesting more information. It was four months before he received a reply. In his second letter, Carlos Miguel Allende had Americanized his name to Carl M. Allen. He had also tempered the tone of his correspondence and seemed less piqued at Jessup. Allende offered to subject himself to hypnosis or sodium pentathol in order to dredge names of personnel involved in the experiments out of his subconscious. He

stated that under narcohypnosis he would perhaps be able to remember names, addresses, and service numbers of his shipmates.

At that point, Jessup was invited to the Office of Naval Research in Washington. The astrophysicist was surprised when an officer handed him a paperback copy of his own book, *The Case for the UFOs*. Jessup was informed that the book had been addressed to Admiral N. Furth, Chief, Office of Naval Research (ONR). The manilla envelope in which it had arrived had been postmarked Seminole, Texas. A cheery "Happy Easter" had been written across the face of the envelope.

When Jessup opened the book, he observed that someone had taken the time and effort to completely annotate his study of the UFO and that it appeared to have been passed back and forth among at least three persons. The ONR asked that Jessup examine the notations and see if he might have any idea who had been responsible for making the comments.

Each man wrote in a different color of ink, and they were designated as Mr. A. (assumed to be Carlos Miguel Allende), Mr. B., and Jemi. The three individuals referred to "LMs," who seemed to be extraterrestrials who were friendly or indifferent to earthlings; and to the "SMs," a group of hostile aliens. Throughout the text, the three used terms such as mothership, home-ship, dead-ship, Great ark, great bombardment, great return, great war, little-men, force-fields, deep freezes, undersea building, measure markers, scout ships, magnetic and gravity fields, sheets of diamond, cosmic rays, force cutters, undersea explorers, inlay work, clear-talk, telepathing, and vortices. Such terms certainly have encouraged UFO researchers to speculate that the mysterious Carl Allen and his two friends were representatives of an extraterrestrial power that took root on Earth centuries ago and has long since established an advanced underground subculture.

Dr. Morris K. Jessup was found in his station wagon in Dade County Park, Florida, on the evening of April 20, 1959. Police officers reconstructed the death as a suicide. A hose had been attached to the exhaust pipe of the station wagon and looped into the dosed interior. Some associates mentioned despondency over an

approaching divorce as the principal reason. Most of his colleagues, however, were shocked and surprised that Jessup would seek the ultimate escape of a dosed car and carbon monoxide. And ever since Jessup's death UFO researchers have argued that the alleged suicide was the price the astrophysicist had paid for getting too close to the truth about flying saucers.

There really was a destroyer named the *Eldridge*, and it remained on active duty until 1946. After it had been removed from military service, it was mothballed until it was transferred to the Greek Navy.

Many UFO researchers maintain that some kind of secret experiment took place with a Navy warship in 1943, thus planting the seed for the legend of the Philadelphia Experiment. Most speculate that it was probably an experiment in attempting to make ships invisible to enemy submarines and that it very well could have involved incredibly high voltages of electricity—which could have burned and scorched seamen and even delivered a kind of shock that drove some of the crewmen insane.

Other researchers have insisted that a government conspiracy is at work and that the secret experiment ripped a hole in the space-time continuum that permitted alien intelligences to begin their invasion of the planet.

Numerous UFO investigators have searched without success for that tantalizing proof of the Philadelphia Experiment in invisibility which Allende claimed could be found in the Philadelphia newspapers. "Check for a tiny one-paragraph (upper half of sheet, inside the paper near the rear third of the paper, 1944) story describing the sailors' actions after their initial voyage," he had teased Jessup. "The invisible sailors raided a beer joint and caused such shock and paralysis of the waitresses that little of a comprehensible nature could be gotten them."

Although the newspaper clipping or any other proofs of the Philadelphia Experiment have never been located, in 1980 writer Robert A. Goerman managed to find the home and the surviving family of Carl M. Allen, alias Carlos Miguel Allende. Although there will probably always be those who swear

that they or their kin participated in the remarkable secret navy experiment in invisibility and teleportation in 1943, Goerman's research has quite likely provided a reasonable explanation. It was all a hoax, a fantasy, molded by a former sailor who loved to read about UFOs and strange, unsolved mysteries so much, that he created one that may never die.

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## MAKING THE CONNECTION

- abductee** Someone who believes that he or she has been taken away by deception or force against his/her will.
- alien** A being or living creature from another planet or world.
- anomalous** Something strange and unusual that deviates from what is considered normal. From the Greek *anomalos*, meaning uneven.
- archaeologist** A person who scientifically examines old ruins or artifacts such as the remains of buildings, pottery, graves, tools, and all other relevant material in order to study ancient cultures.
- astronomy** The scientific study of the of the workings of the universe—of stars, planets, their positions, sizes, composition, movement behavior. Via the Old French and Latin from Greek *astronomia*, meaning literally star-arranging.
- conspiracy** An agreement or plot between two or more people to commit an illegal or subversive action.
- contactee** Someone who believes to have been or is in contact with an alien from another planet.
- extraterrestrial** Something or someone originating or coming from beyond Earth, outside of Earth's atmosphere.
- foo fighter** A term coined by pilots who reported sightings of unconventional aircraft that appeared as nocturnal lights during World War II. A popular cartoon character of the time, Smokey Stover, often said "Where there's foo there's fire" and it became the saying to describe the strange phenomena.
- hieroglyphics** The writing system of ancient Egypt that uses symbols or pictures to signify sounds, objects, or concepts. Can also refer to any writing or symbols that are difficult to decipher.
- Homo sapiens** Mankind or humankind, the species of modern human beings.
- hypothesis** A theory or assumption that needs further exploration, but which is used as a tentative explanation until further data confirms or denies it.
- intergalactic** Something that is located, or is moving, between two or more galaxies.
- mortician** An undertaker or one who prepares dead bodies for burial and funerals. Formed from the Latin stem *mors*, death and the English *ician*.
- phenomena** (plural of phenomenon) Strange, extraordinary, unusual or even miraculous events, happenings or persons or things. From the Greek *phainomenon*, that which appears, from the past participle of *phainein*, to bring to light.
- pulsar** A star generally believed to be a neutron star and that appears to pulse as it briefly emits bursts of visible radiation such as radio waves and x-rays.
- semidivine** Possessing similar or some of the characteristics, abilities, or powers normally attributed to a deity and/or existing on a higher spiritual level or plane than common mortals yet not completely divine.

**telepathic transfer** The transferring of thoughts from one person to another.

**theory of evolution** The biological theory of the complex process of living organisms, how they change and evolve from one generation to another or over many generations.

**UFO** Literally an unidentified flying object, although the term is often used by some to refer to an alien spacecraft.

**UFOlogist** Someone who investigates the reports and sightings of unidentified flying objects.

## GLOSSARY

**abductee** Someone who believes that he or she has been taken away by deception or force against his/her will.

**aboriginal** Refers to a people that has lived or existed in a particular area or region from the earliest known times or from the beginning.

**abyss** From late Latin *abyssus* and Greek *abus-sos*, which literally means “bottomless,” stemming from *bussos*, meaning “bottom.” A gorge or chasm that is inconceivably deep, vast or infinite, such as the bottomless pit of hell or a dwelling place of evil spirits.

**alchemy** From Greek, *khemeia* to Arabic, *alkimiya* via medieval Latin *alchimia* and Old French, fourteenth century *alquemie*, meaning “the chemistry.” A predecessor of chemistry practiced in the Middle Ages and Renaissance principally concerned with seeking methods of transforming base metals into gold and the “elixir of life.”

**alien** A being or living creature from another planet or world.

**amnesia** The loss of memory which can be temporary or long term and usually brought on by shock, an injury, or psychological disturbance. Originally from the Greek word *amnestos*, literally meaning not remembered and from a later alteration of the word *amnesia* forgetfulness.

**anomalous** Something strange and unusual that deviates from what is considered normal. From the Greek *anomalos*, meaning uneven.

**anthropology** The scientific study of the origins, behavior, physical, social, and cultural aspects of humankind.

**Antichrist** The antagonist or opponent of Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), who is anticipated by many early as well as contemporary Christians to lead the world into evil before Christ returns to Earth to redeem and rescue the faithful. Can also refer to any person who is in opposition to or an enemy of Jesus Christ or his teachings, as well as to those who claim to be Christ, but in fact are false and misleading.



- anthroposophy** A spiritual or religious philosophy that Rudolph Steiner (1861–1925), an Austrian philosopher and scientist, developed, with the core belief centering around the human accessibility of the spiritual world to properly developed human intellect. Steiner founded the Anthroposophical Society in 1912 to promote his ideas that spiritual development should be humanity's foremost concern.
- apocalypse** From the Greek *apokalupsis*, meaning “revelation.” In the Bible, the Book of Revelation is often referred to as the Apocalypse. Comes from many anonymous, second-century B.C.E. and later Jewish and Christian texts that contain prophetic messages pertaining to a great total devastation or destruction of the world and the salvation of the righteous.
- apothecary** From the Greek *apotheke* meaning “storehouse.” A pharmacist or druggist who is licensed to prescribe, prepare and sell drugs and other medicines, or a pharmacy—where drugs and medicines are sold.
- apparition** The unexpected or sudden appearance of something strange, such as a ghost. From the Latin *apparitus*, past participle of *apparere*, meaning to appear.
- archaeologist** A person who scientifically examines old ruins or artifacts such as the remains of buildings, pottery, graves, tools, and all other relevant material in order to study ancient cultures.
- archipelago** From the Greek *arkhi*, meaning “chief or main” and *pelagos* meaning “sea.” Any large body of water that contains a large number of scattered islands.
- Armageddon** From late Latin *Armagedon*, Greek and Hebrew, *har megiddo*, *megiddon*, which is the mountain region of Megiddo. Megiddo is the site where the great final battle between good and evil will be fought as prophesied and will be a decisive catastrophic event that many believe will be the end of the world.
- astral self** Theosophical belief that humans possess a second body that cannot be perceived with normal senses, yet it coexists with the human body and survives death.
- astronomy** The scientific study of the workings of the universe—of stars, planets, their positions, sizes, composition, movement behavior. Via the Old French and Latin from Greek *astronomia*, meaning literally star-arranging.
- automatic writing** Writing that occurs through either an involuntary, or unconscious, trance-like state with the source being the writer's own unconscious self, from a telepathic link with another, or from a deceased spirit wishing to communicate a message.
- banal** Boring, very ordinary and commonplace. From the French word *ban*, originally used in the context of a mandatory military service for all or common to all.
- barter** The exchange or the process of negotiating certain goods or services for other goods or services.
- Bedouin** A nomadic Arabic person from the desert areas of North Africa and Arabia. Via Old French *beduin*, ultimately from Arabic *badw*, or desert, nomadic desert people.
- betrothal** The act of becoming or being engaged to marry another person.
- Bhagavad Gita** From Sanskrit *Bhagavadgi ta*, meaning “song of the blessed one.” A Hindu religious text, consisting of 700 verses, in which the Hindu god, Krishna, teaches the importance of unattachment from personal aims to the fulfillment of religious duties and devotion to God.
- bipedal** Any animal that has two legs or feet. From the Latin stem *biped*, meaning two-footed.
- birthstone** Each month of the year has a particular precious gemstone or a semi-precious stone associated with it. It is believed that if a person wears the stone assigned their birth month, good fortune or luck will follow.
- bitumen** Any of a variety of natural substances, such as tar or asphalt, containing hydrocar-

bons derived from petroleum and used as a cement or mortar for surfacing roads.

**black magick** The use of magic for evil purposes, calling upon the devil or evil spirits.

**blasphemy** Something said or done which shows a disrespect for God or things that are sacred. An irreverent utterance or action showing a disrespect for sacred things or for God.

**cadaver** A dead body that is usually intended for dissection. From the Latin *cadere*, meaning to fall or to die.

**charlatan** From the Italian *ciarlatano*, via seventeenth-century French *ciarlare*, meaning “to babble or patter” or “empty talk.” Someone who makes elaborate claims or who pretends to have more skill or knowledge than is factual, such as a fraud or quack.

**chieftain** The leader of a clan, tribe, or group.

**clairvoyance** The ability to visualize or sense things beyond the normal range of the five human senses. From the French word *clairvoyant*, meaning clear-sighted and *voyant*, the present participle of *voir* to see.

**conjurations** The act of reciting a name, words or particular phrases with the intent of summoning or invoking a supernatural force or occurrence.

**conquistadores** From the Latin *conquirere* meaning “to conquer.” Spanish soldiers or adventurers, especially of the sixteenth century who conquered Peru, Mexico, or Central America.

**consciousness** Someone’s mind, thoughts or feelings, or can be referring to the part of the mind which is aware of same. The state of being aware of what is going on around you, either individually or the shared feelings of group awareness, feelings or thoughts.

**conspiracy** A plan formulated in secret between two or more people to commit a subversive act.

**contactee** Someone who believes to have been or is in contact with an alien from another planet.

**cosmic consciousness** The sense or special insight of one’s personal or collective awareness in relation to the universe or a universal scheme.

**cosmic sense** The awareness of one’s identity and actions in relationship to the universe or universal scheme of things.

**cosmology** The philosophical study and explanation of the nature of the universe or the scientific study of the origin and structure of the universe.

**cosmos** From the Greek *kosmos* meaning “order, universe, ornament.” The entire universe as regarded in an orderly, harmonious and integrated whole.

**coven** From the Anglo-Norman, mid-seventeenth century “assembly” and from *convenire* meaning convene. An assembly of or a meeting of a group of witches, often 13 in number.

**cryptomnesia** A state of consciousness in which the true source or origin of a particular memory is forgotten or is attributed to a wrongful source or origin.

**cryptozoology** The study of so-called mythical creatures such as the Yeti or Bigfoot, whose existence has not yet been scientifically substantiated.

**cubit** From the Latin *cubitum*, meaning forearm or elbow. An ancient unit of length, based on the distance from the tip of the middle finger to the elbow which approximated 17 to 22 inches.

**deity** From late Latin *deitas* “divine nature,” and *deus* “god.” A divine being or somebody or something with the essential nature of a divinity, such as a god, goddess. When the term is capitalized, it refers to God in monotheistic belief or religions.

**demarcation** The process of setting borders, limits or marking boundaries. From the Spanish *demarcacion*, literally meaning, marking off.

**demon possession** When low-level disincarnate spirits invade and take over a human body.

- desecration** When something sacred is treated in a profane or damaging manner.
- discarnate** The lack of a physical body. Coined from *dis-* and the Latin stem *car-*, meaning *flesh*.
- The Dispersion** From the Greek *diaspora* meaning to scatter or disperse. Refers to the period in history when the Jewish people were forced to scatter in countries outside of Palestine after the Babylonian captivity.
- dogma** From Greek stem word *dogmat*, meaning “opinion” or “tenet,” and from *dokein*, “to seem good.” A belief or set of beliefs, either political, religious, philosophical, or moral and considered to be absolutely true.
- druid** Someone who worships the forces of nature as in the ancient Celtic religion. Can also refer to a priest in the Celtic religion.
- ecclesiasticism** Principles, practices, activities, or body of thought that is all-encompassing and adhered to in an organized church or institution.
- ecstatic** Intense emotion of pleasure, happiness, joy or elation.
- electrodes** Two conductors through which electricity flows in batteries or other electrical equipment.
- electroencephalograph** A device or machine that through the use of electrodes placed on a person’s scalp, monitors the electrical activity in various parts of the brain. These are recorded and used as a diagnostic tool in tracing a variety of anything from brain disorders, tumors or other irregularities to dream research.
- electroencephalographic dream research** Researching dreams using a electroencephalograph to aid the researcher in the brain activity of the one being studied.
- electromagnetic** Of or pertaining to the characteristics of an electromagnet, which is a device having a steel or iron core and is magnetized by an electric current that flows through a surrounding coil.
- elemental spirits** A lower order of spirit beings, said to be usually benevolent and dwell in the nature kingdom as the life force of all things in nature, such as minerals, plants, animals, and the four elements of earth, air, fire and water; the planets, stars, and signs of the zodiac; and hours of the day and night. Elves, brownies, goblins, gnomes, and fairies are said to be among these spirits.
- elixir** Something that is a mysterious, magical substance with curative powers believed to heal all ills or to prolong life and preserve youthfulness. From the Arabic *al-iksir* and the Greek *xerion*, meaning dry powder for treating wounds.
- enchancements** Things or conditions which possess a charming or bewitching quality such as a magical spell.
- encode** To convert a message from plain text into a code. In computer language, to convert from analog to digital form, and in genetics to convert appropriate genetic data.
- enigma** From Greek *ainigma* “to speak in riddles” and *ainos*, meaning “fables.” Somebody or something that is ambiguous, puzzling or not easily understood and might have a hidden meaning or riddle.
- ephemerality** Refers to the state of something living or lasting for a markedly short or brief time. The nature of existing or lasting for only a day, such as certain plants or insects.
- eschatology** Comes from the Greek word *eskhatos* meaning “last” and *-logy* literally meaning “discourse about the last things.” Refers to the body of religious doctrines concerning the human soul in relation to death, judgment, heaven or hell, or in general, life after death and of the final stage or end of the world.
- evocation** The act of calling forth, drawing out or summoning an event or memory from the past, as in recreating.
- exorcism** The act, religious ceremony, or ritual of casting out evil spirits from a person or a place.

- extraterrestrial** Something or someone originating or coming from beyond Earth, outside of Earth's atmosphere.
- false memory** Refers to situations where some therapies and hypnosis may actually be planting memories through certain suggestions or leading questions and comments; thereby creating memories that the patient or client believes to be true, but in reality they are not.
- fanatical** Extreme enthusiasm, frenzy, or zeal about a particular belief, as in politics or religion.
- Five Pillars of Islam** In Arabic, also called the *arkan*, and consists of the five sacred ritual duties believed to be central to mainstream Muslims' faith. The five duties are the confession of faith, performing the five daily prayers, fasting during the month of Ramadan, paying alms tax, and performing at least one sacred pilgrimage to Mecca, the holy land.
- foo fighter** A term coined by pilots who reported sightings of unconventional aircraft that appeared as nocturnal lights during World War II. A popular cartoon character of the time, Smokey Stover, often said "Where there's foo there's fire" and it became the saying to describe the strange phenomena.
- frieze** From the Latin *phrygium (opus)*, meaning work or craftsmanship. A decorative architectural band, usually running along a wall, just below the ceiling, often sculpted with figurines or ornaments.
- fulcrum** From the Latin *fulcire*, meaning "to prop up or support." The part of something that acts as its support.
- Geiger counter** An instrument named after its inventor, German physicist Hans Geiger (1882–1945), that is used to measure and detect such things as particles from radioactive materials.
- geoglyphics** Lines, designs, or symbols left in the earth, such as those in Egypt, Malta, Chile, Bolivia, and Peru with a mysterious, ancient, and puzzling origin.
- Gestalt therapy** A type of psychotherapy that puts a emphasis on a person's feelings as revealing desired or undesired personality traits and how they came to be, by examining unresolved issues from the past.
- Gnostic** From the Greek, *gnostikos*, meaning "concerning knowledge." A believer in Gnosticism, or relating to or possessing spiritual or intellectual knowledge or wisdom.
- guardian angel** A holy, divine being that watches over, guides, and protects humans.
- hallucinations** A false or distorted perception of events during which one vividly imagines seeing, hearing or sensing objects or other people to be present, when in fact they are not witnessed by others.
- haruspicy** A method of divining or telling the future by examining the entrails of animals.
- heresy** The willful, persistent act of adhering to an opinion or belief that rejects or contradicts established teachings or theories that are traditional in philosophy, religion, science, or politics.
- heretic** From the Greek *hairetikos*, meaning "able to choose." Someone who does not conform or whose opinions, theories, or beliefs contradict the conventional established teaching, doctrines, or principles, especially that of religion.
- hieroglyphics** A writing system of ancient Egypt that uses symbols or pictures to signify sounds, objects, or concepts. Can also refer to any writing or symbols that are difficult to decipher. The word comes from an ancient Greek term meaning "sacred carving."
- hierophant** From the Latin *hierophanta* and Greek *hierophantes*, meaning literally a "sacred person who reveals something." An ancient Greek priest who revealed or interpreted the sacred mysteries, or holy doctrines, at the annual festival of Eleusis.
- hoax** An act of deception that is intended to make people think or believe something is real when it is not.
- Homo sapiens** Mankind or humankind, the species of modern human beings.

- horoscope** From Greek *horoskopos*, literally meaning “time observer” and from *hora* meaning “time, or hour,” referring to the time of birth. A diagram or astrological forecast based on the relative position in the heavens of the stars and planets in the signs of the zodiac, at any given moment, but especially at the moment of one’s birth.
- hypnagogic** Relating to or being in the state between wakefulness and sleep where one is drowsy. From the French *hypnagogique* meaning literally leading to sleep.
- hypnopompic** Typical of or involving the state between sleeping and waking. Coined from *hypno* and Greek *pompe*, meaning a sending away.
- hypnosis** The process of putting or being in a sleeplike state, although the person is not sleeping. It can be induced by suggestions or methods of a hypnotist.
- hypothesis** A theory or assumption that needs further exploration, but which is used as a tentative explanation until further data confirms or denies it. From the Greek *hupothesis* meaning foundation or base.
- Ice Age** Any of the periods of extreme cold or glacial epochs in the history of Earth when temperatures fell, resulting in large areas of Earth’s surface covered with glaciers; the most recent one occurring during the Pleistocene epoch.
- incantation** From fourteenth-century French, *cantare*, meaning “to sing” via Latin—*incantare*—“to chant.” The chanting, recitation or uttering of words supposed to produce a magical effect or power.
- incarnation** A period of time in which a spirit or soul dwells in a bodily form or condition. One of a series of lives spent in a physical form.
- indigenous** From a mid-seventeenth century word *indigena*, literally meaning “born-in,” and from *gignere*, meaning “to beget.” Inborn, intrinsic, or belonging to a place, such as originating, growing, or living in an area, environment, region, or country.
- Inquisition** Fourteenth century, from Latin *inquirere* via Old French *inquisicion*, meaning “to inquire.” In the thirteenth century, Roman Catholicism appointed a special tribunal or committee whose chief function was to combat, suppress and punish heresy against the church. Remaining active until the modern era, the official investigations were often harsh and unfair.
- insurrectionist** Someone who is in rebellion or revolt against an established authority, ruler, or government.
- intergalactic** Something that is located, or is moving, between two or more galaxies.
- Invocation** The act of calling upon or appealing to a higher power such as a deity, spirit, or God for assistance. A form of prayer, that invites God’s presence, at the beginning of a ceremony or meeting. In black magick, can be the casting of a spell or formula to invite an evil spirit to appear.
- ions** An atom or group of atoms that are electrically charged through the process of gaining or losing one or more electrons. From the Greek *ion* meaning moving thing; and from the present participle of *ienai* meaning to go—from the movement of any ion toward the electrode of the opposite charge.
- jinni** In Islamic or Muslim legend, a spirit that is capable of taking on the shape of humans or animals in order to perform mischievous acts or to exercise supernatural power and influence over humans. From the Arabic *jinn*, which is the plural of *jinni*.
- Kabbalah** body of mystical Jewish teachings based on an interpretation of hidden meanings contained in the Hebrew scriptures. Kabbalah is Hebrew for “that which is received,” and also refers to a secret oral tradition handed down from teacher to pupil. The term Kabbalah is generally used now to apply to all Jewish mystical practice.
- karmic law** Karma is the Sanskrit word for “deed.” In the Eastern religions of Buddhism and Hinduism all deeds of a person in this life dictate an equal punishment or reward to be met in the next life or series

of lives. In this philosophy, it is a natural moral law rather than a divine judgment which provides the process of development, enabling the soul into higher or lower states, according to the laws of cause and effect to be met.

**knockings/rappings** Tapping sounds said to be coming from deceased spirits in an attempt to communicate with or frighten the living.

**left-hand path** In occult tradition, a practitioner who practices black magic.

**leprous** From the Greek, *lepros*, meaning “scale.” Something resembling the symptoms of or relating to the disease of leprosy, which covers a person’s skin with scales or ulcerations.

**loa** A spirit that is thought to enter the devotee of the Haitian voodoo, during a trance state, and believed to be a protector and guide that could be a local deity, a deified ancestor or even a saint of the Roman Catholic Church.

**lupinomanis** Having the excessive characteristics of a wolf, such as being greedy or ravenously hungry.

**lycanthropy** The magical ability in legends and horror stories of a person who is able to transform into a wolf, and take on all of its characteristics.

**magus** A priest, wizard, or someone who is skilled or learned, especially in astrology, magic, sorcery, or the like.

**manitou** A supernatural force, or spirit that suffuses various living things, as well as inanimate objects, according to the Algonquian peoples. In the mythology of the Ojibwa of the eastern United States, Manitou is the name of the supreme deity, or God, and means “Great Spirit.”

**manna** The food miraculously supplied to the Israelites by God, according to the Old Testament, as they wandered in the wilderness during their flight from Egypt. Spiritual nourishment or something of value received of divine origin or unexpectedly.

**materialization** Something that appears suddenly, as if out of nowhere. In the paranor-

mal it might be a ghost or spirit that suddenly appears to take on a physical form.

**medium** In the paranormal, someone who is able to convey messages between the spirits of the deceased and the spirits of the living.

**megalith** A very large stone that is usually a part of a monument or prehistoric architecture.

**Mesopotamia** Greek word, meaning “between two rivers.” An ancient region that was located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in what is today, modern Iraq and Syria. Some of the world’s earliest and greatest ancient civilizations such as Ur, Sumer, Assyria, and Babylonia were developed in that region.

**messiah** A leader who is regarded as a liberator or savior. In Christianity, the Messiah is Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), in Judaism, it is the king who will lead the Jews back to the Holy Land of Israel and establish world peace.

**metaphysical** Relating to abstract thought or the philosophical study of the nature of existence and truth.

**metrology** The scientific system or study of measurements. From the Greek *metrologie*, meaning theory of ratios and *metron*, or measure.

**mortician** An undertaker or one who prepares dead bodies for burial and funerals.

**narcolepsy** A condition where a person uncontrollably falls asleep at odd times during daily activities and/or for long extended periods of time. Hallucinations and even paralysis might also accompany this condition.

**near-death experience** A mystical-like occurrence or sensation that individuals on the brink of death or who were dead, but brought back to life, have described which includes leaving their physical body and hovering over it as though they were a bystander.

**neo-paganism** Someone who believes in a contemporary or modernized version of the religions which existed before Chris-

- tianity, especially those with a reverence for nature over the worship of a divine or supreme being.
- neophyte** From the Latin *neophytus* and Greek *neophytos* or *phuein*, “to plant” or “cause to grow”—literally meaning “newly planted.” A beginner or novice at a particular task or endeavor. Somebody who is a recent convert to a belief. A newly ordained priest, or someone who is new to a religious order, but who has not yet taken their vows, so is not yet a part of the order.
- neuron** The basic functional unit of the nervous system a cell body that consists of an axon and dendrites and transmit nerve impulses. A neuron is also called a *nerve cell*. Via German from Greek *neuron*, meaning sinew, cord, or nerve.
- Novena of Masses** In the Roman Catholic Church, the recitation of prayers or devotions for a particular purpose, for nine consecutive days. From the Latin *nus*, meaning nine each and from *novem*, meaning nine.
- Old Testament** The first of the two main divisions of the Christian Bible that corresponds to the Hebrew scriptures.
- omen** A prophetic sign, phenomenon, or happening supposed to foreshadow good or evil or indicate how someone or something will fare in the future—an indication of the course of future events.
- oracle** Either someone or something that is the source of wisdom, knowledge or prophecy. Can also refer to the place where the prophetic word would be given. Via French from the Latin *oraculum*, from *orare* to speak.
- paleoanthropology** The study of humanlike creatures or early human beings more primitive than *Homo Sapiens*, usually done through fossil evidence.
- paleontology** The study of ancient forms of life in geologic or prehistoric times, using such evidence as fossils, plants, animals, and other organisms.
- Pan** In Greek mythology the god of nature or of the woods, fields, pastures, forests, and flocks. Is described as having the torso and head of a human, but the legs, ears, and horns of a goat.
- paranormal** Events or phenomena that are beyond the range of normal experience and not understood or explained in terms of current scientific knowledge.
- parapsychologist** One who studies mental phenomena, such as telepathy or extrasensory perception, the mind/body connection, and other psi or paranormal factors that cannot be explained by known scientific principles.
- parapsychology** The study or exploration of mental phenomena that does not have a scientific explanation in the known psychological principles.
- Passover** The seven or eight days of a Jewish festival that begins on the fourteenth day of Nissan and commemorates the exodus of the Hebrews from their captivity in Egypt. From the Hebrew word *pesa*, meaning to pass without affecting.
- pharaoh** From the Hebrew *par'oh*, Egyptian *pr-'o*, and Latin and Greek *Pharao*, meaning literally “great house.” An ancient Egyptian title for the ruler or king of Egypt, often considered a tyrant and one who expected unquestioning obedience.
- pharmacologist** The study of or science of drugs in all their aspects, including sources, chemistry, production, their use in treating ailments and disease, as well as any known side effects.
- phenomena** Strange, extraordinary, unusual, even miraculous events, or happenings to persons or things. From the Greek *phainomenon*, that which appears, from the past participle of *phainein*, to bring to light.
- philanthropist** Someone who is benevolent or generous in his or her desire or activities to improve the social, spiritual or material welfare of humankind. From the late Latin, ultimately, Greek *philanthropos*, humane; *philos*; loving and *anthropos*, human being.
- philanthropy** From the Greek *philanthropos*, meaning “humane,” and from *philos*, meaning “loving.” An affection or desire

to help improve the spiritual, social, or material welfare of humanity through acts of charity or benevolence.

**physiognomy** From *phusis* meaning “nature, character” and *gnomon*, “to judge.” The art of judging a person’s character or temperament by their physical features, especially facial features.

**physiology** The study of the functioning and internal workings of living things, such as metabolism, respiration, reproduction and the like. From the Latin word *physiologia* and the Greek *phusiologia*, and *phusis* meaning nature.

**precognition** The ability to foresee what is going to happen in the future, especially if this perception is gained through other than the normal human senses or extrasensory.

**predator** Any organism or animal that hunts, kills, and eats other animals. Can refer to a ruthless person who is extremely aggressive in harming another. From the Latin *praedator* and *praedari*, meaning to seize as plunder.

**psi** The factor or factors responsible for parapsychological phenomena. Derived from the Greek letter *psi* which is used to denote the unknown factor in an equation.

**psyche** The soul or human spirit or can refer to the mental characteristics of a person or group or nation. Via Latin from Greek *psukhe* meaning breath, soul, mind and from *psukhein* to breathe.

**psychiatrist** A doctor who is trained to treat people with psychiatric disorders.

**psychoanalysis** The system of analysis regarding the relationship of conscious and unconscious psychological aspects and their treatment in mental or psycho neurosis.

**psychoanalyst** One who uses the therapeutic methods of psychiatric analysis, such as dream analysis and free association, as developed by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) to treat patients in order to gain awareness of suppressed subconscious experiences or memories that might be causing psychological blocks.

**psychokinesis** The ability to make objects move or to in some way affect them without using anything but mental powers.

**pulsar** A star generally believed to be a neutron star and that appears to pulse as it briefly emits bursts of visible radiation such as radio waves and x-rays.

**putrefy** Causing something to decay, usually indicating a foul odor. From the Latin stem, *putr*, meaning rotten, plus *facere*, to make.

**Qur’an** The sacred text, or holy book, of Islam. For Muslims, it is the very word of Allah, the absolute God of the Islamic faith, as revealed to the prophet Muhammad (c. 570 C.E.–632 C.E.) by the archangel Gabriel.

**rectory** The house or dwelling that a rector (clergyman) lives in.

**reincarnation** The reappearance or rebirth of something in a new form. Some religions or belief systems state that the soul returns to live another life in a new physical form and does so in a cyclical manner.

**resurrection** The act of rising from the dead or returning to life. In Christian belief, the Resurrection was the rising of Jesus Christ from the dead after he was crucified and entombed. Resurrection also refers to the rising of the dead on Judgment Day, as anticipated by Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

**retroognition** The mental process or faculty of knowing, seeing, or perceiving things, events, or occurrences of things in the past, especially through other than the normal human senses as in extrasensory.

**right-hand path** In occult tradition, a practitioner who practices white magic.

**rite** Originally from an Indo-European base meaning “to fit together” and was the ancestor of the English words *arithmetic* and *rhyme* via, the Latin *ritus*. A formal act or observance as a community custom, such as the rite of courtship. Often has a solemn, religious or ceremonial meaning, such as the rite of baptism.

**Sabbath** From the Greek *sabbaton*, and the Hebrew *sabba*, both meaning “to rest.” A



- day of rest from work and for religious worship. In Christianity, Sunday is the observed day of worship while Saturday is observed in Judaism and some Christian denominations.
- Sanskrit** Sanskrit is an ancient Indo-European language and the language of traditional Hinduism in India. Spoken between the fourteenth and fifth centuries B.C.E., it has been considered and maintained as a priestly and literary language of the sacred Veda scriptures and other classical texts.
- Santeria** From Spanish *santeria* meaning “holiness.” A religion which originated in Cuba by enslaved West African laborers that combines the West African Yoruba religion with Roman Catholicism and recognizes a supreme God as well as other spirits.
- sarcophagus** From the Greek *sarx* meaning “flesh,” and Greek *sarkophagos*, literally meaning “flesh-eater.” Originally a kind of limestone that had properties to aid in the rapid decomposition of the deceased bodies and was used in the making of coffins. Eventually came to mean any stone coffin, especially one with inscriptions or decorated with sculpture and used as a monument.
- sauropod** Any of various large semi-aquatic plant-eating dinosaurs that had a long neck and tail and a small head. From the suborder *Sauropoda*, a Latin word meaning lizard foot.
- schizophrenia** A severe psychiatric disorder which can include symptoms of withdrawal or detachment from reality, delusions, hallucinations, emotional instability, and intellectual disturbances or illogical patterns of thinking to various degrees. The term comes from Greek words meaning “split mind.”
- seance** A meeting or gathering of people in which a spiritualist makes attempts to communicate with the spirits of deceased persons, or a gathering to receive spiritualistic messages.
- semidivine** Possessing similar or some of the characteristics, abilities, or powers normally attributed to a deity and/or existing on a higher spiritual level or plane than common mortals yet not completely divine.
- shaman** A religious or spiritual leader, usually possessing special powers, such as that of prophecy, and healing, and acts as an intermediary between the physical and spiritual realms.
- shamanic exorcism** When a shaman, or tribal medicine-holy person, performs a ceremonial ritual to expel the disincarnate spirits from a person.
- shapeshifter** A supposed fictional being, spirit or something that is able to change its appearance or shape.
- shofar** A trumpet made of a ram’s horn, blown by the ancient and modern Hebrews during religious ceremonies and as a signal in battle.
- soothsayer** From Middle English, literally meaning “somebody who speaks the truth.” Someone who claims to have the ability to foretell future events.
- soul** The animating and vital principal in human beings, credited with the faculties of will, emotion, thought and action and often conceived as an immaterial entity, separate from the physical body. The spiritual nature of human beings, regarded as immortal, separable from the body at death, and susceptible to happiness or misery in a future state. The disembodied spirit of a dead human being.
- spell** A formula or word believed to have magical power. A trance or a bewitched state.
- spirit control** The guide that mediums contact to receive messages from deceased spirits, or another name for spirit guide as used in mediumship.
- spirit guide** A nonphysical being or entity which possibly can be an angel, the higher self, the spirit of a deceased person, a higher group mind, or a highly evolved being whose purpose is to help, guide, direct, and protect the individual.
- spittle** Something that looks like or is saliva, which is secreted from the mouth.

- stigmata** Marks on a person's body resembling the wounds inflicted on Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) during his Crucifixion on the cross.
- subversive** To cause the ruin or downfall of something or to undermine or overthrow principles, an institution, or a government.
- supernatural** Relating to or pertaining to God or the characteristics of God; a deity or magic of something that is above and beyond what is normally explained by natural laws.
- superstition** The belief that certain actions and rituals have a magical effect resulting in either good or bad. From the Latin stem *superstition*, and *superstes*, meaning standing over or in awe.
- taboo** Something that is forbidden. In some cases can refer to something being sacred, therefore forbidden, such as in Polynesian societies. From the Tongan *tabu*, said to have been introduced into the English language by Captain James Cook in the late eighteenth century.
- talisman** An object such as a gemstone or stone, believed to have magical powers or properties. From the Greek *telesma*, meaning something consecrated, *telein*, to complete, and *telos*, result.
- Tanakh** From the Hebrew *tenak*, an acronym formed from *torah*. It is the sacred book of Judaism, consisting of the Torah—the five books of Moses, *The Nevi'im*—the words of the prophets, and the *Kethuvim*—the writings.
- telepathy** Communication of thoughts, mental images, ideas, feelings, or sensations from one person's mind to another's without the use of speech, writing, signs, or symbols.
- theory of evolution** The biological theory of the complex process of living organisms, how they change and evolve from one generation to another or over many generations.
- therianthrope** Used to describe a mythological creature that is half human and half animal. Coined from the Greek *therion*, meaning small wild animal, and *anthropo*, meaning human being.
- totem** An animal, bird, plant, or any other natural object that is revered as a personal or tribal symbol.
- transference** The process of change that happens when one person or place is transferred to another.
- transience** A state of impermanence, or lasting for only a brief time. Remaining in a place only for a short time, or the brief appearance of someone or something.
- transmutation** The act of transforming or changing from one nature, form, or state into another.
- tribulation** Great affliction, trial, or distress. In Christianity, the tribulation refers to the prophesied period of time which precedes the return of Jesus Christ to Earth, in which there will be tremendous suffering that will test humanity's endurance, patience, or faith.
- UFO** Literally an unidentified flying object, although the term is often used by some to refer to an alien spacecraft.
- UFologist** Someone who investigates the reports and sightings of unidentified flying objects.
- Valhalla** In Norse mythology, when the souls of heroes are killed in battle, they spend eternity in a great hall, which is called Valhalla. From the Old Norse *valhall*, literally meaning hall of the slain.
- Valkyrie** One of the 12 handmaids of Odin in Norse mythology who ride their horses over the battlefield as they escort the souls of slain heroes to Valhalla. From the Old Norse *Valkyrja*, meaning literally chooser of the slain.
- vision** From the Latin *vis*, to see. Faculty of sight or a mental image produced by imagination. Can refer to a mystical experience of seeing as if with the eyes, only through a supernatural means such as in a dream, trance, or through a supernatural being, and one which often has religious, revelatory, or prophetic significance.

**voodoo** From Louisiana French, *voudou* or *vodu*, meaning “fetish.” A religion mainly practiced in the Caribbean countries, especially Haiti, that is comprised of a combination of Roman Catholic rituals and animistic beliefs involving fetishes, magic, charms, spells, curses, and communication with ancestral spirits.

**white magick** The use of magic for supposed good purposes such as to counteract evil.

**Wiccan** Someone who is a witch, a believer or follower of the religion of Wicca.

**wizard** A variant of the fifteenth century word *wisard*, meaning “wise.” Someone professing

to have magical powers as a magician, sorcerer, or a male witch. In general, someone who is extremely knowledgeable and clever.

**zoology** The scientific branch of biology that studies animals in all their characteristics and aspects. From the Greek *zoologia*, literally the study of life and from *zolon*, or life form.

**Zoroaster** A Persian prophet (c. 628 B.C.E.–c. 551 B.C.E.) and the founder of an ancient religion called Zoroastrianism whose principal belief is in a supreme deity and of the existence of a dualism between good and evil. Derived from the Greek word *Zarat* or *Zarathustra*, meaning camel handler.

The Cumulative Index, found in each volume, is an alphabetic arrangement of all people, places, images, and concepts found in the text. Names of publications, movies, ships, television programs, radio broadcasts, foreign words, and cross-references are indicated by italics.

The page references to the subjects include the Arabic volume number as well as the page number. Main entries are designated by bold page numbers while images are denoted by italics.

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