

The Unexplained

\$1.00

PSYCHIC POWERS

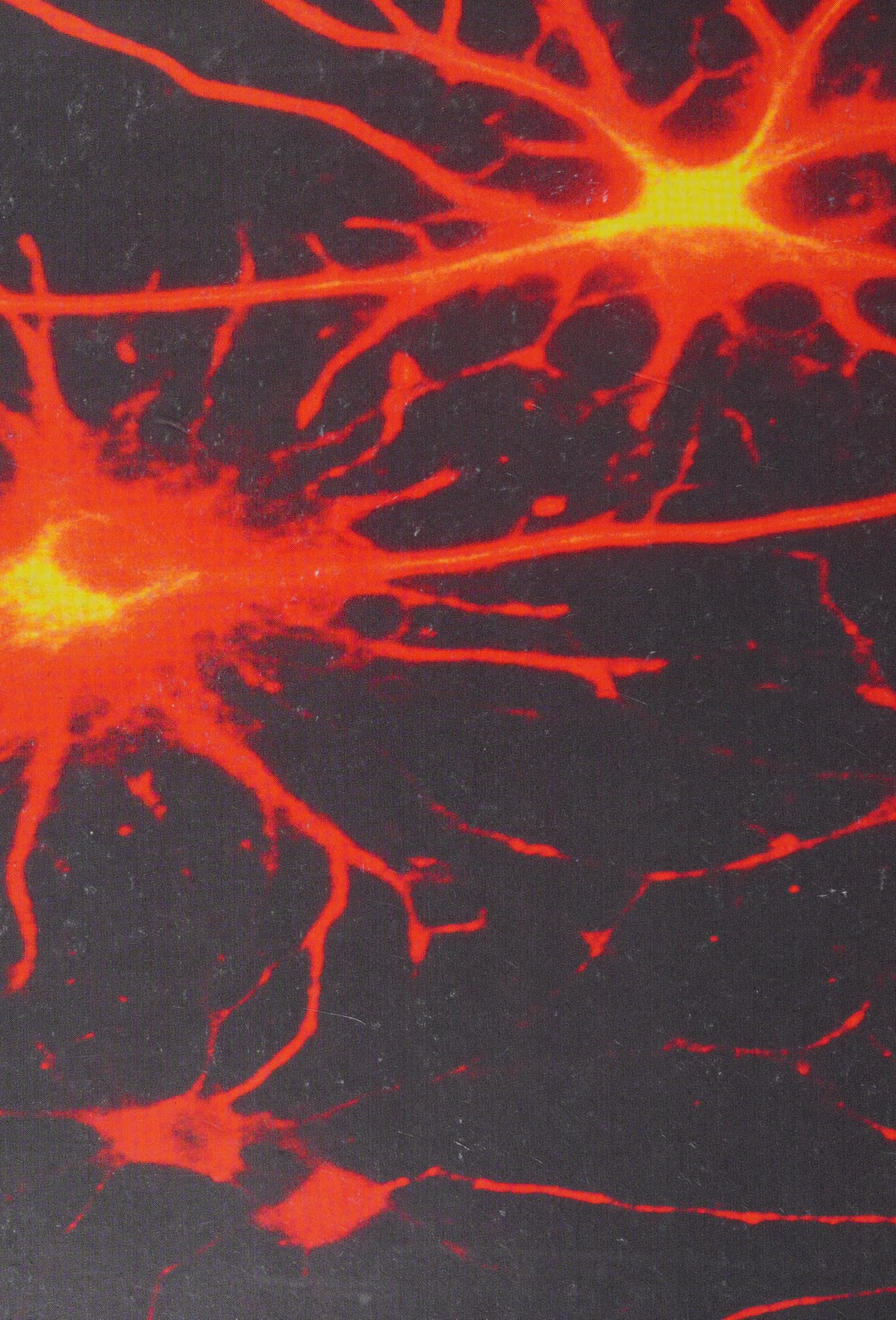


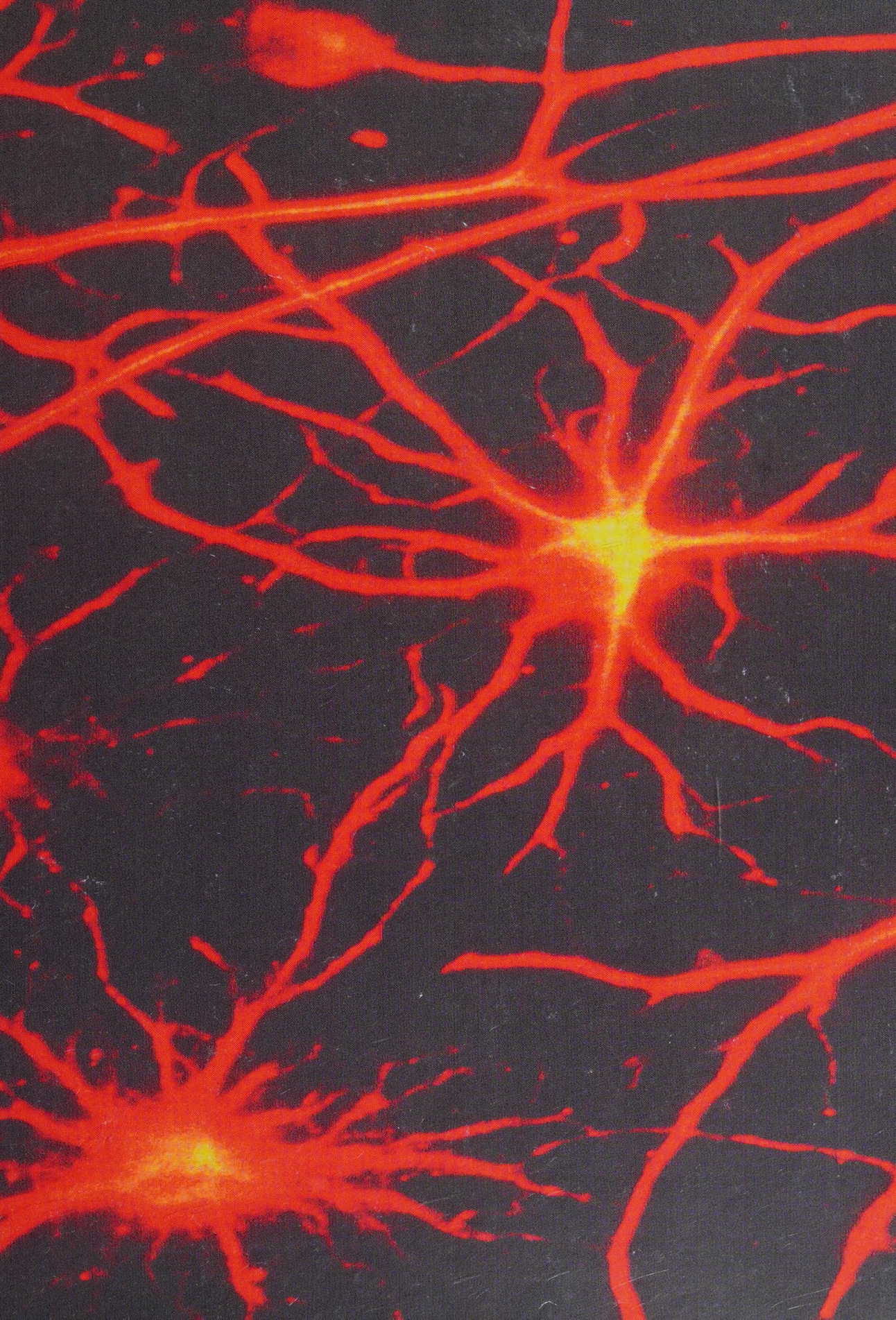
COLIN WILSON

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Enter the world of the unknown







THE UNEXPLAINED

PSYCHIC POWERS



COLIN WILSON



DK PUBLISHING, INC.



A DK PUBLISHING BOOK

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INTRODUCTION



I Ching cards can be used to foretell the future

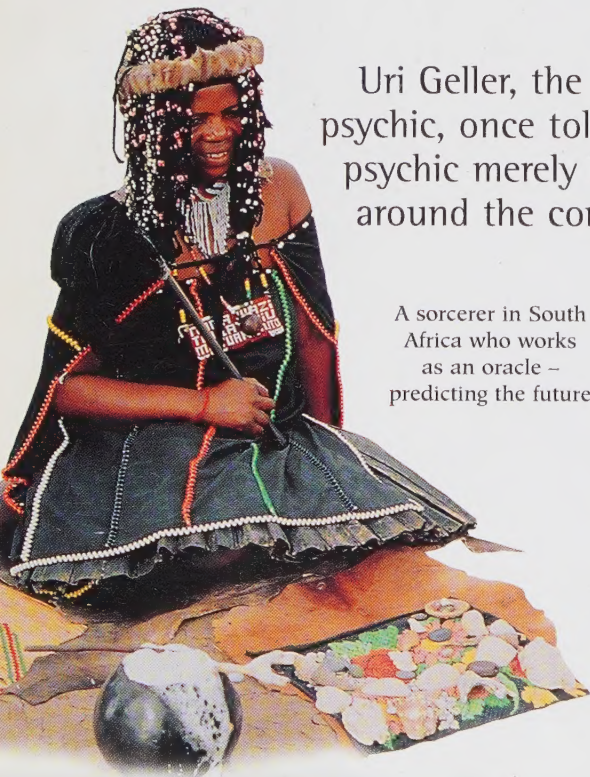
This book is about psychics: people who can do strange things with their minds – some can make small objects move (psychokinesis), or float in the air (levitation), or even walk on red-hot coals without getting burned.

All humans possess some psychic powers, even though most of us are not aware of them. My own powers are very small. Yet when my children were babies, asleep in their carriages, I could wake them up by simply looking at them for a few moments

– it even worked through a window. And when my wife had a bad toothache, I felt it myself – not as a pain, but as a feeling of misery. And I knew exactly when her dentist pulled out the tooth because I suddenly felt strangely happy.

“The human mind is like an iceberg – the greater part is hidden below the surface.”

Carl Jung, Swiss psychologist



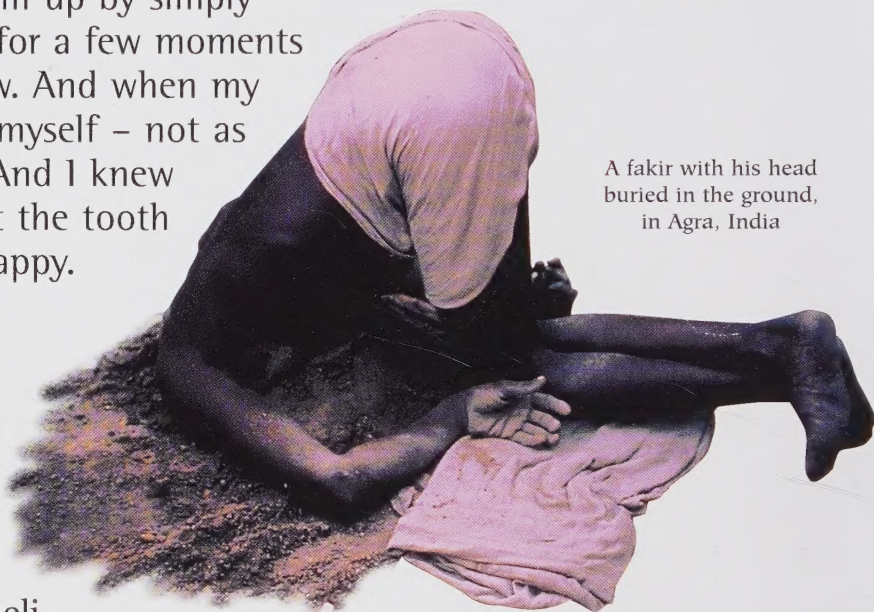
A sorcerer in South Africa who works as an oracle – predicting the future

Uri Geller, the Israeli psychic, once told me that anyone can teach themselves to become psychic merely by trying to guess the color of the next car to come around the corner. He said that very quickly you can begin to guess almost every one correctly. Uri can bend spoons just by rubbing them with his fingertip. He has covered his car with thousands of bent spoons and other pieces of cutlery.

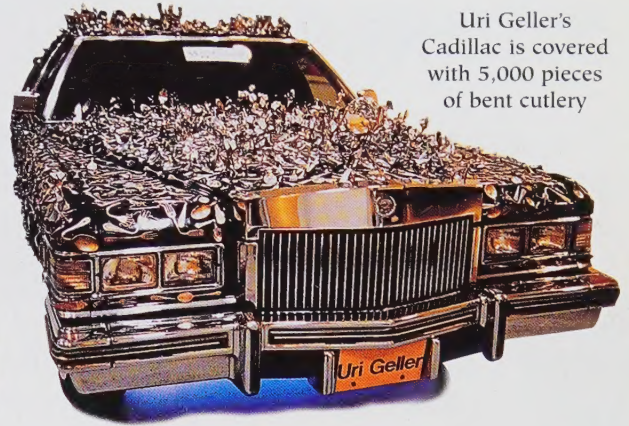
Indian fakirs have amazing power over their bodies – such as the ability to slow down their breathing for several hours. But some psychic powers are much easier to understand, because they seem to happen naturally.



A fakir with his head buried in the ground, in Agra, India



A Sri Lankan
fire walker feels
no pain from
red-hot coals



Uri Geller's
Cadillac is covered
with 5,000 pieces
of bent cutlery

And what about “stigmatics,” people whose hands develop the same wounds that Jesus suffered on the cross, and who sometimes shed tears of blood?

How is it possible to foresee the future, which has not yet happened? It has been done thousands of times, not only by fortune-tellers using crystal balls, or by reading the Chinese *I Ching* oracle, but by people who have dreamed of future events or just “know” what will happen tomorrow or next week.

“The Universe is not only queerer than we imagine. It is queerer than we can imagine.”

J. B. S. Haldane, British biologist



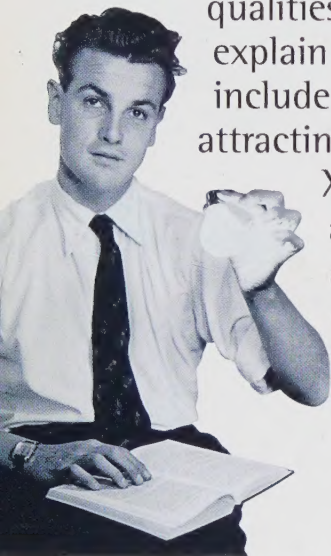
Claretta Robertson from Oakland,
California, whose stigmata bled during
Easter 1972

This book will not try to explain these bizarre things – that would be too much to hope for. But it will show you that they really happen, and that our world is far, far stranger than most people think.

Robin Wilson

STRANGE TALENTS

The human body is a remarkable organism, capable of astonishing feats of endurance and spectacular athletic achievements. But a few individuals possess weird qualities that no one has been able to explain satisfactorily. These bizarre talents include storing electricity like a battery, attracting metal like a magnet, having X-ray vision, and even being able to eat metal. There are also people who can bend metal objects by stroking them. Who knows what else the human body can do?



Brian Williams can discharge electricity at high voltage

Electrical Man

Some people seem to be able to store electricity in their bodies and then discharge it. Brian Williams from Cardiff, Wales, UK, is able to illuminate a lightbulb just by holding it in his fingers.

MAGNETIC WOMAN

After watching a television program about a Russian woman who was magnetic, Erika Zur Stimberg from Bochum, Germany, tried it out for herself. She put a metal spoon against her chest and was amazed to find that it stayed there.



X-ray Vision

In a hospital in Beijing, China, Zheng Xiang Ling works alongside doctors though she is not a nurse or doctor herself. Zheng has a unique ability – she can see the internal organs and bones of patients.

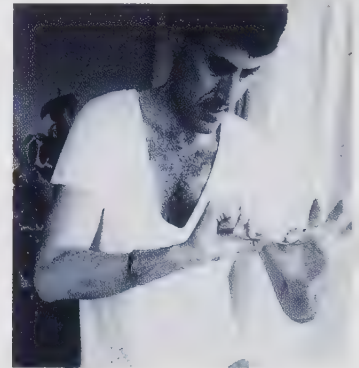
Her X-ray vision gives her a full-color, three-dimensional view inside patients and assists doctors with their diagnoses.



A colored X-ray clearly reveals organs and bones

Spoonbending

During the 1970s an Israeli named Uri Geller became famous for his unusual ability to make metal objects bend simply by stroking them gently with his finger. Metal spoons bent by Geller show signs of “metal fatigue,” as though they had been twisted back and forth vigorously. Geller can also break metal rings without touching them, and start watches without handling them. It is possible that he produces a strange form of electricity.



Uri Geller can bend spoons, move compass needles, and detect the presence of minerals underground

Michel Lotito eats an average of 2 lb (900 g) of metal a day



Monsieur Mangetout

Frenchman Michel Lotito, better known as Monsieur Mangetout (or Mr. Eat-All), travels the world eating metal and glass washed down with mineral oil and plenty of water. He has consumed bicycles, television sets, and even a light aircraft. Scientists examining Lotito’s stomach have found that his intestinal walls are twice as thick as an average person’s and his digestive juices are very strong.



Mrs. Zur Stirnberg – a magnetic woman

The contents of her kitchen cupboard stuck to Mrs. Zur Stirnberg



Moving Metals

Many people, especially children, like Monica Tejada from Spain, found that they too could twist metal just by stroking it lightly.

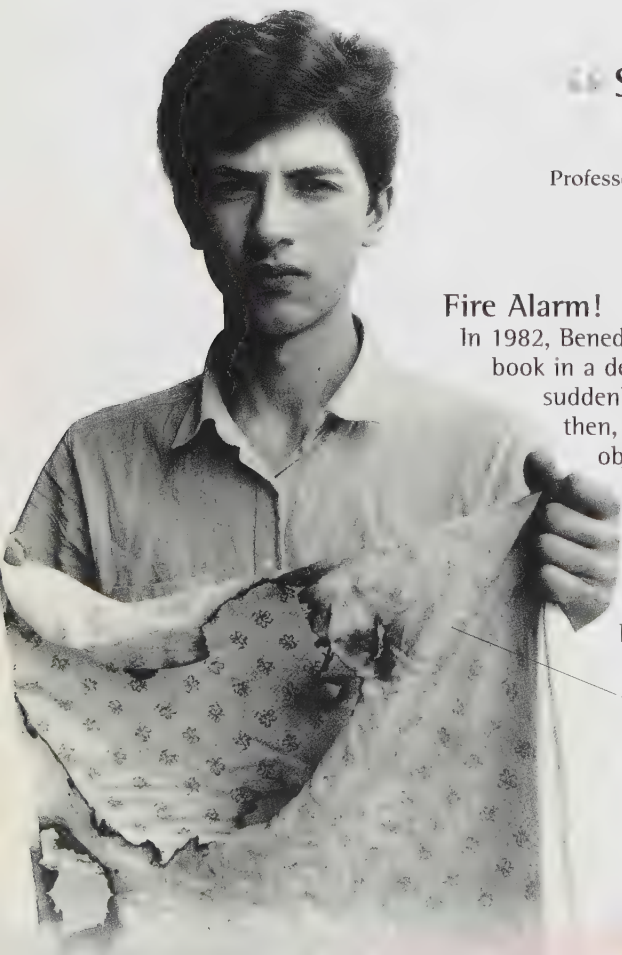
GIFTS AND CURSES

Some of the unknown forces inside us can produce extraordinary effects. One such effect is spontaneous combustion, when people begin to burn from the inside until their body is completely destroyed by the fire. According to science, this should be impossible. The same is true of children who can set fire to things just by looking at them.

SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION

In a few cases, a fire consumes a person almost completely but does not damage the surrounding area. These mysterious deaths are the result of spontaneous combustion. What makes a person burst into flames? The most likely explanation is electricity. Dry hair crackles with static electricity when you comb it, so perhaps the body can build up some kind of electric charge that explodes into flames. Or could the cause be, as some believe, a force unknown to science?

During spontaneous combustion the body bursts into flames for no known reason



“Such things just can’t happen.”

Professor Wilton Krogman, fire expert

Fire Alarm!

In 1982, Benedetto Supino was reading a comic book in a dentist’s waiting room, when it suddenly burst into flames. Ever since then, he has been able to make objects catch fire just by looking at them. Benedetto, who lives in Formia, Italy, is one of many “pyrokinetic people” – mostly children – who seem to be able to cause fires without knowing how or why.

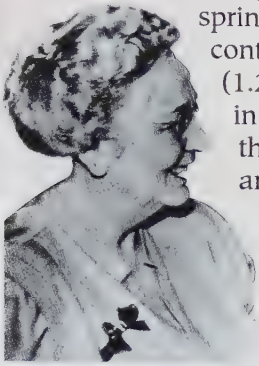
This sheet mysteriously burned while Benedetto was asleep

Benedetto Supino



The Case of Mary Reeser

When Mary Reeser said good-night to her neighbor on July 1, 1951, she told the neighbor that it was too hot to sleep, but otherwise she seemed well. The next morning, all that was left of Mrs. Reeser and the armchair in which she had been sitting, were some glowing cinders and a few blackened springs. Most of the damage was contained within a circle about 4 ft (1.2 m) around the chair. Little else in the room was burned, although there was a layer of sticky soot all around the walls about 4 ft (1.2 m) above the floor. Below this line the room was only slightly affected.



Mary Reeser from St. Petersburg, Florida



Clearing up after the strange fire in Mary Reeser's apartment

Skin-shedding

Some humans shed their skin just like snakes and other reptiles. Mr. S. O. Buskirk of Clark County, Missouri, used to shed his skin every year. For five years running on June 27, his skin began to harden and then peel off. Sometimes the skin came away in large sections – the skin on his hands would come off in two whole pieces like a pair of gloves. Underneath the old layers, soft, new skin was revealed.

Skin-shedding is a very rare condition

Shedding skin like a snake

Luminous People

Another bizarre condition is luminosity – people who glow like lightbulbs.

In 1934, stories about Anna Monaro, of Pirano, Italy, appeared in medical journals around the world.

Anna suffered from asthma and when she was ill a blue glow shone from her chest. It would appear for just a few seconds at a time and was sometimes colored red or green. Doctors could not explain the phenomenon.

A luminous person may give off a blue glow

“Rubbing increased the glow and it spread...”

Medical journal *English Mechanic*, 1869, on the case of a luminous toe

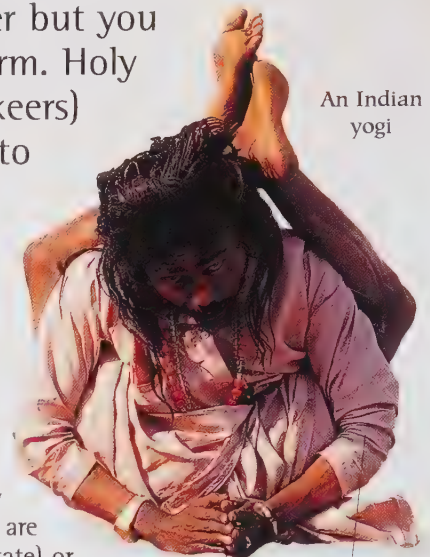


MIND POWER

Does pain exist in the mind? If you put your hand in icy water but you tell yourself the water is warm, the water can actually feel warm. Holy men in India and Sri Lanka, known as fakirs (pronounced fakkeers) use meditation and concentration as a way to block out pain. Fakirs can even stick needles into themselves without bleeding. The martial arts of China and Japan also teach that the most powerful weapon of all is the mind.

Controlling the Mind

Yoga is an exercise that develops control over the mind and body. A yoga master is called a yogi. Many yogis can endure extremes of heat or cold and there are even reports of yogis who can float in the air (levitate) or walk on water. But for all yogis, their main goal is to achieve harmony with the Creator (Brahma).



An Indian yogi

There are thousands of yoga postures

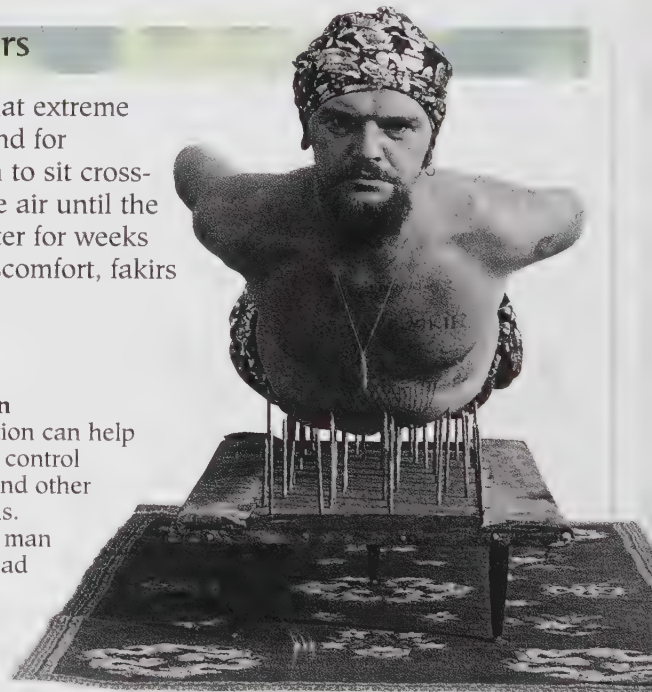
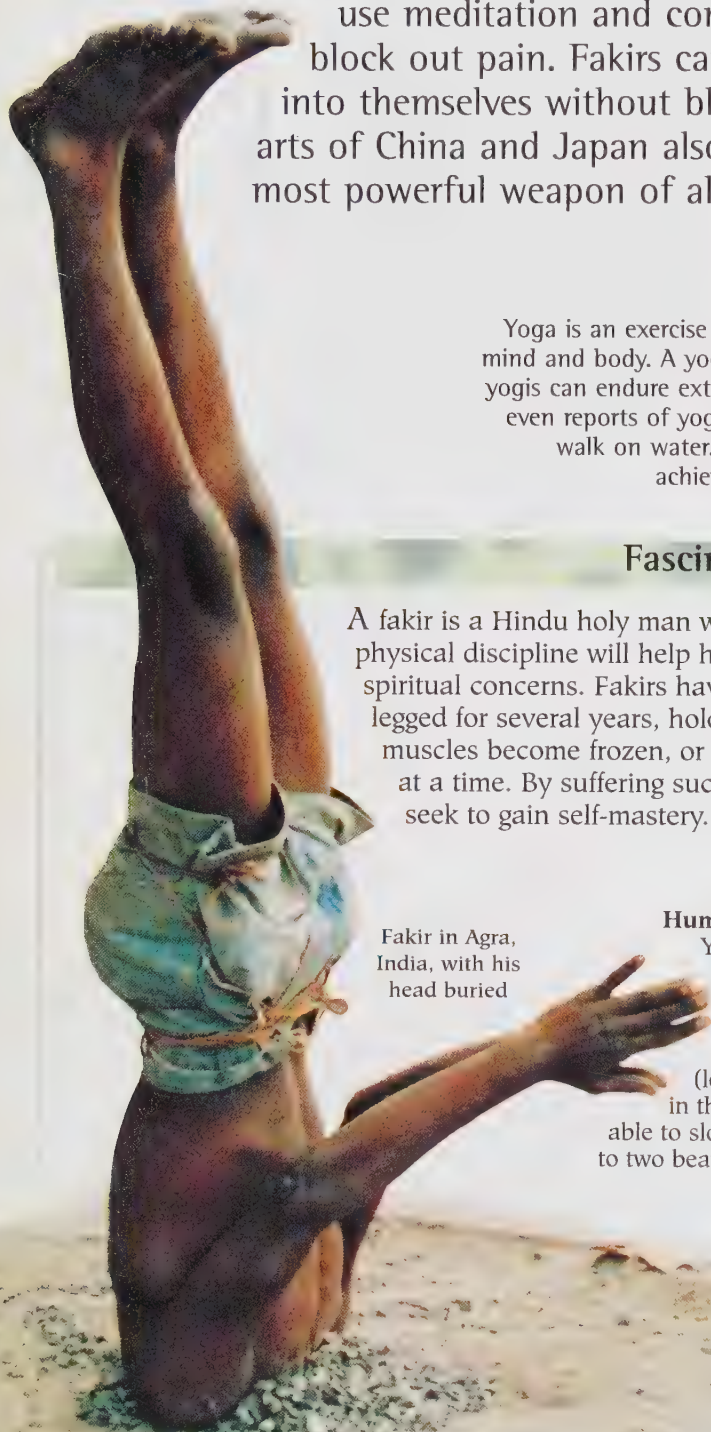
Fascinating Fakirs

A fakir is a Hindu holy man who believes that extreme physical discipline will help him free his mind for spiritual concerns. Fakirs have been known to sit cross-legged for several years, hold an arm in the air until the muscles become frozen, or even sit in water for weeks at a time. By suffering such pain and discomfort, fakirs seek to gain self-mastery.

Human Hibernation

Yoga and meditation can help a fakir learn to control his breathing and other bodily functions. When this holy man (left) buries his head in the ground, he is able to slow his heart rate to two beats a minute.

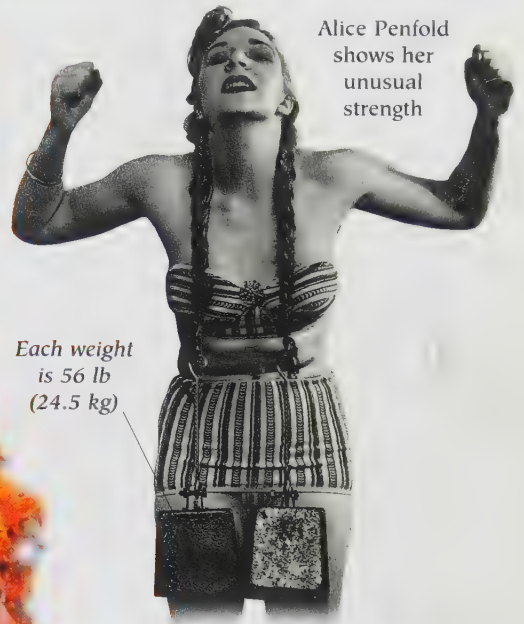
Fakir in Agra, India, with his head buried



Frenchman Rudi Ange stretches out on a bed of nails

Bed of Nails

Many fakirs become immune to pain and can lie without discomfort on a bed of sharp nails. They can spend hours in this position. In fact, this feat may not be as painful as it looks because spreading the body's weight over many nails means that no one nail will pierce the skin.



Alice Penfold shows her unusual strength

Each weight is 56 lb (24.5 kg)

EATING FIRE

Fire-eaters do not really “eat” fire. They put a burning stick in their mouth and quickly close their lips around it. Fire cannot burn without oxygen so the flame goes out. When they take it out of their mouth, it bursts into flames again. When fire-eaters want to blow fire, they fill their mouths with a flammable liquid and blow it over a burning stick so that the flames leap out. Fire-eating is extremely dangerous and requires long training – even professionals get burned.

“It is a very dangerous trick.”

Jean Gegan, fire-eater

Karate Chop

Martial arts originated in China hundreds of years ago. Disciplines such as karate were developed in Japan and are now popular around the world. They were first used in battle but are now practiced for self-defense. For all martial arts self-discipline is vital. A martial artist takes his or her skills very seriously and has developed self-awareness and control. It takes years of practice to learn how to smash through stone or brick without injuring the hand.

A karate expert smashes concrete blocks



Awesome Strength

Even as a child, Alice Penfold of Bury, UK, had remarkable strength. She once demonstrated it by picking up a stool on which her older sister was sitting and raising it above her head – using only her teeth. Holding up two heavy weights with her pigtails was another of Alice's unusual feats of strength.

A fire-eater puts on a spectacular show in a street in Paris, France

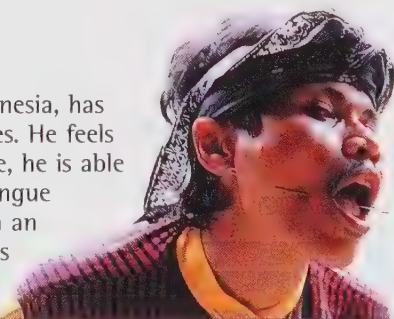


NO PAIN, NO FEAR

The key to all the bizarre mysteries in these pages is the human mind itself. Just as we may not notice that we have hurt ourselves when we are very excited, so a few remarkable individuals do not seem to feel pain or fear. Fire walkers, “human pincushions,” and monks who strike themselves with iron bars can train their minds to switch off the body’s sense of pain.

Overcoming Pain

This worshipper in Prambanan, Java, Indonesia, has achieved a state of ecstasy while he dances. He feels that he is possessed by a god. In this state, he is able to drive needles through his cheek and tongue without feeling pain. Studies show that in an extreme state the brain releases substances called endorphins that act as a natural painkiller and bring a sense of well-being.



A fire walker in Sri Lanka

A dancer pierces his face during a festival in Java, Indonesia



A Hindu worshipper at the Thaipusam festival

Human Pincushion

During the Thaipusam festival in Singapore, Hindus pierce their bodies and hang lemons from the wounds. Perhaps they feel no pain or perhaps they believe that the pain proves that they repent of their sins.

WALKING ON FIRE

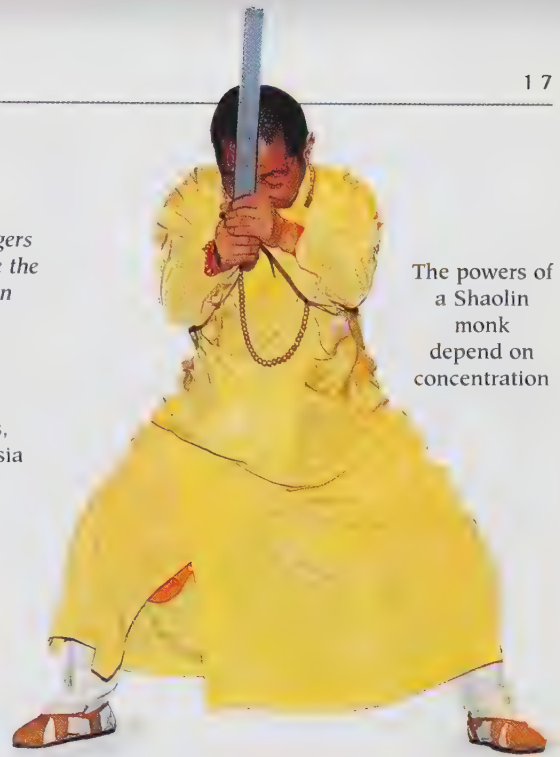
Fire walking is practiced all over the world, particularly in Polynesia, India, Japan, and California. Researchers believe that anyone can walk on red-hot coals or rocks, provided they do it quickly enough. If the feet are in contact with the fire for only a few seconds – even though the coals can reach a temperature of 1,472° F (800° C) – the flesh will not burn. Yet for fire walkers, the secret lies in the power of the mind. Fire walkers in Polynesia believe in a magical force called “mana,” and to prove its strength they take the hand of a spectator, who can also walk on the fire, and feel only a mild warmth on his or her feet.





Daggers pierce the skin

Barong dancers, Indonesia



The powers of a Shaolin monk depend on concentration

“ They experienced no injury or pain... ”

Dr. Harry Wright, Philadelphia

Knife Dancing

Barong dancers in Bali, Indonesia, perform a dance using daggers. They enter a trancelike state as they dance and use the knives to pierce their bodies, but they do not even draw blood.

Skills of the Shaolin

Monks from the Shaolin monastery in Hunan province, China, practice a form of Buddhism that includes martial arts and meditation.

The martial arts are not intended for combat but rather for spiritual progress.

The secret of the monks' unusual strength lies in their concentration.



Patterns on the priestess's skirt may dazzle the snake

Deadly Kiss

In Myanmar (Burma) priestesses of serpent cults dance with cobras, especially the king cobra. They avoid the deadly fangs by using their long skirts to distract the snake, like a bullfighter using a cape. At the end of the dance the priestess leans forward to kiss the snake. This may be less dangerous than it seems; by this point the snake is exhausted and has probably used up all its venom on the woman's skirt.

A snake priestess kisses a cobra at the end of her dance

“ The snake is sacred and may not be harmed. ”

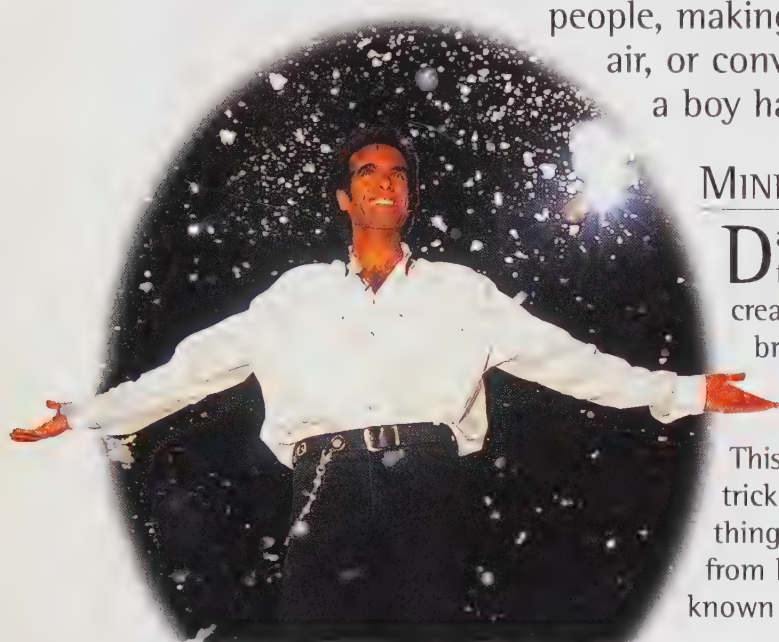
Ancient Buddhist text

TRICKS AND MAGIC

The “magic” you see on television depends on illusion – making things appear and disappear by “sleight of hand” and by distracting the audience’s attention, so that no one can be sure exactly what they saw. Other kinds of magic cannot be so easily explained. Some magicians really do seem to have special powers, levitating both themselves and other people, making objects float in the air, or convincing a crowd that a boy has simply vanished.

MIND-BENDING MAGICIAN

David Copperfield’s magic is familiar to many of us. He creates superb illusions that are broadcast on television. David has even made the Great Wall of China “disappear.” This is only one form of magic trick. Magicians can also make things appear, such as rabbits from hats. This type of magic is known as “conjuring.”



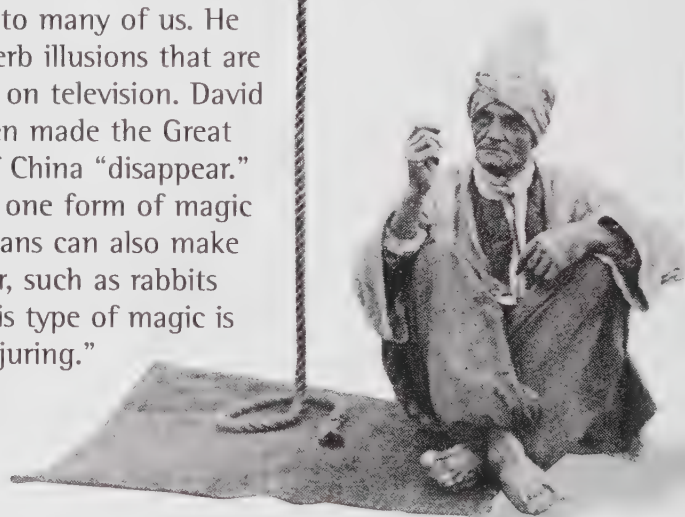
World-famous magician David Copperfield



Karachi and Kyder, famous performers of the rope trick, photographed in 1935

Indian Rope Trick

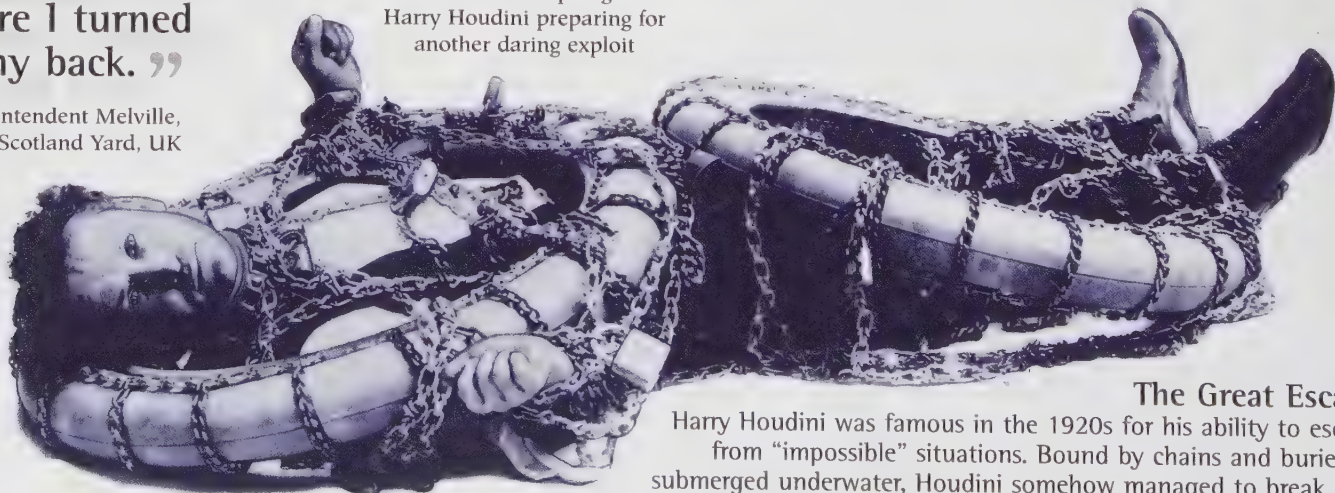
In the famous Indian rope trick, when the magician throws a rope into the air, it remains upright. The magician’s assistant, usually a child, climbs up the rope and then disappears. Later, the child reappears standing on the ground. Though there are many photographs of the trick, no one is quite sure how it is done.



“He had the handcuffs off before I turned my back.”

Superintendent Melville, Scotland Yard, UK

American escapologist Harry Houdini preparing for another daring exploit



The Great Escape

Harry Houdini was famous in the 1920s for his ability to escape from “impossible” situations. Bound by chains and buried or submerged underwater, Houdini somehow managed to break free. He was rumored to have supernatural powers. In fact, he had probably learned to control his breathing by studying Indian yogis (Hindu holy men).

Levitation

Certainly some magicians use tricks to raise people into the air, but can psychic powers achieve the same thing? In fact, hundreds of psychics have been able to overcome the law of gravity. The feat may involve a form of meditation. A well-known experiment involving four people levitating someone using only their index fingers under the person's arms and knees would appear to rely on meditation. It seems that collective mind power can generate enough energy to lift even a heavy person into the air.



Mrs. Deane concentrates and the table rises



The table hovers in the air...



...then it crashes down to the ground again

“I have known Mrs. Deane for many years and know her to be totally honest.”

Estelle Stead

On the Move

Furniture sometimes seems to levitate during a seance (a meeting where a medium attempts to communicate with the dead). Mrs. Ada Deane, a medium who was well-known in the UK during the 1920s, caused a table to rise in the air during a seance in 1923. This sequence of photographs (left) shows the table moving and rising up.

D. D. Home levitating



Floating Home

Medium Daniel Douglas Home from Connecticut, was famous for many exploits, including levitation. Once, in a house in London, UK, he was seen to float out of one fourth-floor window and in through another.

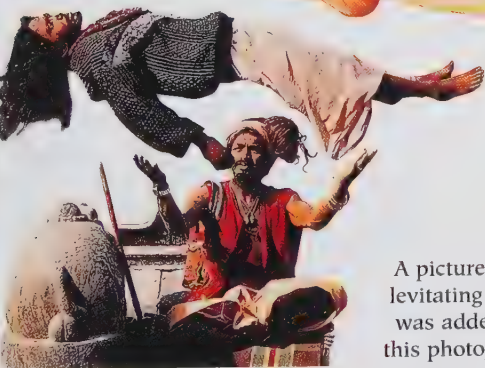


Rising High

Magician “Doc” Shiels from Cornwall, UK, (above) includes levitation in his performances. This arresting photograph shows Shiels levitating his daughter. He declines to say whether he is using supernatural abilities or trickery.

British magician “Doc” Shiels levitating his daughter

A picture of a levitating fakir was added to this photograph



Fakir Feats

Visitors to India often witness fakirs (holy men) performing levitation. Demonstrations seem to defy scientific laws and many people find them hard to believe. This photograph (above) is certainly a fraud.

THE WISE AND THE WEIRD

In pre-Christian times there were wise women, known as witches, who were priestesses of an ancient religion that worshipped the Moon. The “three wise men” of the Bible, who were also known as the Magi (our word “magic” comes from them) were Persian scholars who studied the stars. Modern “wise men” from India and nearby countries are called sadhus, or gurus. They are spiritual teachers or religious wanderers.

Merlin helped set King Arthur on the throne



A WICKED WITCH?

Traditionally, a witch is an old, ugly hag who flies around on a broomstick. According to fairy tales, witches were wicked women; in medieval times, they were accused of making pacts with the devil and were executed. In fact, long ago, in pre-Christian times, witches were regarded as wise healers. They often had a wide knowledge of herbs and could treat simple illnesses or even cast spells to make the crops grow. Witches still exist today. Their religion is called “Wicca” (from an Old English word meaning wise) and it regards nature as sacred.

Typically, a witch wore a pointed hat

A traditional witch

The Wizard Merlin

King Arthur was a British general who fought the Saxons around AD 500. He was assisted by Merlin who was a wizard or wise man. Merlin was Arthur’s adviser and could foretell the future. Historians think that Merlin really existed; he was called Myrddin and was a bard (a poet who sang his poems aloud) rather than a magician.

A loogarou flies at night



Shape-shifter

Witches were thought to be capable of changing their shape. They could appear as animals or birds if they chose. In West Indian folklore, a childless woman could become a werewolf called a loogarou – a giant creature who ate children.





The Pythia at the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, in Greece

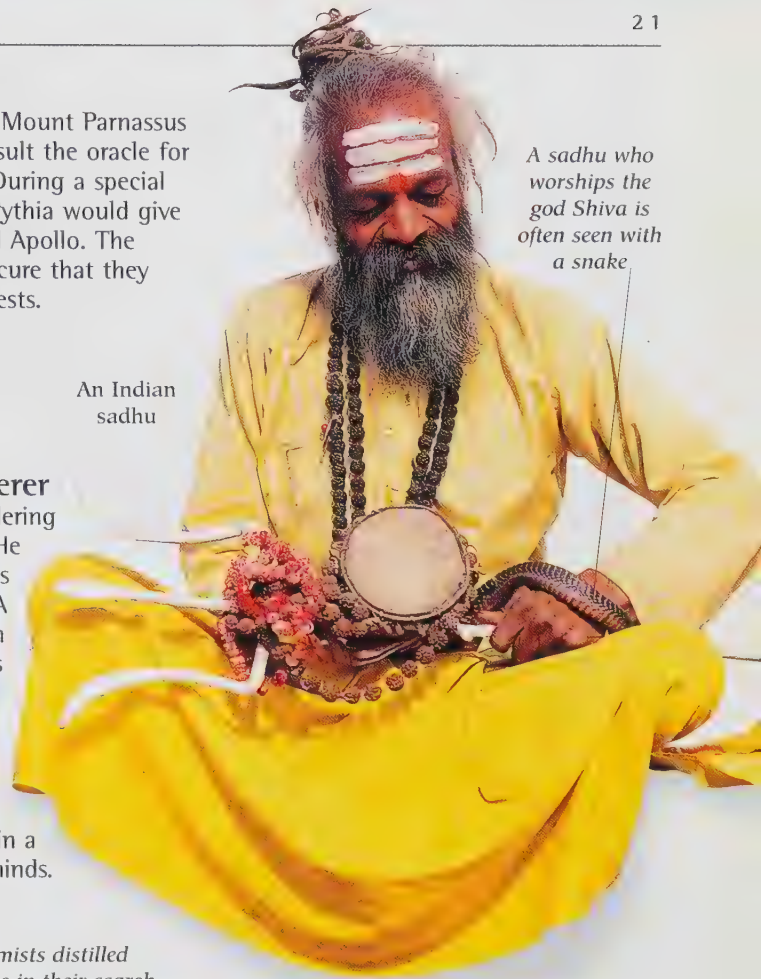
Consulting the Oracle

At the Temple of Apollo on Mount Parnassus in Greece, people could consult the oracle for answers to their questions. During a special ritual, a woman called the Pythia would give a reply on behalf of the god Apollo. The answers were usually so obscure that they had to be interpreted by priests.

A Holy Wanderer

In the Hindu religion a wandering holy man is called a sadhu. He has few possessions and relies on others to help him. A sadhu has turned his back on ordinary life and spends his time seeking, in prayer and meditation, to uncover the meaning of life. Many sadhus possess apparently magical powers, like the ability to travel to other places while in a trance, and to read minds.

An Indian sadhu



A sadhu who worships the god Shiva is often seen with a snake

Base metals were crushed and heated to try to turn them into gold

Alchemists distilled chemicals in their search for the elixir of life



The Art of Alchemy

In the Middle Ages, scientists who called themselves alchemists sought the "philosopher's stone." This would turn base metals, like lead, into gold and would enable whoever discovered it to live forever. All over the world, alchemists worked in their laboratories mixing substances. A few insisted they had succeeded. Frenchman Nicholas Flamel claimed to have discovered the magical stone in 1382 and to have changed or "transmuted" mercury into gold three times. Unlike most alchemists, Flamel certainly died a very rich man.

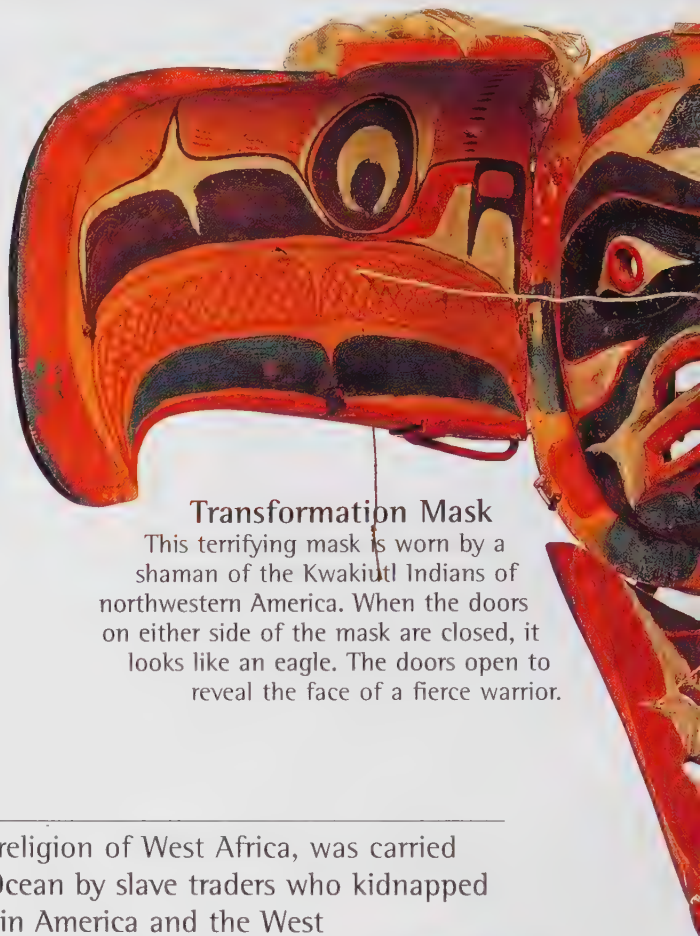
An alchemist's laboratory in Florence, Italy, painted in 1570 by Jan Stradanus

THE SPIRIT WORLD

Shamans, medicine men, and voodoo priests have one thing in common – they all claim to be able to communicate with spirits. They believe that the world is full of good and evil forces, and that by entering into a trance they can visit the spirit world, where they receive help and advice. Sometimes spirits live inside the body of a shaman and help him to heal, settle disputes, or locate lost objects.



A voodoo priest possessed by spirits is ready to heal people at a voodoo-healing hospital in Ghana, West Africa



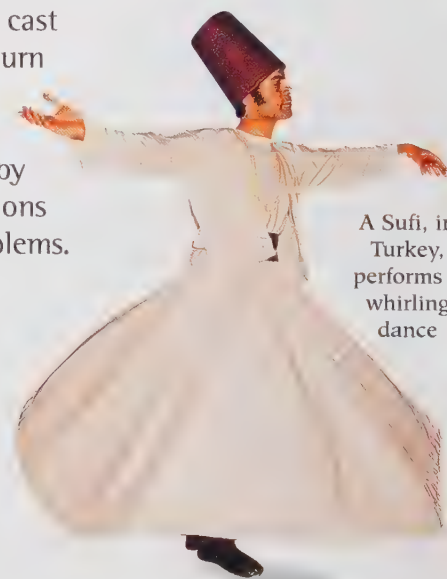
Transformation Mask

This terrifying mask is worn by a shaman of the Kwakiutl Indians of northwestern America. When the doors on either side of the mask are closed, it looks like an eagle. The doors open to reveal the face of a fierce warrior.

VOODOO SORCERY

Voodoo, the magical religion of West Africa, was carried across the Atlantic Ocean by slave traders who kidnapped Africans and sold them in America and the West Indies, especially Haiti. Voodoo sorcerers cast spells, utter curses, and steal bodies to turn into zombies (the walking dead).

During their rituals, voodoo priests allow themselves to be possessed by spirits who can answer questions and solve problems.



A Sufi, in Turkey, performs a whirling dance

Whirling Dervish

Dervishes are members of an Islamic group called Sufis. Sufi Muslims seek a close relationship with God. Some express their devotion in a whirling dance, which can continue for hours with the dancers achieving a state of religious ecstasy.

Kwakiutl
transformation
mask – open



Closed
mask

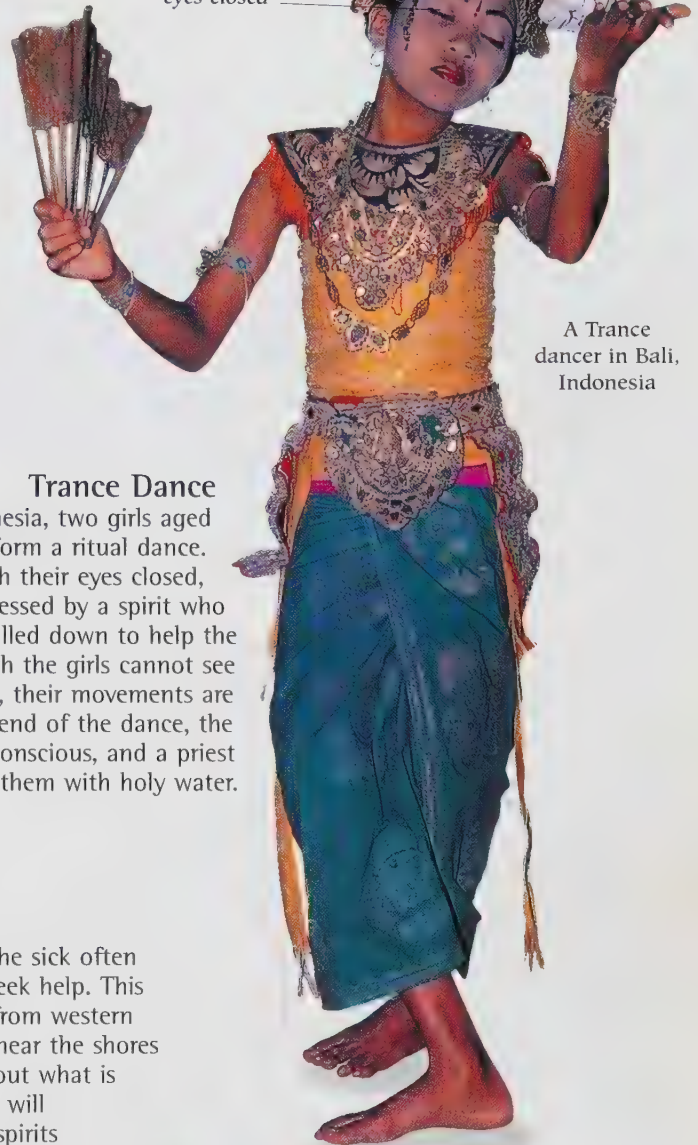


African Healer

In some parts of Africa the sick often visit a traditional healer to seek help. This healer is from the Luo tribe from western Kenya. He lives and works near the shores of Lake Victoria. To find out what is wrong with someone, he will communicate with the spirits using cowrie shells. From the arrangement of the shells in his hand he can discover the source of his patient's problem.

A Luo healer, from
Kenya studies
cowrie shells

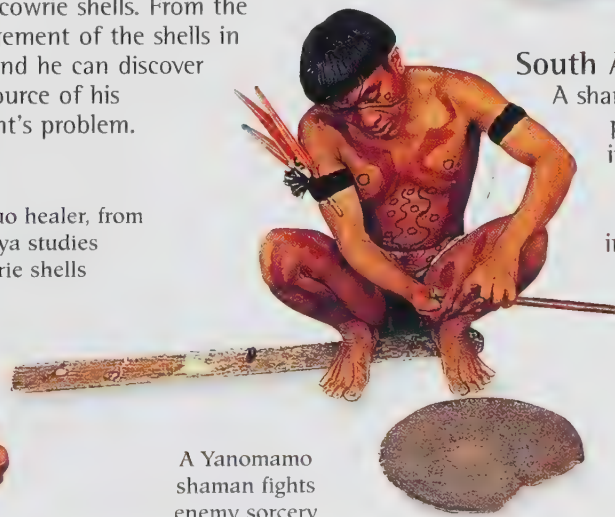
She dances
with her
eyes closed



A Trance
dancer in Bali,
Indonesia

Trance Dance

In Bali, Indonesia, two girls aged 10 or 11 perform a ritual dance. They dance with their eyes closed, in a trance, possessed by a spirit who has been called down to help the village. Although the girls cannot see one another, their movements are identical. At the end of the dance, the girls collapse, unconscious, and a priest prays and blesses them with holy water.



A Yanomamo
shaman fights
enemy sorcery

South American Shaman

A shaman of the Yanomamo people from Amazonia, in South America, must complete years of training before he can invite spirits (or *hekura*) to live in his body. The *hekura* will obey him, and help him to heal. *Hekura* ward off illness, thought to be caused by enemy sorcery, and are sent to eat the souls of enemies.

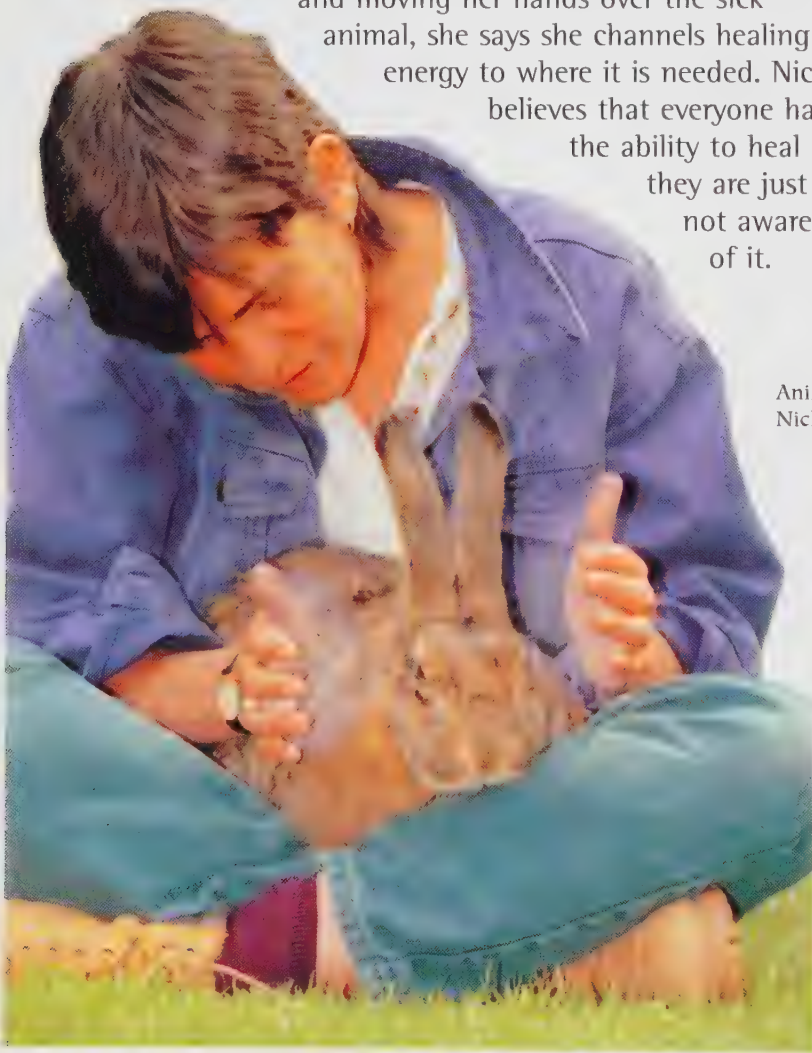
SAINTS AND HEALERS

No one knows how certain people can cure illnesses simply by placing their hands on the sufferer, but throughout history, saints, shamans, and healers have had this power. "Psychic healers" (as they are called) believe that they are a channel for healing energies. Could it be that patients simply heal themselves by believing that they are cured? Apparently not, because healers have been able to treat even tiny babies.

AMAZING ANIMAL HEALER

Nicky Provost, a Frenchwoman living in Devon, England, has an extraordinary talent. Though she is not a trained vet she can cure sick animals. Nicky has helped dogs, rats, rabbits, and even sheep with her special gifts. Using intense concentration

and moving her hands over the sick animal, she says she channels healing energy to where it is needed. Nicky believes that everyone has the ability to heal – they are just not aware of it.



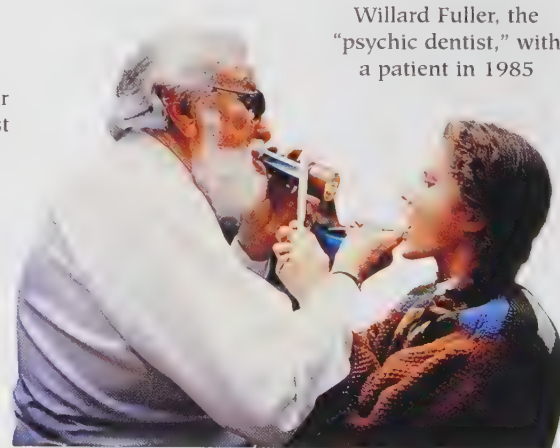
Animal healer
Nicky Provost



Spiritual healer
Lorraine Ham

Healing Hands

Lorraine Ham is a psychic or spiritual healer from West Yorkshire, UK. When she lays her hands on her patients, they feel a pleasant warmth that takes away their pain. Lorraine feels that she transfers a kind of energy to her patients. She may have inherited some of her healing skills from her great-great-grandfather who was a Maori herbalist and healer.



Willard Fuller, the
"psychic dentist," with
a patient in 1985

Psychic Dentistry

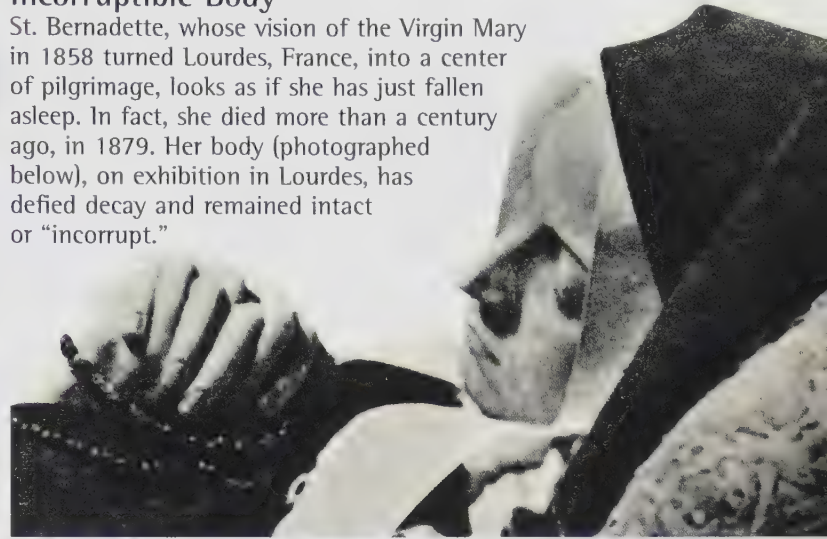
A former Baptist minister, American Willard Fuller found that he had a remarkable gift for treating dental problems using only spiritual means. He has apparently caused fillings and even new teeth to appear in his patients' mouths. There are about 25,000 people in the US who claim that they have received "miraculous" dental treatment from Mr. Fuller – the "psychic dentist."



Sacred hand of St. John Kemble

Incorruptible Body

St. Bernadette, whose vision of the Virgin Mary in 1858 turned Lourdes, France, into a center of pilgrimage, looks as if she has just fallen asleep. In fact, she died more than a century ago, in 1879. Her body (photographed below), on exhibition in Lourdes, has defied decay and remained intact or "incorrupt."

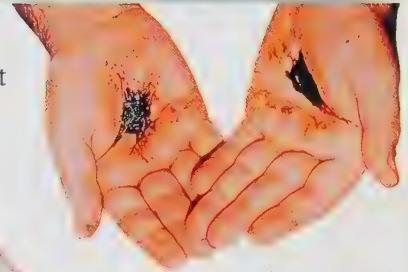


A Helping Hand

A holy relic saved Father Christopher Jenkins, who suffered a stroke in Hereford, UK, in July 1995. He was near death when his assistant placed the mummified hand of St. John Kemble on his brow, after which Father Jenkins recovered from his coma.

Marks of Suffering

Some individuals, called stigmatics, have wounds on their bodies that correspond to the sufferings of Christ at his crucifixion. The marks are known as stigmata and include the holes made by the nails on Christ's hands and feet, a wound caused by a spear in his side, and the marks of the crown of thorns on his head.



Mr. Bongiovanni's stigmata



Painting by Italian artist Giotto of St. Francis receiving the stigmata

The First Stigmatic

St. Francis of Assisi is reported to be the first person to have developed the marks of the stigmata in 1224. While praying he saw a vision of Jesus, and immediately afterward he developed the wounds of the crucifixion.

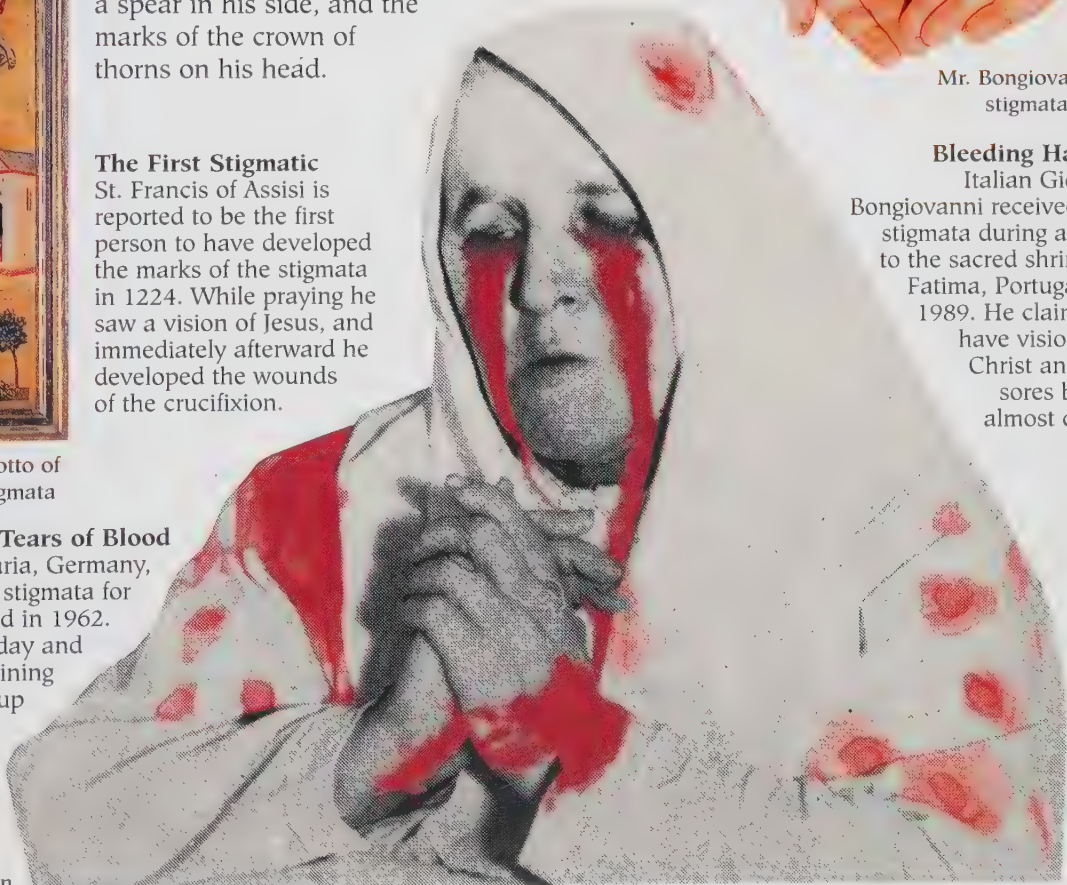
Bleeding Hands

Italian Giorgio Bongiovanni received his stigmata during a visit to the sacred shrine at Fatima, Portugal, in 1989. He claims to have visions of Christ and his sores bleed almost daily.

Tears of Blood

Teresa Neumann from Bavaria, Germany, showed the marks of the stigmata for over 30 years until she died in 1962. Her wounds bled every Friday and she also wept tears containing blood. She could lose up to a pint (0.5 liters) of blood on some occasions. However, Teresa always recovered and her wounds healed again by Sunday.

Stigmatic Teresa Neumann



ALL IN THE MIND

Try this simple experiment. Spread some small pieces of paper on a smooth table. Then stare at them and will them to move. It is surprising how many people can do this, especially if they relax rather than trying too hard. Psychokinesis (PK) is making

A pen writes in a sealed container during a SORRAT experiment



something move using mind power alone. PK can also explain how some people can take a photograph with their mind.

Mystery Movement

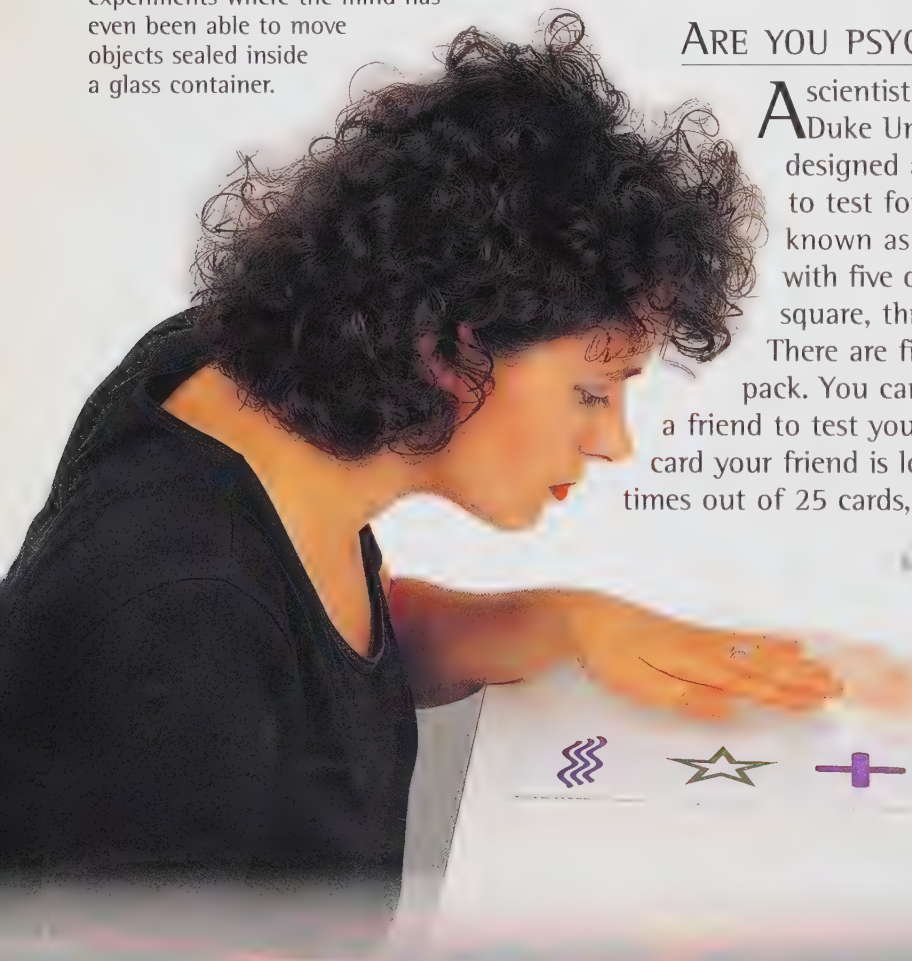
Stanislawa Tomczyk, a Polish psychic, discovered her remarkable talents in 1909. Not only could she levitate objects using the power of her mind, but she could also stop a clock sealed in a glass case. Dr. Ochorowicz, a psychologist, investigated her powers and was convinced she was genuine.



Stanislawa Tomczyk raises a pair of scissors

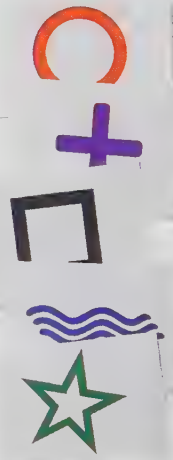
Extraordinary Experiments

The Society for Research on Rapport and Telekinesis (SORRAT) conducts experiments to test psychokinesis. Based in Missouri, SORRAT has recorded experiments where the mind has even been able to move objects sealed inside a glass container.



ARE YOU PSYCHIC?

A scientist named Dr. Karl Zener of Duke University, North Carolina, designed a set of cards in the 1920s to test for psychic powers. The cards, known as Zener cards, are marked with five distinct images – circle, cross, square, three wavy lines, and a star. There are five each of these cards in a pack. You can make them yourself and get a friend to test you. If you guess correctly which card your friend is looking at, more than five times out of 25 cards, you are probably psychic.



“The symbols came into my mind.”

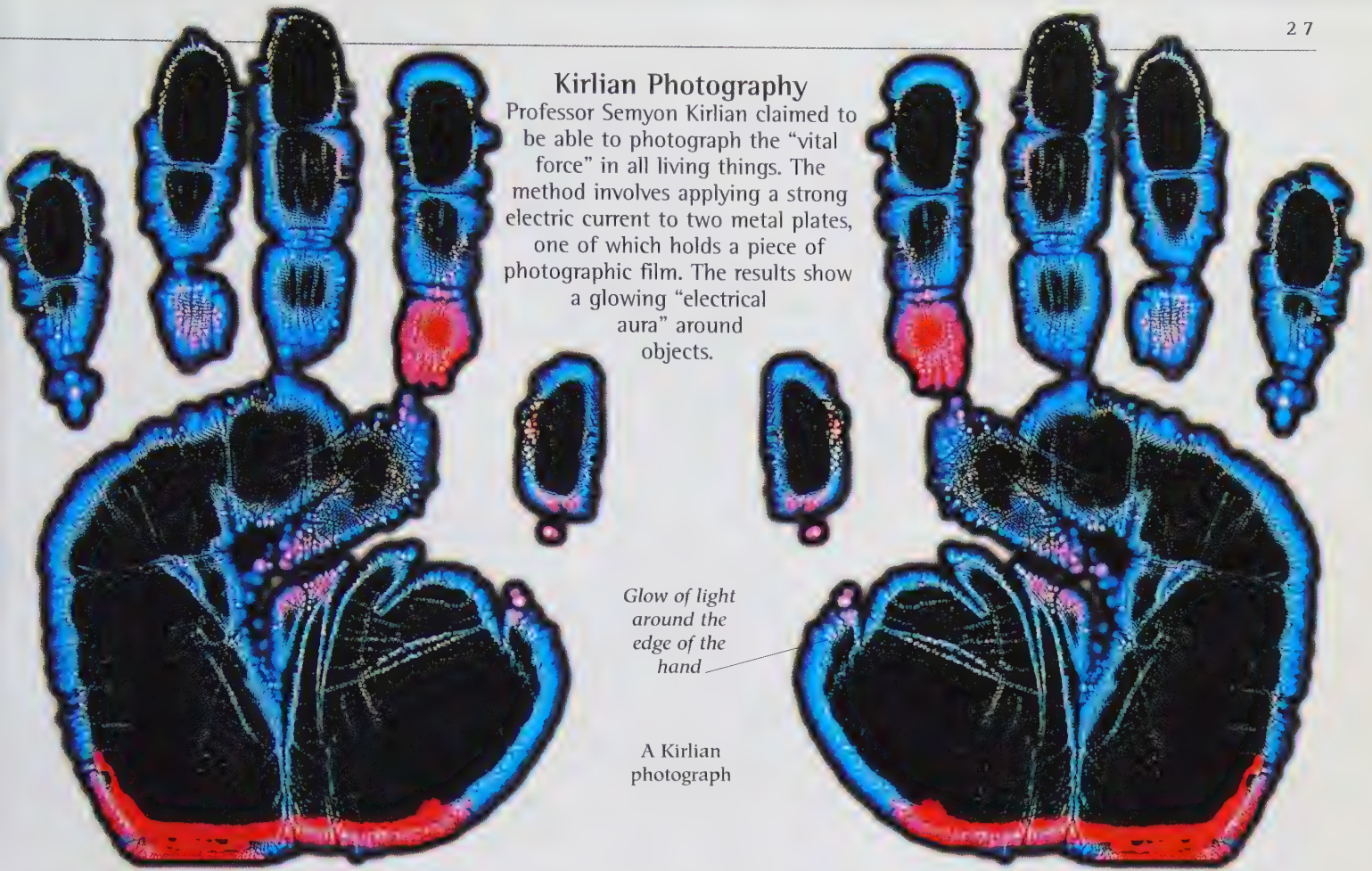
The symbols on the Zener cards are clear and unlikely to be confused

Maria da Silva, student of psychokinesis



Kirlian Photography

Professor Semyon Kirlian claimed to be able to photograph the "vital force" in all living things. The method involves applying a strong electric current to two metal plates, one of which holds a piece of photographic film. The results show a glowing "electrical aura" around objects.



Glow of light around the edge of the hand

A Kirlian photograph

An aura appears like a shining halo



A photograph of an aura

Seeing the Aura

Psychics claim to be able to see a kind of light around all living things – they call it an aura. It is not usually visible to ordinary people. Some photographers, however, believe they have caught the aura on camera. It appears as a cloud of colored lights around someone's head.

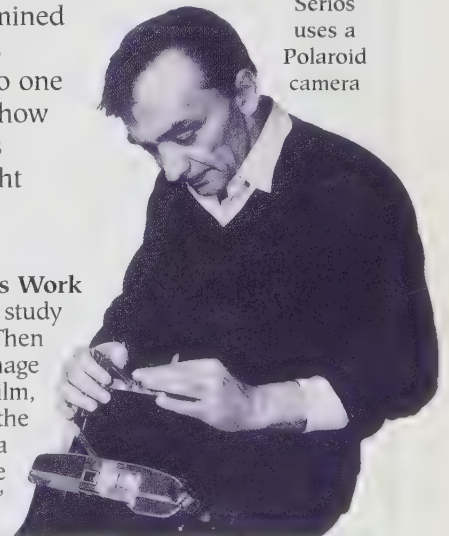
Thoughtography

Ted Serios, an elevator operator in Chicago, was hypnotized by a friend and discovered that he possessed a marvelous talent. When he stared into a camera he could produce photographs of things like St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome, Italy, Big Ben in London, UK, or a Neanderthal man, using only the power of his mind. This curious ability is known as "thoughtography." Serios was tested by scientists in the 1960s who examined his photographs carefully. Still no one has figured out how he produced his amazing "thought pictures."



Serios's "thoughtography" taken in 1962 of the Capitol dome, Washington, DC

Serios uses a Polaroid camera



Serios Work

Serios would first study a photograph. Then to transfer the image onto a camera film, he peered at the lens through a cardboard tube he called his "gismo."

PECULIAR PERSONALITIES

We know very little about the human mind. The existence of multiple personalities – when two or more people live in the same body – defies common sense. Identical twins who often seem to share one mind are also an enigma. And what about “psychics” who can solve crimes using mind power? The human mind is still as mysterious as the depths of the oceans.

THE POWER OF HYPNOSIS

A hypnotist can place someone in a trance by suggesting that they relax deeply. In this state, they can be helped with all kinds of problems, from giving up smoking to overcoming pain or even learning how to use a paralyzed limb. How does hypnosis work? All we know is that the hypnotist makes the “ordinary” part of the mind go to sleep, while a deeper and more powerful part stays awake and performs minor miracles.



A scene from *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (1996)

New Life from Old Flesh

The dream of creating life out of dead matter has intrigued humans for centuries. In 1816, Mary Shelley used this idea in her famous novel *Frankenstein*. In the story, a scientist produces a monster when he tries to create a man out of dead flesh.

Identical twins
Irene Reid and
Jeanette
Hamilton



Twin Lives

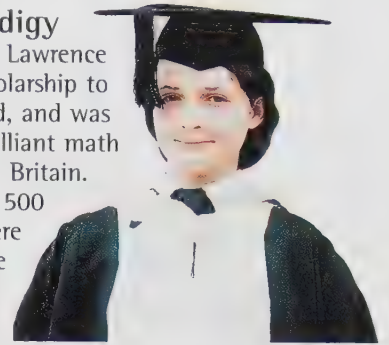
Identical twins who have been separated at birth and meet again years later, often find that they have much in common. In addition to looking alike, they may share the same likes and dislikes, adopt similar habits, and suffer the same illnesses. Jeanette Hamilton and Irene Reid, united after 33 years, found that they had the same phobias of water and heights.

A hypnotist finds the hidden part of the mind

Child Prodigy

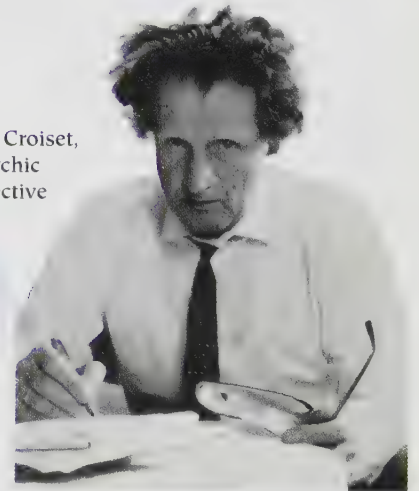
In 1981, 10-year-old Ruth Lawrence gained a mathematics scholarship to Oxford University, England, and was regarded as the most brilliant math student ever seen in Britain.

Most of the other 500 competitors were nearly twice her age.



Ruth Lawrence at her graduation

Gerard Croiset, psychic detective



Psychic Detective

Dutchman Gerard Croiset was famous for being able to solve crimes and find missing people, particularly children. He could do this by looking at a photograph or by holding something that belonged to them, which would enable him to sense their location.

The Doris Fischer Case

In 1892, when Doris Fischer was three, she suffered a deep trauma and became two personalities. Her "second self" was a mischievous girl named Margaret who could "take over" Doris's body, without her knowledge, and would cause endless problems. When Doris was 17, a third personality called "sick Doris" appeared. Margaret disliked this personality and became aggressive toward Doris, attacking herself and causing injuries. A psychologist named Walter Franklin Prince studied the case and eventually managed to persuade Doris's other personalities to go away.



The real Doris



The personality called Margaret, singing to her dolls

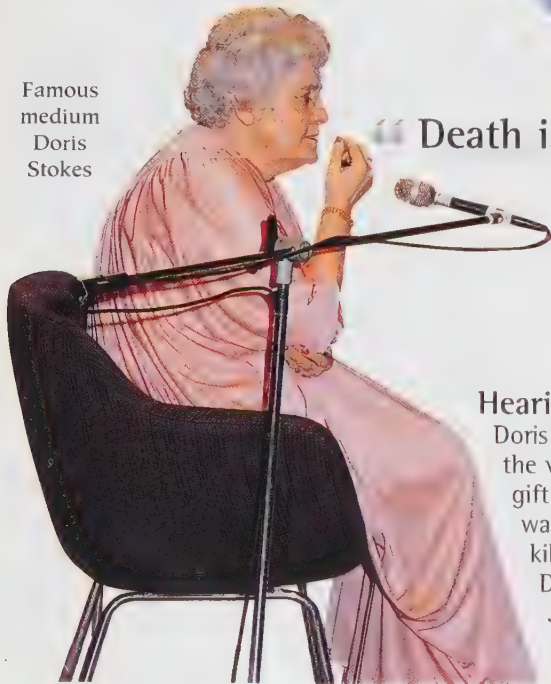
LOOKING INTO THE BEYOND

A medium can be regarded as a kind of “human radio” through which the dead can speak. Most mediums or “channelers” go into a trance when they make contact with spirits of the dead. Other people use a Ouija board to ask questions of dead relatives. Some mediums write down messages direct from the dead, a practice known as “automatic writing.” Occasionally, music is received in this way, too.

USING A OUIJA BOARD

A Ouija board has the letters of the alphabet arranged around its edge. Several people sit around the board and place their fingers on a glass or pointer. When, and of course if, the glass begins to move, the “sitters” around the table, may ask the “spirit” questions. The glass moves toward letters and spells out an answer, sometimes traveling so fast that it is hard for the sitters to keep their fingers on it. “Ouija” comes from two words meaning yes – “oui” (French) and “ja” (German).

Famous
medium
Doris
Stokes

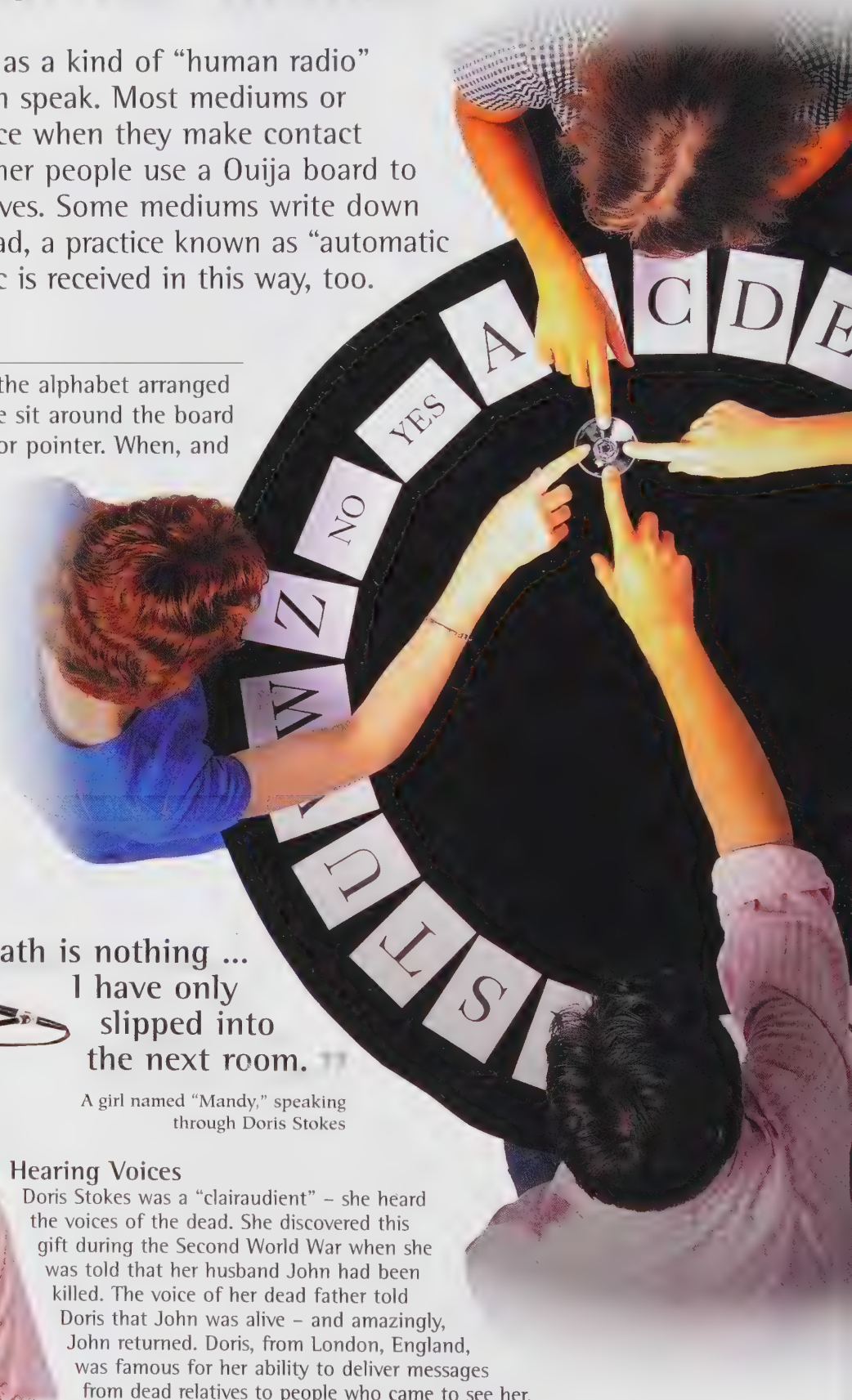


“Death is nothing ...
I have only
slipped into
the next room.”

A girl named “Mandy,” speaking
through Doris Stokes

Hearing Voices

Doris Stokes was a “clairaudient” – she heard the voices of the dead. She discovered this gift during the Second World War when she was told that her husband John had been killed. The voice of her dead father told Doris that John was alive – and amazingly, John returned. Doris, from London, England, was famous for her ability to deliver messages from dead relatives to people who came to see her.



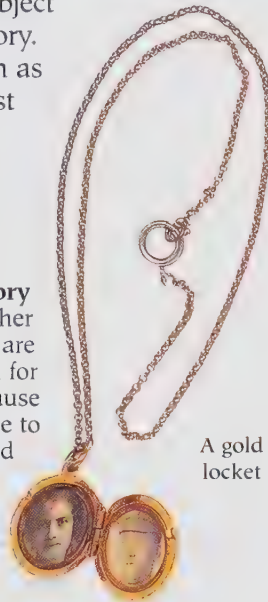
Psychometry

Some people are able to hold an object in their hands and “sense” its history. This extraordinary ability is known as psychometry. A good psychometrist may be able to hold, for example, a Roman vase, and describe the house it came from and its various owners.

Peter Nelson, US psychometrist, “sensing” the history of an ancient jar

Unlocking History

Locketts and other personal objects are good material for psychometrists because they have been close to their owners and “absorbed” some of their history.



A gold locket

Chinese Message

This Chinese script (right) was received by the American medium Mina (Margery) Crandon as automatic writing. It is said to be from the Chinese philosopher Confucius, but it is written in modern Chinese. It is remarkable nevertheless because Margery did not know a word of Chinese.

之有也與之本。信。弟。而好。犯上者鮮矣。不好犯上。而好作亂者。不知人。而不愠。不亦君子乎。有子自其為人也孝。

Chinese script received by Mrs. Crandon

“One of the most baffling cases in history.”

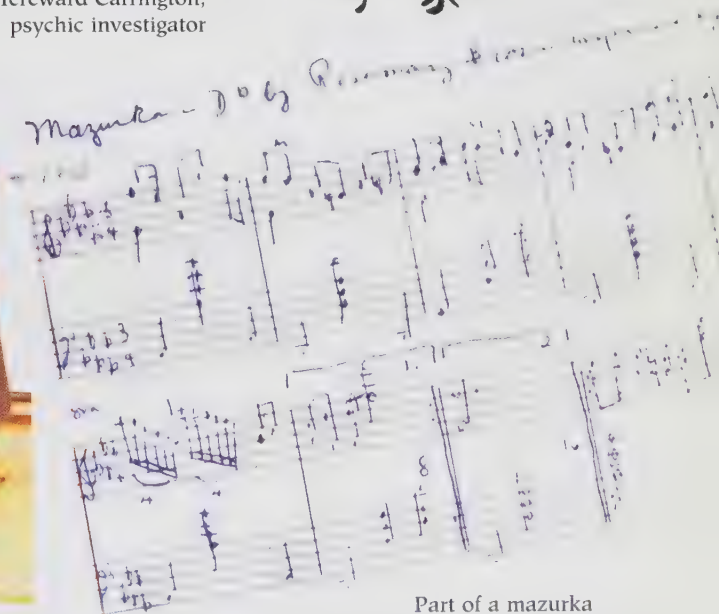
Hereward Carrington, psychic investigator

Sitters around a Ouija board

Music Channels

Rosemary Brown from London, England, is a very unusual medium. When she sits at the piano, she is “taken over” by dead composers such as Liszt, Chopin, Beethoven, and Mozart, and acts as a channel for their work. She also writes down music supposedly dictated to her by these composers. Rosemary is an amateur pianist, but when she is channeling she plays with a skill that is far beyond her usual abilities.

Rosemary Brown has channeled more than 400 compositions



Part of a mazaruka received from Chopin

OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCES

Religions teach that we have a soul – or spirit – that leaves the body when we die. If this is so, then why should the soul not be able to leave the body – and return to it – while we are still alive? People who practice “remote viewing” claim they can leave their bodies, and even go to distant places and see what is going on there. Governments have actually trained psychics to use this technique to discover military secrets.

TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE BODY

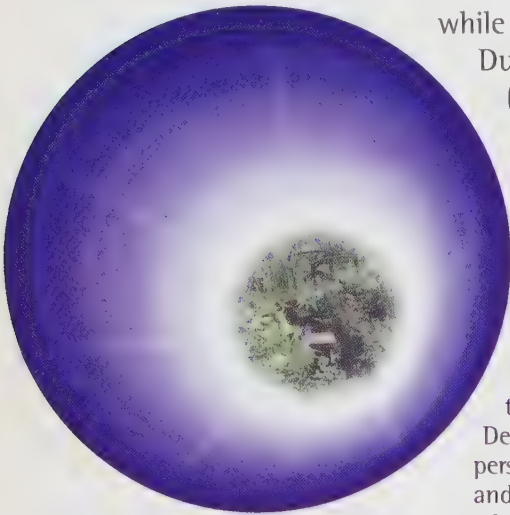
Thousands of people have reported floating out of their bodies, some when they were ill (perhaps with a fever), some when they were under an anesthetic in the hospital, and some while simply lying down feeling relaxed.

During an out-of-body experience (OBE), people may see their own body, often from above, or they may “visit” other places.

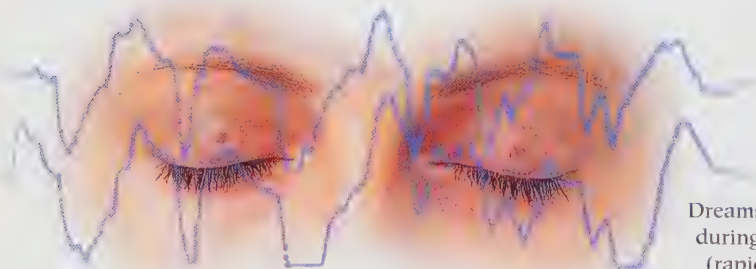
Near-death Experiences

Many people have apparently “died” and come back to life again. They often report feeling strangely light and happy and describe moving down a long tunnel with a light or garden at the end. Dead relatives may appear and tell the person that it is not their time to die, and that they must return. Most are reluctant to go back to their body but after waking say that they will never be afraid of death again.

Many people have described looking down on themselves during an out-of-body experience



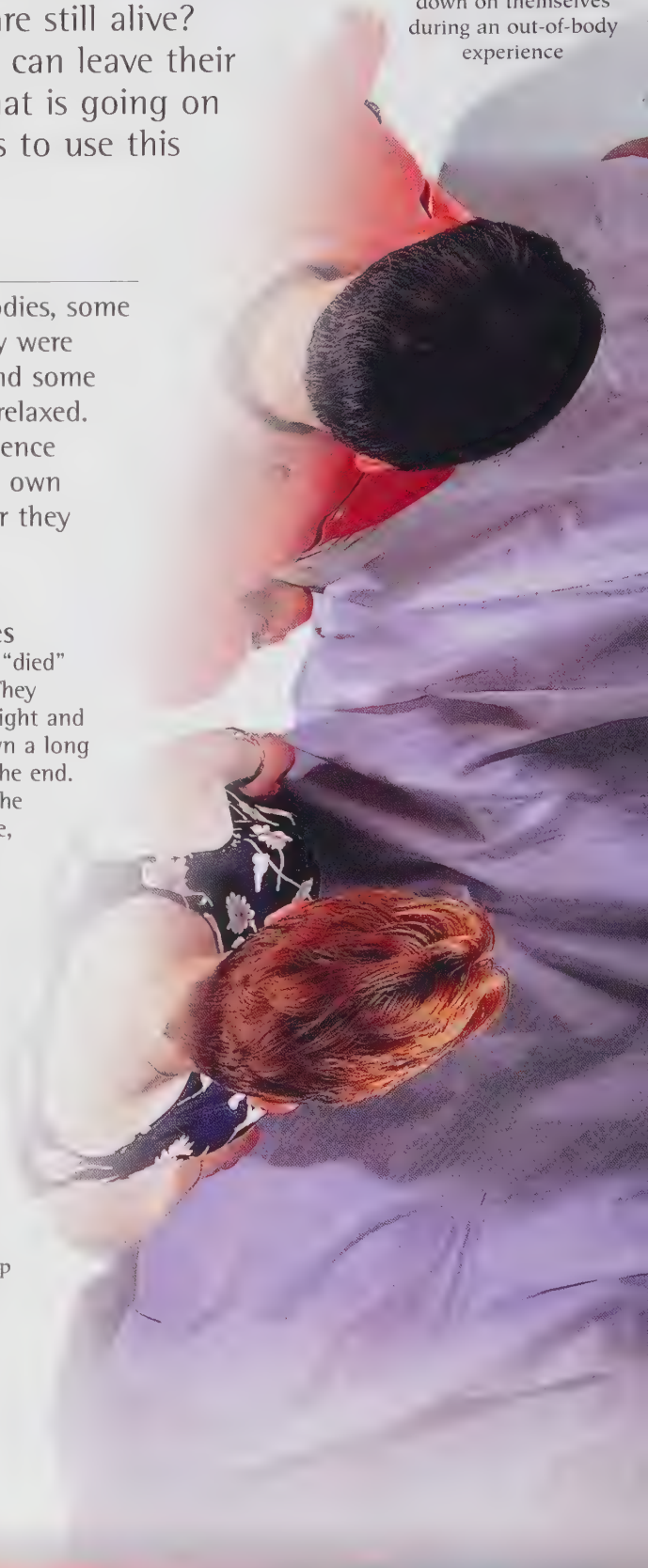
Many near-death experiences include seeing a tunnel with a beautiful garden at the end



Dreams occur during REM (rapid eye movement) sleep

Dreams Can Come True

In dreams we often see ourselves acting out situations that are both familiar and unfamiliar. Some people believe that it is possible to dream deliberately about a situation that you want to change, so that dreaming about succeeding in a test can actually help you to do well in the test, or dreaming about feeling happy can help you to feel that way when you wake up.



“ I found myself bumping against the ceiling and looking down at my own body. ”

D. H. Lawrence,
British writer

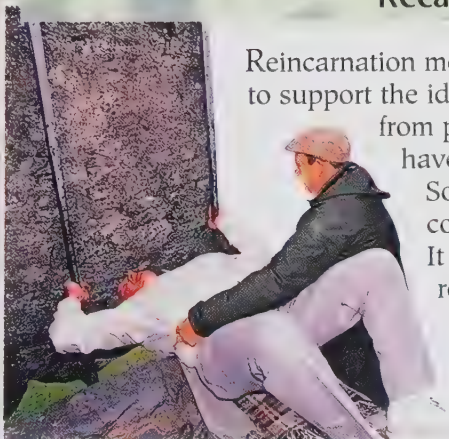
Astral Projection

Some people believe they can have an out-of-body experience at will. Some “astral projectors,” like Americans Sylvan Muldoon and Robert Monroe, have written books describing how to do it. Believers in astral travel explain that a human has an astral body, which is an exact copy of the physical body. It exists only in another dimension or “astral plane.” At death, the astral body separates itself from the physical body forever.

A silver cord seems to connect the physical body and the astral body

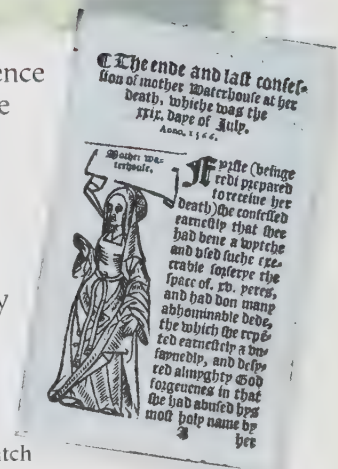
Recalling Past Lives

Reincarnation means being born again. Evidence to support the idea of reincarnation has come from people who, under hypnosis, have recalled their past lives. Sometimes they describe a convincing amount of detail. It may be that someone is recalling information that they read a long time ago and have now forgotten.



Bridie Murphy
American Virginia Tighe was hypnotized in 1952 and recalled details of her life in Ireland in the 1700s as someone called Bridie Murphy. She even explained how people used to kiss the Blarney Stone.

Suspended upside down to kiss the Blarney Stone, Ireland



Witch pamphlet

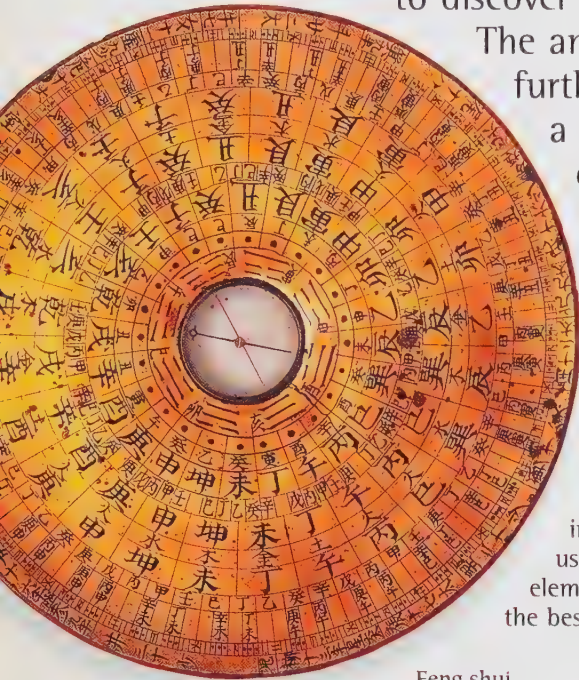
Witch Trial

Under hypnosis, a woman named Jan described being tried as a witch. Unconsciously, the details seem to have come from a pamphlet about the trials.

READING THE SIGNS

Can chance events – like the turn of a card or the arrangement of the planets when you were born – foretell your future? Diviners or fortune-tellers use crystal balls, throwing sticks, or cards to discover what the future holds.

The answers they find may need further explanation, either from a book like the Chinese *I Ching* or by the clients themselves.



Feng shui compass

The Art of Feng Shui

The ancient Chinese art of feng shui (pronounced fang shway) is based on living in harmony with one's surroundings. By using a feng shui compass, an expert studies elements such as wind and water and suggests the best position for your front door or your bed.



Lines and areas used in palm reading

Palm Reading

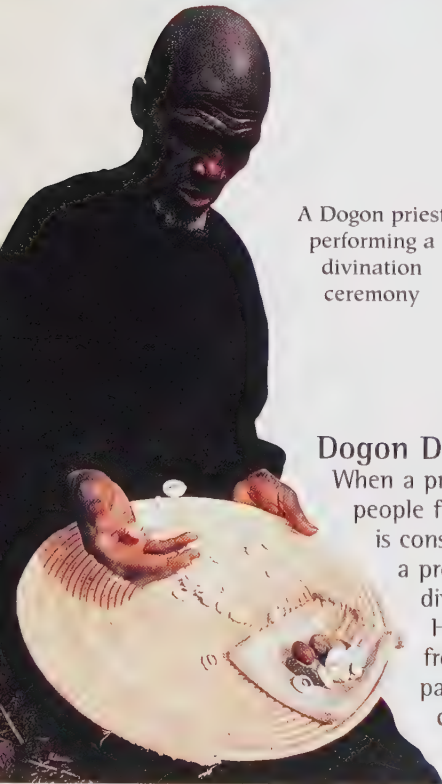
The palmist (or chiromancer) believes that everything that will happen to you is foretold in the lines of your palm as well as in the shape of your hand.

TAROT CARDS

Since at least the 15th century, tarot cards have been one of the most popular ways of fortune-telling in Europe. Each card contains a picture such as the "Fool" or the "Lovers." The cards must be shuffled, placed facedown, then turned over one by one, before a "reading" or interpretation can be made.



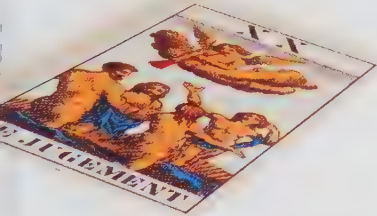
French tarot cards



A Dogon priest performing a divination ceremony

Dogon Diviner

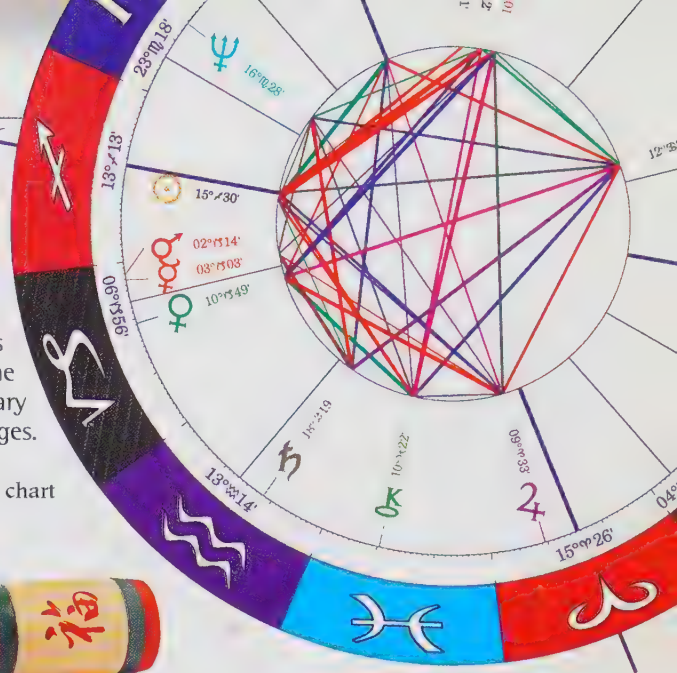
When a priest of the Dogon people from Mali, West Africa, is consulted by someone with a problem, he uses kola nuts to divine what the person must do. He passes the kola nuts quickly from hand to hand and marks out a pattern in dust on a tray. Each pattern corresponds to a sacred poem, which the diviner recites to his client, leaving the client to interpret it.



Looking at the Heavens

Astrologers believe that character and fate are affected by the position of the planets when we are born. They draw up a birth chart that shows the planets in the 12 signs of the zodiac (such as Leo or Sagittarius). Astrologers also interpret the angles (aspects) between the planets: conjunctions combine planetary energies; oppositions create challenges.

A computer-generated birth chart



Throwing sticks are often seen in Chinese temples



A Lucky Throw

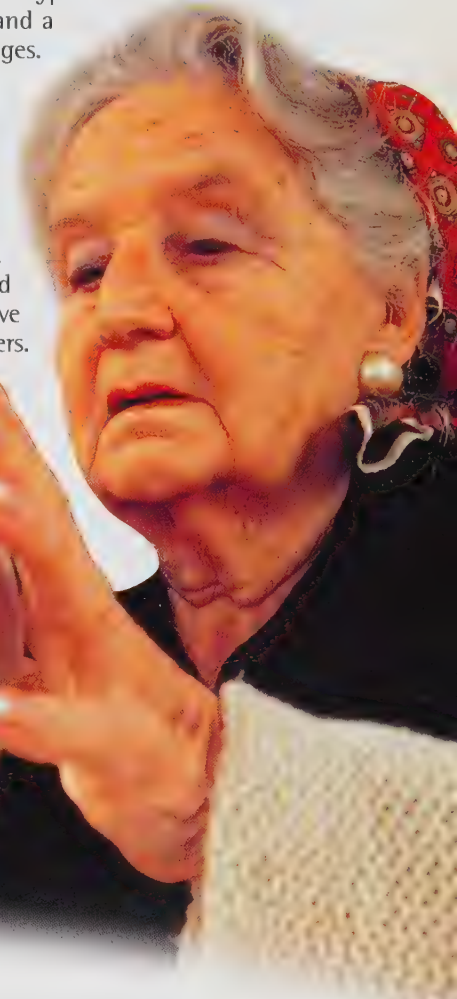
Throwing sticks like the ones above rely on chance to tell the future. Cryptic notes are written on the sticks and a book must be used to interpret the messages.

“There is no such thing as chance – all things depend on the will of heaven.”

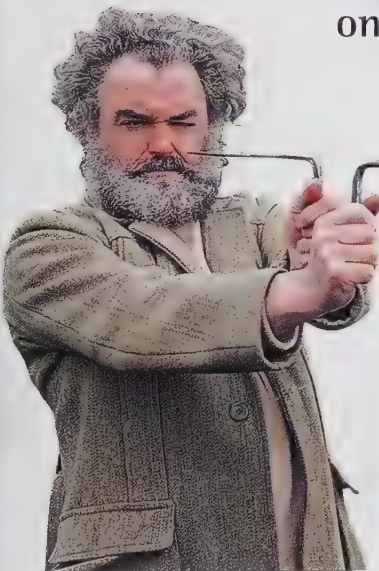
Confucius

Crystal Gazing

Some people can go into a light trance while staring into a crystal ball. Then they use their psychic powers to see what will happen in the future. All over the world, crystals are regarded as sacred. They are thought to have special healing powers.



Psychics may see pictures in a crystal ball



Hamish Miller, dowsing in Cornwall, England



Feeling the Way
Dowsers, or water diviners, work with a forked hazel twig or two metal rods in their hands. The rods bend (or swing apart) to reveal the presence of underground water or “earth forces.” Dowsing can also locate electric cables or archaeological remains. Occasionally, dowsers dangle a pendulum over a map and find this method effective for detecting water, ancient settlements, or even mineral deposits.

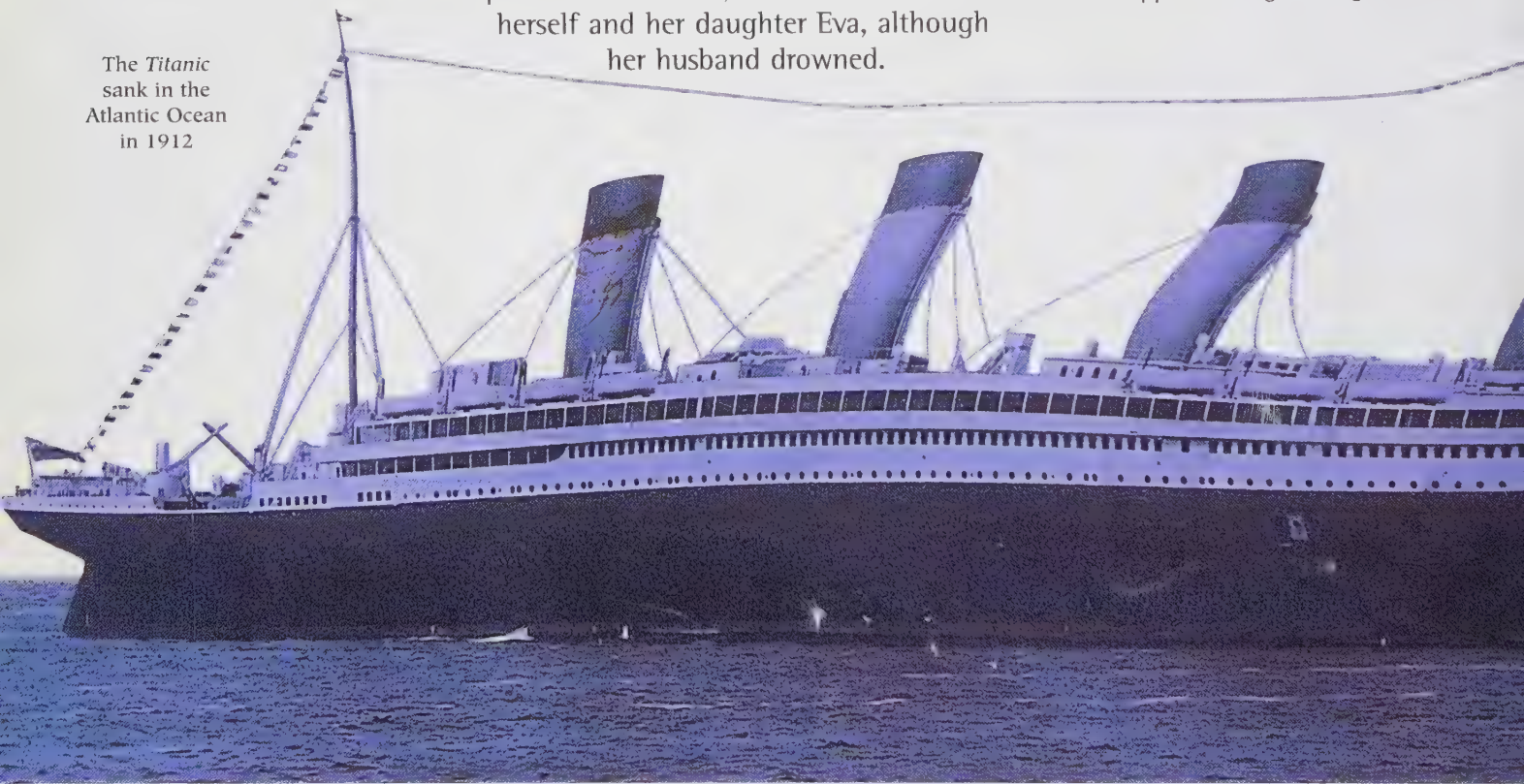
SEEING THE FUTURE

Seeing into the future should, of course, be impossible, because the future still lies ahead. But thousands of people have experienced “precognition” and seen a glimpse of what is going to happen. Is time some kind of illusion? Does it move in one direction only? Has the future already happened, like a CD whose “future” already exists on the disc?

THE SINKING OF THE *TITANIC*

The ocean liner the *Titanic* sank when it struck an iceberg on its maiden voyage from Great Britain to America, on April 15, 1912. One passenger who had a premonition of disaster was Mrs. Hart. She felt that a ship declared “unsinkable” was bound to meet bad luck. Mrs. Hart reluctantly went on board and sat fully dressed each night, ready for the catastrophe. When it came, she was able to save herself and her daughter Eva, although her husband drowned.

The *Titanic* sank in the Atlantic Ocean in 1912



Horses in the Derby, Epsom Downs, Surrey, England

Winning Dream

On May 31, 1933, John Williams woke from a dream about the Derby horserace, which was to be run that day. In his dream, he heard the names of the winning four horses but he could recall only the first two – Hyperion and King Salmon. That afternoon, the horses won just as he had dreamed. Mr. Williams did not bet on the race – he disapproved of gambling.

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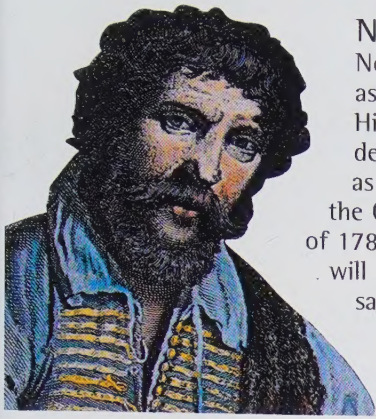
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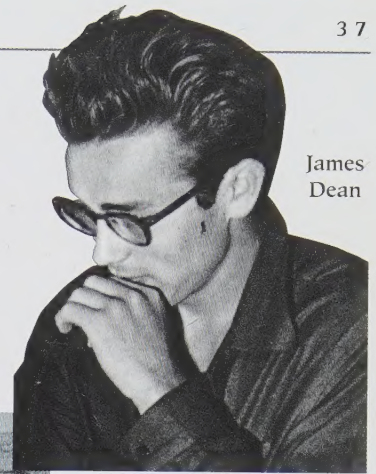
Michel de Notredame, also known as Nostradamus, died in 1566

Nostradamus

Nostradamus, born in 1503, was a French doctor and astrologer who seemed to be able to foretell the future. His famous prophecies, each written in four lines, are deliberately obscure because he was afraid of being burned as a sorcerer. They foretold many historical events, including the Great Fire of London in 1666 and the French Revolution of 1789. He predicts that in July 1999, "the great King of Terror will descend from the sky." If nothing happens, we can safely say that Nostradamus has been proved wrong.



Wreckage of the crash that killed James Dean



James Dean

James Dean's Death

The famous actor James Dean showed his new sports car, a silver Porsche 550 Spyder, to fellow actor Alec Guinness, on September 23, 1955. Guinness had a sudden premonition of disaster. He told Dean that if he drove the car, he would be dead within a week. Dean was killed in the car one week later, on September 30.

"I didn't know it was an iceberg, but I knew it was this 'something'."

Mrs. Hart after the sinking of the *Titanic*



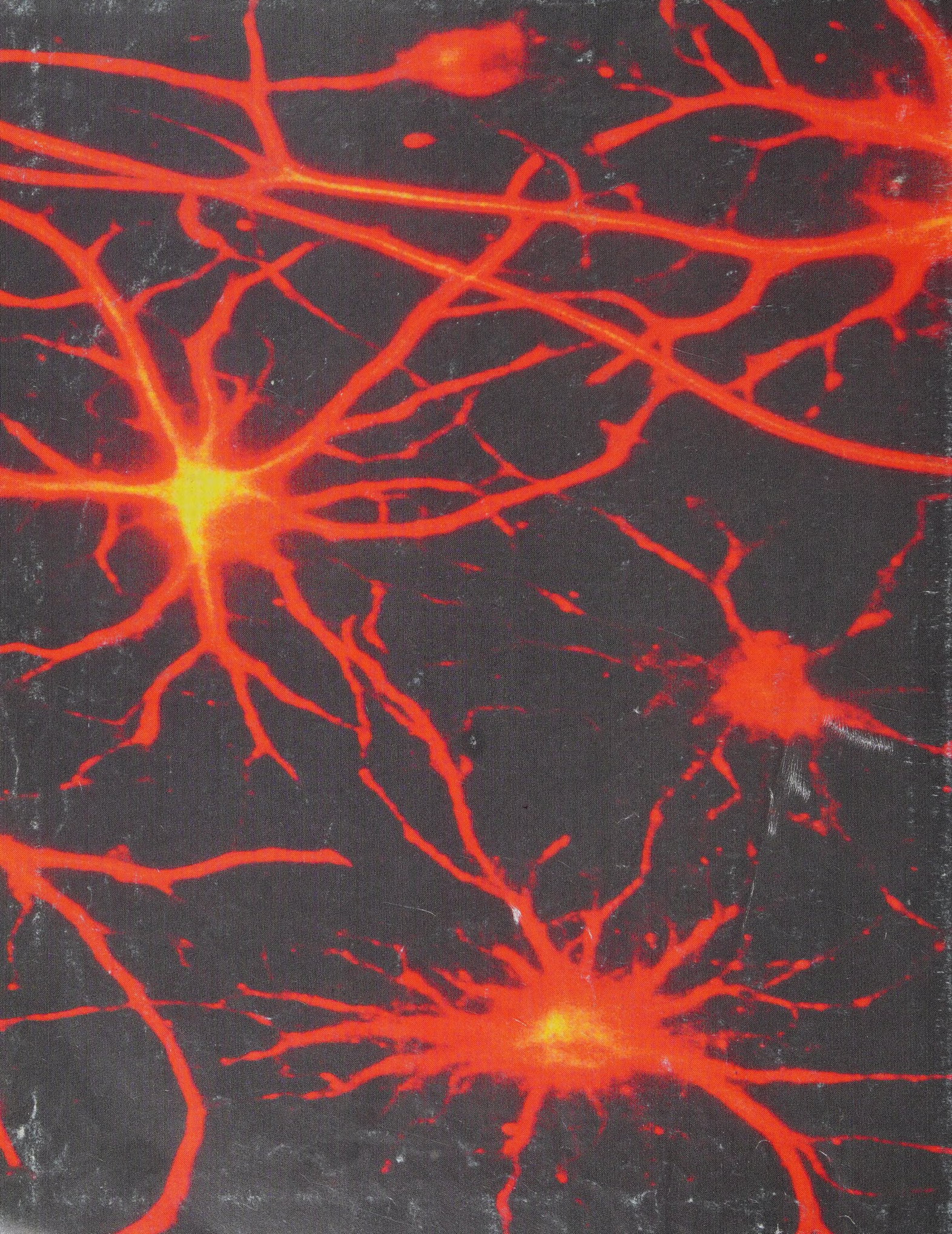
Drawing of the assassination of British Prime Minister Spencer Perceval

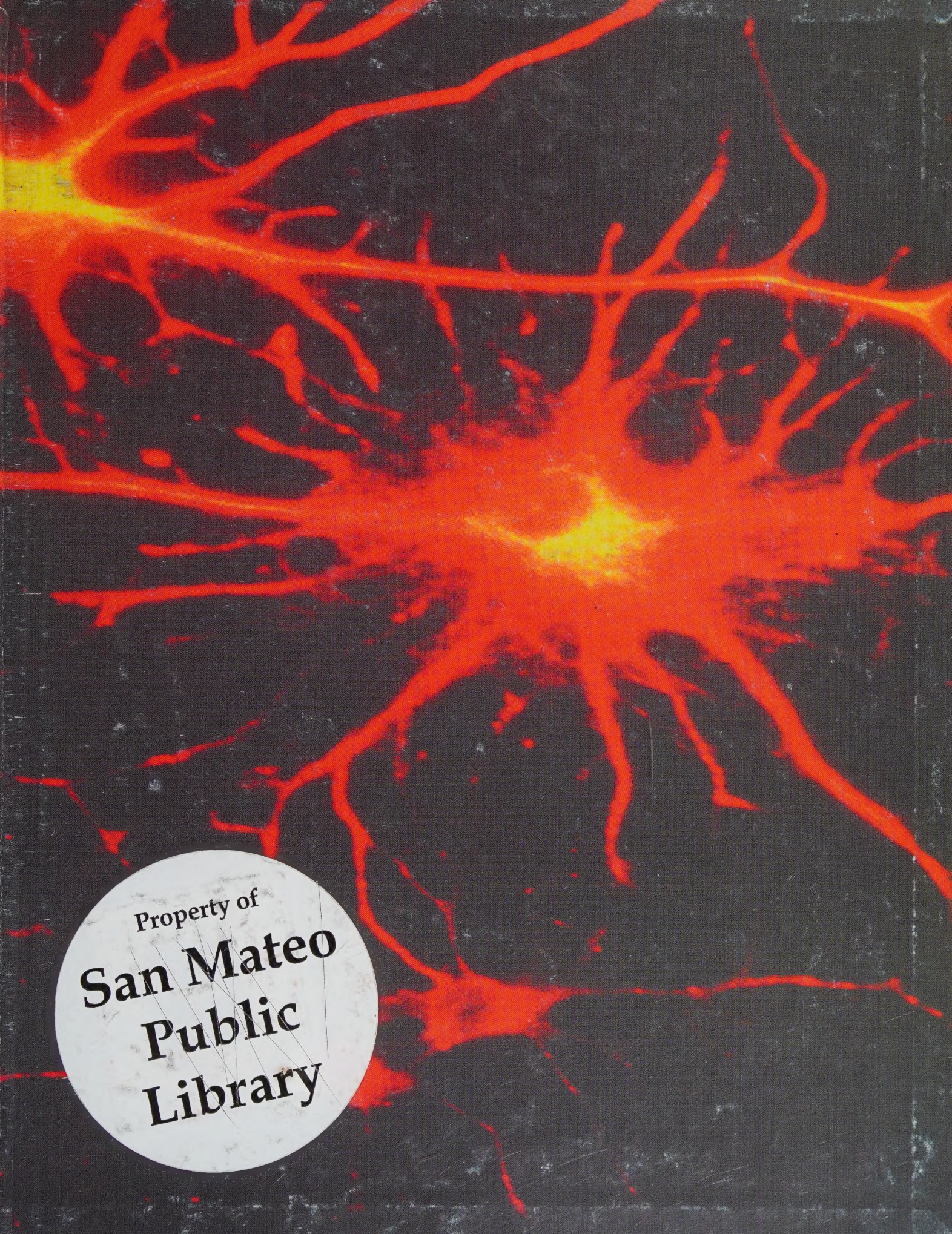


Murder Mystery

On May 3, 1812, an unnamed Cornishman dreamed of the murder of the British Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval. His friends advised him to keep silent in case he was ridiculed. Eight days later, in the House of Commons, London, England, Perceval was shot exactly as the Cornishman had dreamed.

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Colin Wilson is an acknowledged expert on unsolved mysteries; the best-selling author has written more than eighty books on unexplained phenomena. As a widely published journalist and writer, Wilson has opened many minds to the world of the unexplained.



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