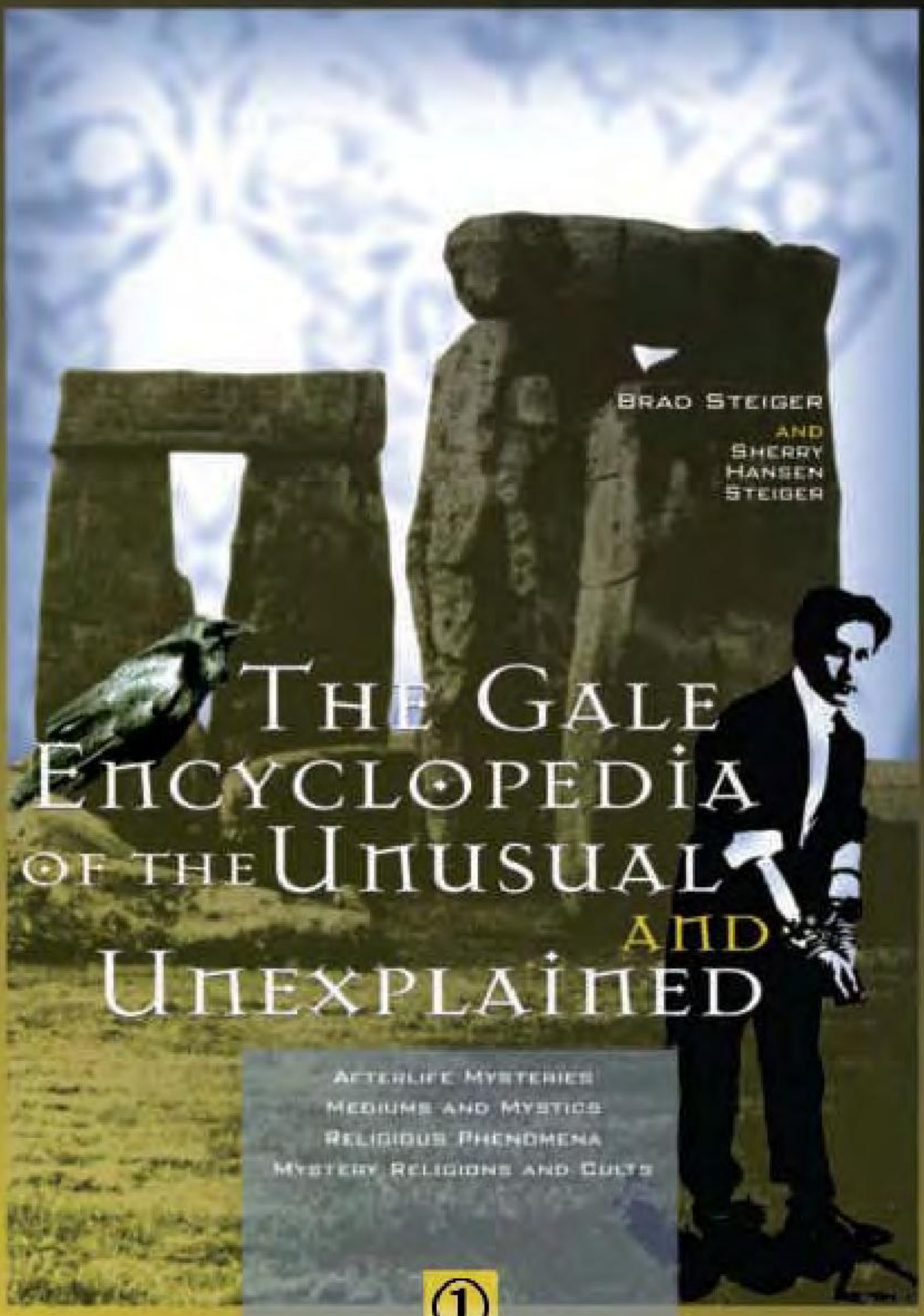
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Preface

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.

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.

Introduction

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.

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 werecreatures 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 Oxia 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 ecclesiaticis 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 *Corrrector* 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.

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—Brad E. Steiger

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Chapter 1
Afterlife Mysteries

Humankind's obsession with the unknown and the unexplained begins with the greatest question of all: Do humans survive physical death? And if so, are they born again? The mystery of what lies on the other side of death has given birth to humankind's magic, mysticisms, religions, and all the diverse creatures of Light and Darkness that populate the mysterious regions in between.

INTRODUCTION

Children take the continuity of life for granted. It is the fact of death that has to be taught. Self-preservation is one of humankind's most powerful instincts, transcending the grave itself, for the desire for immortality, an afterlife, is nothing else than one form of the search for self-preservation.

In the inner-self, humans visualize themselves as observers of all that can be seen or can be imagined. Consciousness is experienced as a ever-flowing stream which, in spite of its temporary breaks in sleep, still seems to be continuous and without a conscious beginning or end. One goes to sleep many times, but always to wake once more. Humans have gotten into the habit of being alive. To think of oneself as non-being is difficult. People can accept the mortality of others, but not of themselves.

One of the earliest recorded expressions of desire for a future life was written thousands of years ago by an Egyptian scribe for whom the expectation of personal immortality was connected with the belief that his body would avoid the horrors of disintegration if it were to be mummified. This prayer of a hopeful soul contains a cry of immediately recognizable human longing. To the god Osiris, the king and judge of the dead, he prays,

> Grant thou that I may enter into the land of everlastingness, according to what was done for thee, whose body never saw corruption...Let not my body become worms, but deliver me as thou didst thyself....Let life come from the body's death and let not decay...make an end of me...I shall have my being; I shall live; I shall live! (from the Egyptian Book of the Dead, translated by E. A.W. Budge, 1901)

The belief in an afterlife coincides with the innate conviction that present life has significance and purpose. And because humans believe their earthly existence has meaning and they therefore have a reason for being, it seems imperative that at least some part of them must somehow continue in a future life. While an afterlife may be difficult to prove in a material sense, various world religions promise to provide a spiritual link between a person's actions in this life and his or her continued existence in a future life.

Conceptions of the world beyond death vary considerably among the world religions, but in every religious expression known to history or anthropology, the question of the afterlife in store for the individual believer has been of prime importance. This chapter will offer summaries of the beliefs of the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islamic, and Jewish faiths concerning the fate of the soul after death.

Belief in an afterlife, like belief in a Supreme Being, creates in those who affirm such faith a way of regarding themselves in relation to the future life. These individuals need not view the possibility of an afterlife in the abstract. Those whose faith has trained them to believe completely in an afterlife can easily imagine what the future life will be. For them, life after death is a definable concept, a genuine and real result of how they have lived their present life. To religious individuals, faith in an afterlife becomes increasingly part of their existence, a source of courage and strength as the years go by. And once physical death overtakes them, for the great majority of these individuals, the most significant feature of an afterlife will be their union with the Divine.

For those individuals who hold Christian, Islamic, or Jewish religious beliefs, the soul is generally conceived as coming into existence with the birth of the body, and it would perish when the body perished if it were not for the supernatural intervention of God, who confers upon the soul an immortality that it could not otherwise attain. Those whose view of the afterlife includes the possibility of reincarnation, past lives, and future incarnations have no doubt that the soul is immortal by its very nature. In their view, the existence of the soul did not begin when the body was born, so there is no reason to believe that it will cease to exist when the body dies. According to various doctrines of reincarnation, there are immutable spiritual laws which will determine whether the soul will be born again into another physical body or will be merged in eternal unity with the Absolute.

OLDEST DISCOVERED BURIAL SITE

The earliest discovered burial sites are those of Neanderthal man, though according to researcher George Constable, they "were not credited with deliberate meaningful burial of their dead until more than a half-century after their discovery." The well-known anthropologist and archaeologist Louis Leaky said of the discoveries that their grave sites were intentional and thus indicates the Neanderthals displayed a keen self-awareness and a concern for the human spirit.

Many burial sites have been discovered in Europe and the Near East. The placement of the remains reveals ritualistic elements, as the cadavers were found in a sleeping or fetal position. Some remains have also been found with plants or flowers, placed in the hands or the body, and sometimes with red pigment, possibly used in a symbolic rite. Some Neanderthals were found buried together in a group, meaning that entire family groups remained united after death.

One of the most interesting burial sites contained remains that had been carefully placed in the fetal position on a bedding of woody horsetail, a regional plant. This particular Neanderthal was also buried with several varieties of flowers. Leaky stated that the flowers were arranged deliberately as the body was being covered. Apparently the family and friends of the deceased gathered the distinct species of flowers, carried them to the grave, and carefully placed them on the body.

An analysis of the flower specimens revealed them to be cornflowers, St. Banaby's thistle, and grape hyacinths, among other plants. Many of the plants found have curative qualities that range from pain relief to inflammation suppression. It is not known if Neanderthals were advanced enough to realize the exact medicinal properties of the plants to their specific uses, or if this was only a coincidental placement of flowers and herbs. Or perhaps they were honoring a special person of the tribe, such as a medicine man or shaman. Regardless, it is evident that Neanderthal man was much more complex than he was given credit for.

According to anthropologist F. Clark Howell the flexed position of the body, and discoveries of other sites where stone slabs were placed over the Neanderthal graves, along with food and tools, suggests that Neanderthal man believed in life after death. Their concept of the afterlife must not have been that much different than the life they experienced on earth; they provided the dead with food, tools, and other everyday items, much like the Egyptians did for their journey to the next life. Death to the Neanderthals may have even been regarded as a kind of sleep, perhaps like a rest before a rebirth, as corpses were carefully positioned in the fetal state.

SOURCES:

Burial, Ritual, Religion, and Cannibalism. http://thunder.indstate.edu/~ramanank/ritual.html. 10 July 2001.

While many people consider the belief in reincarnation to be held primarily by the adherents of Hinduism and some Buddhist sects, the concept of past lives is by no means confined to these Eastern religions. This chapter will examine many Western philosophers, clerics, medical doctors, and scholars who have expressed an individual acceptance of a prior and continued existence in an earthly body, in addition to certain Christian, Islamic, and Jewish sects that have also suggested that reincarnation may be one of the forms of survival after death.

Down through the centuries, the physical act of passage from one world to another at the moment of death has remained a mystery for the living. From time to time, one who had been resuscitated and brought back to life returned with an account of having stood at the edge of some vast unknown and uncharted world and having witnessed the activity of ethereal beings within. In recent decades, there have been an increasing number of well-documented accounts of people who have been resuscitated from clinical death and returned with reports of passing through a darkened tunnel to emerge into a place of light, and therein, meeting beings of light. Such **near-death experiences** (NDEs) demonstrate the inherent desire for a conscious life beyond the grave and for an endless continuation of spiritual opportunities. This longing for an unobstructed life, for life in the fullest sense that the individual can conceive, is an essential element in the earnest desire for immortality.

A belief in an afterlife may be essentially humanity's belief in itself. Within the vast majority of human beings exists a fundamental longing for the continuance of conscious and rational life. In centuries past, a desire for a future life was confined to affirmations of faith in the teachings or the scriptures of one's religious belief. Today, the hopes of the common person, the saint, and the mystic that an afterlife is truly a reality have been joined by many scientists, who are proving that the scientific desire to know and to keep on knowing is but another form of the same demand for a continuation of a conscious and rational life.

How the Major Religions View the Afterlife

With all their diversity of beliefs, the major religions are in accord in one great teaching: Human beings are immortal and their spirit comes from a divine world and may eventually return there. Since the earliest forms of spiritual expression, this is the great promise and hope that religions have offered to their followers. It is the believer's eternal answer to the cynicism of the materialist who shouts that there is no afterlife, that death is the end.

Anthropologists can only guess whether or not the earliest members of the *Homo sapiens* species (c. 30,000 B.C.E.) conducted burial rituals of a quality that would qualify them as religious. However, it is known that they buried their dead with care and consideration and included food, weapons, and various personal belongings with the body. Even the Neanderthal species (c. 100,000 B.C.E.) placed food, stone implements, and decorative shells and bones in the graves with the deceased, which they often covered with a red pigment. Since there are no written scriptures describing the purpose of including such funerary objects in the graves (writing was not developed until the fourth millennium B.C.E.), one must presume the placement of weapons, food, and other utilitarian items beside the dead indicates that these prehistoric people believed that death was not the end. The member of the tribe or clan who was no longer among the living still required nourishment, clothing, and protection to journey safely in another kind of existence beyond the grave. Somehow, there was some part of the person that survived death.

That part of the human being that survives death is known in Christianity, Islam, and Judaism 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 part of a living being, the atman, which is eternal and seeks to be united with the Universal Soul, or the Brahman. Buddhism teaches that an individual is but a transient combination of

the five aggregates (*skandhas*)—matter, sensation, perception, predisposition, and consciousness—and has no permanent soul. 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. Some faiths contend that it ascends to a paradise or descends into a hell. Others believe it may achieve a rebirth into another physical body, or may merge with the Divine in an eternal unity. Traditional Christianity, Islam, and Judaism envision a resurrection of a spiritual body at a time of final judgment, but generally speaking, the soul is of greater value and purpose than the physical body it inhabited while on Earth. The material shell within which humans dwell during their lifetime is nothing other than clay or ashes into which God has breathed the breath of life. The physical body is a temporary possession that a human has, not what a person is.

All the major world religions hold the belief that how a person has conducted himself or herself while living on Earth will greatly influence his or her soul's ultimate destiny after physical death. In fact, many teachings state that the only reason for birth into the material world is the opportunity to prepare for the soul's destiny in the immaterial worlds. And what is more, how one meets the challenges of life on Earth, whether or not one chooses to walk a path of good or evil, determines how that soul will be treated after death. All the seeds that one has sown throughout his or her lifetime, good or bad, will be harvested in the afterlife.

When an individual dies, according to many world religions, the soul is judged or evaluated, then sent to what is perceived as an eternal place—heaven or hell. The Hindu or Buddhist expects to encounter Yama, the god of the dead. In the Hindu scriptures, Yama holds dominion over the bright realms and can be influenced in determining a soul's admission by offerings made for the benefit of the deceased by relatives and friends. In the Buddhist tradition, Yama is the lord of hell who administers punishment according to each individual's karma, the cause and effect of his or her actions on Earth. In neither religious expression is Yama at all comparable to Satan, who in Christian belief is both the creator of evil and the accuser of human weaknesses.

EARLIEST *members of the* Homo sapiens *species (c. 30,000 B.C.E.) conducted burial rituals of a quality that would qualify them as religious.*

In Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, the soul's arrival at either heaven or hell is made somewhat confusing by the teachings of a great, final Judgment Day and the Resurrection of the Dead. And when Roman Catholic Christianity added the doctrine of purgatory in the sixteenth century, the matter became all the more complex because now certain souls were given an opportunity to atone for their sins while residing in a kind of interim area between heaven and hell. While many Christians, Jews, and Muslims believe that the dead lie sleeping in their graves until the Last Judgment, others in those same faiths maintain that judgment is pronounced immediately after death. Likewise, the concept of the World to Come in Jewish writings may refer to a present heaven or foretell of a future redemption on Earth.

BUDDHISM

While the Buddhist text recognizes the existence of a self as a being that distinguishes one person from another, the Buddhist teachings state that the Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim concept of an eternal metaphysical soul is inaccurate. To Buddhists, the human person is but a temporary assemblage of various elements, both physical and psychical, and none of these individual aspects of a whole person can be isolated as the essential self; nor can the sum of them all constitute the self. Everything, all of reality, is in a constant state of change and decay. Because a human is composed of so many elements that are always in a state of flux, always dissolving and combining with one another in new ways, it is

impossible to suggest that an individual could retain the same soul-self for eternity. Rather than atman, Buddhist doctrine teaches anatman/or, "no-self."

"WHEN *a son of the Buddha fulfills his course, in the world to come, he becomes Buddha.*"

Although the Buddha (c. 567–487 B.C.E.) denied the Hindu concept of an immortal self that passes through a series of incarnations, he did accept the doctrines of karma ("actions," the cause-and-effect laws of material existence) and *samsara* (rebirth). If the Buddha recognized rebirth into another lifetime but did not believe in an essential self or soul, then what would be reborn? The Buddhist answer is difficult to comprehend; the various components in the perpetual process of change that constitute human beings do not reassemble themselves by random chance. The karmic laws determine the nature of a person's rebirth. Various aspects which make up a functioning human during his or her lifetime enter the *santana*, the "chain of being," whose various links are related one to the other by the law of cause and effect. While there is no *atman* or individual self that can be reincarnated, the "contingent self" that exists from moment to moment is comprised of aggregates that are burdened with the consequences of previous actions and bear the potential to be reborn again and again. Because the aggregates of each living person bear within them the fruits of past actions and desires, the moment of death sets in motion an immediate retribution for the consequences of these deeds, forcing the individual to be reborn once again into the unceasing cycle of karma and *samsara*. However, dharma, the physical and moral laws that govern the universe, flow through everything and everyone, thereby continually changing and rearranging every aspect of the human. Although driven by karma, the dharma rearranges the process of rebirth to form a new individual.

In his first sermon, the Noble Truth of Suffering (Dukha), the Buddha presented his views on the aggregates that constitute the human condition:

> The Noble Truth of Suffering is this: Birth is suffering; aging is suffering; sickness is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; association with the unpleasant is suffering; dissociation with the pleasant is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering—in brief, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

In the Dhammapada (147:51) the Buddha speaks further of the destiny of all human flesh in quite graphic terms:

> Behold this beautiful body, a mass of sores, a heaped up lump, diseased, much thought of, in which nothing lasts, nothing persists. Thoroughly worn out is this body, a nest of diseases, perishable....Truly, life ends in death....Of bones is this house made, plastered with flesh and blood. Herein are stored decay, death, conceit, and hypocrisy. Even ornamented royal chariots wear out. So too the body reaches old age. But the Dhamma of the Good grows not old. Thus do the Good reveal it among the Good.

The Buddha's advice to all those who wish to rise above the karmic laws of death and rebirth is to live a contemplative, religious life:

> Men who have not led a religious life and have not laid up treasure in their youth, perish like old herons in a lake without fish. Men who have not led a religious life and have not laid up treasure in their youth lie like worn-out bows, sighing after the past. (Dhammapada 155:56)

The counsel of the Buddha is quite similar to the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:19–21 when he admonished those who would follow him not to expend their energies accumulating treasures on Earth where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourself treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Dharma is the path to the goal of nirvana, which in Buddhist teachings can represent the final extinction of the desire to exist, or can also suggest a high level of mystical experience achieved through deep meditation or trance. It never means the complete annihilation of the self, only the squelching of the wish to be reborn. Most often, nirvana is meant to indicate a transformed state of human consciousness which achieves a reality independent of the material world.

Once the desire to continue existence in a material flesh form has been extinguished, and "when a son of the Buddha fulfills his course, in the world to come, he comes Buddha." To achieve one's Buddhahood in Buddhism is comparable to realizing Brahma, the Absolute and Ultimate, in Hinduism. Once those levels have been attained, it is believed that one is freed forever from material reality and becomes one with eternal reality.

There are many schools of historical Buddhism—Hinayana, Mahayana, Tantric, and Pure Land—and it is difficult to find consensus among them concerning the afterlife. Tibetan Buddhism's Book of the Dead provides an important source for an understanding of their concept of the afterlife journey of the soul. A lama (priest) sits at the side of the deceased and recites texts from the Book, a ritual which is thought to revive the *bla,* the life force within the body, and give it the power to embark upon a 49-day journey through the intermediate stage between death and rebirth. Such a recitation by the priest at the bedside of the deceased might include these words from the Tibetan Book of the Dead:

> Since you [no longer] have a material body of flesh and blood, whatever may come—sounds, lights, or rays—are, all three, unable to harm you; you are incapable of dying. It is quite sufficient for you to know that these apparitions are your own thought-forms. Recognize this to be the *bardo* [the intermediate state after death].

If there is to be no rebirth for the soul, it appears before Yama, the god of the dead, to be judged. In Tibetan Buddhism, there is a direct link between one's earthly lifetimes and intermediate stages of existence in the various spheres of paradise, extending to the appearance of the soul remaining the same as the one it assumed when living as a human on Earth.

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

Both Buddhism and Hinduism place Yama, god of the dead, in the position of judge in the afterlife, and these passages from the Rig-Veda depict the special reverence with which he was held:

> Yama was the first to find us our abode, a place that can never be taken away, a place where our ancient Fathers have departed; all who are born go there by that path, treading their own. Meet the Fathers, meet Yama, meet

> with the fulfillment of wishes in the highest heaven; casting off imperfections, find anew your dwelling, and be united with a lustrous body.

Regardless of one's religious background, it is in the presence of death that all humans find themselves face to face with the single greatest mystery of their existence: Does life extend beyond the grave? Whether one believes in a supernatural heavenly kingdom, the inescapable laws of karma, or a state of eternal bliss, death remains a dreadful force beyond one's control. For untold millions of men and women the ceremonies of religion provide their only assurance that life goes on when the darkness of physical death envelops them.

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CHRISTIANITY

The core of the Christian faith is the belief in the resurrection of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) after his death on the cross and the promise of life everlasting to all who accept his divinity and believe in him. Because Christianity rose out of Judaism, the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the gospels reflect many of the Jewish beliefs of the soul and the afterlife, primarily that a reunion of body and soul will be accomplished in the next world. The accounts of the appearance of Jesus to his apostles after his resurrection show how completely they believed that they beheld him in the flesh, even to the extreme of the skeptical Thomas placing his fingertips into the still-open wounds of the crucifixion. "A spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have," Jesus told them. Then, to prove his physicality still further, he asks if they have anything for him to eat.

Paul (?–c. 68 C.E.), the apostle and once avid persecutor of Christians, received his revelation from the voice of Jesus within a blinding light while he was traveling on the road to Damascus. He discovered it to be a challenge to convince others in the belief in the physical resurrection of the dead when he preached in Athens. Although the assembled Athenians listened politely to his message of a new faith, they mocked him and walked away when he began to speak of dead bodies standing up and being reborn. To these cultured men and women who had been exposed to Plato's philosophy that the material body was but a fleshly prison from which the soul was freed by death, the very notion of resurrecting decaying bodies was repugnant. Paul refused to acknowledge defeat. Because he had been educated as a Greek, he set about achieving a compromise between the resurrection theology being taught by his fellow apostles and the Platonic view of the soul so widely accepted in Greek society.

Paul knew that Plato had viewed the soul as composed of three constituents: the *nous*, (the rational soul, is immortal and incarnated in a physical body); the *thumos* (passion, heart, spirit); and *epithumetikos* (desire). After many hardships, imprisonments, and public humiliation, Paul worked out a theology that envisioned human nature as composed of three essential elements—the physical body; the psyche, the life-principle, much like the Hebrew concept of the *nephesh;* and the *pneuma*, the spirit, the inner self. Developing his thought further, he made the distinction between the "natural body" of a living person that dies and is buried, and the "spiritual body," which is resurrected.

In I Corinthians 15:35–44, Paul writes:

> But some will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" You foolish man! What you sow

> does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel....God gives it a body as He has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is alike....There are celestial bodies and there are terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another....So it is with the resurrection from the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown in the physical body, it is raised in a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

Although he had begun to mix Platonic and Jewish philosophies in a manner that would be found acceptable to thousands of new converts to Christianity, Paul could not free himself completely from the Hebrew tradition that insisted upon some bodily form in the afterlife. However inconsistent it might appear to some students of theology, Paul and his fellow first-century Christian missionaries taught that while the immortal soul within was the most essential aspect of a person's existence, in order for a proper afterlife, one day there would be a judgment and the righteous would be rewarded with reconstituted bodies.

The early church fathers began more and more to shape Christian doctrines that reflected Plato's metaphysical philosophy, but they remained greatly divided over the particular nature of the immortal soul. The Platonists saw the soul as supraindividual and remaining within the universal cosmic soul after its final ascent to oneness with the Divine. The Christian philosophers could not be shaken from their position that each soul was created by God to be immortal and individual, irrevocably connected to the afterlife. Among them was Tertullian (c. 160 C.E.–220 C.E.), who defined the soul as having sprung directly from the breath of God, thereby making it immortal. The body, in the Platonic view, was merely the instrument of the *anima*—the soul. The highly respected Alexandrian scholar Origen (c. 185 C.E.–254 C.E.) theorized that in the beginning, God had created a certain number of spirit entities who received physical bodies or spiritual bodies as determined by their respective merits. Some might be appointed human forms, while others, according to their conduct, would be elevated to angelic status, or relegated to the position of demons.

EACH soul was created by God to be immortal and individual, irrevocably connected to the afterlife.

Such a concept of the preexistence of souls seemed too close to reincarnation for those learned Christian scholars assembled for the First Council of Constantinople in 543. By then, church doctrine had decreed that it was given each soul to live once, to die, and then to await the Day of Judgement when Christ returned to Earth. Despite his prestige as a learned and wise church father, Origen's views were condemned as heretical. The prevailing view of the early Christian church was the one espoused by Jerome (c. 342 C.E.–420 C.E.), who envisioned God as creating new souls as they were required for the new bodies being born to human parents on Earth. Essentially, orthodox contemporary Christianity continues to maintain the position that each new person born receives a new soul that has never before existed in any other form. In Christian doctrine, the soul is superior to the body because of its divine origin and because it is immortal, but belief in a resurrection of the physical body is also an essential aspect of both the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, which declare that after the Last Judgment Jesus shall once again appear to "judge the living and the dead."

In Chapter 25 of Matthew, Jesus tells a parable of how the Son of Man is to come and sit on his throne as the people of all nations gather before him so that he might separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. Those individuals who loved their neighbors as themselves will be rewarded with eternal life, but those who have chosen greed and self-interest will be sent away into eternal punishment.

In Acts 17:31, it is stated that God has appointed Jesus Christ to judge the world; Acts 10:42 again names Christ as the one "ordained by God to be judge of the living and the dead."

HELL, *in traditional Christian thought, is a place of eternal torment for those who have been damned after the Last Judgment.*

The early Christian Church believed that the Second Coming of Jesus was imminent and that many who were alive in the time of the apostles would live to see his return in the clouds. When this remarkable event occurred, it would signal the end of time and Jesus Christ would raise the dead and judge those who would ascend to heaven and those who would suffer the everlasting torments of hell. The delay in the Second Coming forced the Church to adjust its theology to acknowledge that the time of judgment for each individual would arrive at the time of that person's death.

For the traditional Christian, heaven is the everlasting dwelling place of God and the angelic beings who have served him faithfully since the beginning. There, those Christians who have been redeemed through faith in Jesus as the Christ will be with him forever in glory. Liberal Christians acknowledge that, as Jesus promised, there are many mansions in his father's kingdom where those of other faiths may also dwell. For more fundamental and conservative Christians, the terrifying graphic images depicted over the centuries of the Last Judgment have been too powerful to be eliminated from doctrinal teachings, so they envision a beautiful place high above the Earth where only true believers in Jesus may reign with him.

Hell, in traditional Christian thought, is a place of eternal torment for those who have been damned after the Last Judgment. It is generally pictured as a barren pit filled with flames, the images developed out of the Hebrew Sheol and the Greek Hades as the final resting places for the dead. Roman Catholic Christianity continues to depict hell as a state of unending punishment for the unrepentant, but over five centuries ago, the councils of Florence (1439) and Trent (1545–63) defined the concept of purgatory, an intermediate state after death during which the souls have opportunities to expiate certain of their sins. Devoted members of their families can offer prayers and oblations which can assist those souls in purgatory to atone for their earthly transgressions and achieve a restoration of their union with God.

Protestant Christianity does not offer its followers the opportunities for afterlife redemption afforded by purgatory or any other intermediate spiritual state, but it has removed much of the fear of hell and replaced it with an emphasis upon grace and faith. While fundamentalist Protestants retain the traditional views of heaven and hell, there are many contemporary Protestant clergy who have rejected the idea of a place of eternal torment for condemned souls as incompatible with the belief in a loving God of forgiveness. Hell has been transformed from a place of everlasting suffering to an afterlife state of being without the presence of God. For liberal Christian theologians, the entire teaching of a place of everlasting damnation has been completely rejected in favor of the love of Jesus for all humanity.

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HINDUISM

In India's religious classic work, the Bhagavad Gita ("Song of the Lord"), the nature of the soul is defined: "It is born not, nor does it ever die, nor shall it, after having been brought into being, come not to be hereafter. The unborn, the permanent, the eternal, the ancient, it is slain not when the body is slain."

The oldest collection of Sanskrit hymns is the Rig-Veda, dating back to about 1400 B.C.E. Composed by the Aryan people who invaded the Indus Valley in about 1500 B.C.E., the early Vedic songs are primarily associated with funeral rituals and perceive the individual person as composed of three separate entities: the body, the *asu* (life principle), and the *manas* (the seat of the mind, will, and emotions). Although the *asu*, and the *manas* were highly regarded, they cannot really be considered as comprising the essential self, the soul. The facet of the person that survives the physical is yet something else, a kind of miniature of the living man or woman that resides within the center of the body near the heart.

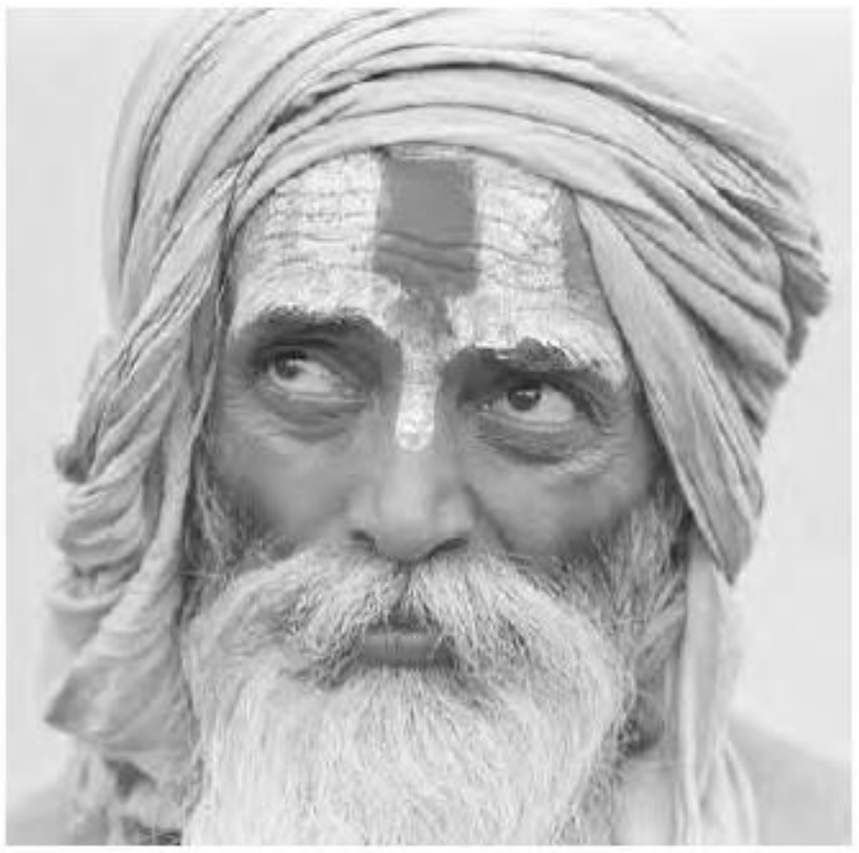
During the period from about 600 B.C.E. to 480 B.C.E., the series of writings known as Upanishads set forth the twin doctrines of *samsara* (rebirth) and karma (the cause and effect actions of an individual during his or her life). An individual has a direct influence on his or her karma process in the material world and the manner in which the person deals with the difficulties inherent in an existence bound by time and space; the individual determines the form of his or her next earthly incarnation. The subject of the two doctrines is the *atman*, or self, the essence of the person that contains the divine breath of life. The *atman* within the individual was "smaller than a grain of rice," but it was connected to the great cosmic soul, the Atman or Brahma, the divine principle. Unfortunately, while occupying a physical body, the atman was subject to *avidya*, an earthly veil of profound ignorance that blinded the *atman* to its true nature as Brahma and subjected it to the processes of karma and *samsara*. *Avidya* led to *maya* the illusion that deceives each individual *atman* into mistaking the material world as the real world. Living under this illusion, the individual accumulates karma and continues to enter the unceasing process of *samsara*, the wheel of return with its succession of new lifetimes and deaths.

The passage of the soul from this world to the next is described in the Brihadarankyaka Upanishad:

> The Self, having in dreams enjoyed the pleasures of sense, gone hither and thither, experienced good and evil, hastens back to the state of waking from which he started. As a man passes from dream to wakefulness, so does he pass from this life to the next.... Then the point of his heart, where the nerves join, is lighted by the light of the Self, and by that light he departs either through the eye, or through the gate of the skull, or through some other aperture of the body....The Self remains conscious, and, conscious, the dying man goes to his abode. The deeds of this life, and the

In Hinduism, Vishnu is considered one of the main gods of worship.

(ST. LOUIS ART MUSEUM)



Hindu holy man or *Sadhu.* (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

impressions they leave behind, follow him. As a caterpillar, having reached the end of a blade of grass, takes hold of another blade and draws itself to it, so the Self, having left behind it [a body] unconscious, takes hold of another body and draws himself to it.

"IT is born not, nor does it ever die, nor shall it, after having been brought into being, come not to be hereafter. The unborn, the permanent, the eternal, the ancient, it is slain not when the body is slain."

By the third century B.C.E. Hinduism had largely adopted a cyclical worldview of lives and rebirths in which the earlier concepts of heaven and hell, an afterlife system of reward and punishment, were replaced by intermediate states between lifetimes. Hindu cosmology depicted three *lokas,* or realms—heaven, Earth, and a netherworld—and 14 additional levels in which varying degrees of suffering or bliss awaited the soul between physical existences. Seven of these heavens or hells rise above Earth and seven descend below. According to the great Hindu teacher Sankara, who lived in the ninth century, and the school of Advaita Vedanata, the eventual goal of the soul's odyssey was *moksa,* a complete liberation from *samsara,* the cycle of death and rebirth, which would lead to nirvana, the ultimate union of *atman* with the divine Brahma. In the eleventh century, Ramanjua and the school of Visitadvaita saw the bliss of nirvana as a complete oneness of the soul with God.

In the last centuries before the common era, a form of Hinduism known as *bhakti* spread rapidly across India. *Bhakti* envisions a loving relationship between God and the devout believer that is based upon grace. Those devotees who have prepared themselves by a loving attitude, a study of the scriptures, and devotion to Lord Krishna may free themselves from an endless cycle of death and rebirth. Eternal life is granted to the devotees who, at the time of death, give up their physical body with only thoughts of Lord Krishna on their minds.

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ISLAM

In regard to the concept of a soul, Islam envisions a human as a being of spirit and body. The creation of Adam as described in the Qur'an (or Koran) is reminiscent of Genesis in the Judeo-Christian Bible as the Lord announces to the angels that he is going to create a human of clay and that he will breathe his spirit into him after he has given him form. "And He originated the creation of man out of clay, then He fashioned his progeny of an extraction of mean water, then He shaped him, and breathed His spirit in him." (Qur'an 32:8–9)

Muslims pray in the direction of Mecca during an Islamic holiday at Coney Island, New York. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

Muhammed (570 C.E.–632 C.E.) appears to have regarded the soul as the essential self of a human being, but he, adhering to the ancient Judeo-Christian tradition, also considered the physical body as a requirement for life after death. The word for the independent soul is *nafs*, similar in meaning to the Greek *psyche*, and the word for the aspect of the soul that gives humans their dignity and elevates them above the animals is *ruh*, equivalent to the Greek word *nous*. These two aspects of the soul combine the lower and the higher, the human and the divine.

As in the other major religions, how one lives on Earth will prepare the soul for the afterlife, and there are promises of a paradise or the warnings of a place of torment. The Qur'an 57:20 contains an admonition concerning the transient nature of life on Earth and a reminder of the two possible destinations that await the soul after death: "Know that the present life is but a sport and a diversion, an adornment and a cause of boasting among you, and a rivalry in wealth and children. It is as a rain whose vegetation pleases the unbelievers; then it withers, and you see it turning yellow, then it becomes straw. And in the Hereafter there is grievous punishment, and forgiveness from God and good pleasure; whereas the present life is but the joy of delusion."

Muhammed speaks of the Last Judgment, after which there will be a resurrection of the dead which will bring everlasting bliss to the righteous and hellish torments to the wicked. The judgment will be individual. No soul will be able to help a friend or family member, he warns; no soul will be able to give satisfaction or to make intercession for another.

While the doctrine of the resurrection of the body has never been abandoned in Islam, later students of the Qur'an sought to define the soul in more metaphysical terms, and a belief in the preexistence of souls was generally established. In this view, Allah kept a treasure house of souls in paradise available for their respective incarnations on Earth.

The Islamic paradise is in many ways an extension of the legendary Garden of Eden in the Bible. It is a beautiful place filled with trees, flowers, and fruits, but it really cannot be expressed in human terms. It is far more wonderful than any person could ever imagine. "All who obey God and the Apostle are in the company of those on whom is the grace of God—of the Prophets who teach, the sincere lovers of Truth, the witnesses [martyrs] who testify, and the righteous who do good: Ah! What a beautiful fellowship!" (Qur'an 4:69)

MUHAMMED *says the Last Judgment will bring everlasting bliss to the righteous and hellish torments to the wicked.*

Hell is a place of torment, and, like the image held by many Christians, a place of fire and burning. In the Islamic teachings, neither heaven nor hell last throughout eternity. Infinity belongs to Allah alone, and there may exist various stages of paradise and hell for those souls who dwell there.

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JUDAISM

"Then the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Genesis 2:7). In the second chapter of Genesis, Yahweh, the god of Israel, shapes the form of Adam from the clay, then breathes into him the "breath of life," so that Adam becomes *nephesh*, or a "living soul."

Interestingly, Yahweh also bestows the breath of life into the animals that flourished in the Garden of Eden, and they, too, are considered living souls. *Nephesh* is closely associated with blood, the life-substance, which is drained away from the body at death, thus establishing in Hebrew tradition the recognition that a living person is a composite entity made up of flesh and *nephesh*, the spiritual essence. "The body is the sheath of the soul," states the Talmud, Sanhedrin 108a.

The early Hebrews believed that after death the soul descended to Sheol, a place deep inside the Earth where the spirits of the dead were consigned to dust and gloom. "All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Ecclesiastes 3:20). By the time the Book of Daniel was written, in about 165 B.C.E., the belief had been established that the dead would be resurrected and receive judgment: "Many of those who lie dead in the ground will rise from death. Some of them will be given eternal life, and others will receive nothing but eternal shame and disgrace. Everyone who has been wise will shine bright as the sky above, and everyone who has led others to please God will shine like the stars" (Daniel 12: 2–4).

While the verses from Daniel are the only ones in Jewish scripture that specifically mention the afterlife of the soul, the subject is widely discussed in Rabbinic literature, the Kabbalah, and Jewish folklore. Generally, the soul is believed to have its roots in the world of the divine, and after the physical death of the body, the soul returns to the place of its spiritual origin. Some Jewish thinkers refer to the soul's sojourn on Earth as a kind of exile to be served until its reunion with God.

By the second century B.C.E., many Jewish teachers had been exposed to the Greek concept of the soul as the essential self that exists prior to the earthly body into which it is born and which survives the body's physical death. However, the old traditions retained the view that, an existence in the

afterlife requires the restoration of the whole person. As Jewish thinking on the afterlife progressed from earlier beliefs, a school of thought arose maintaining that during the arrival of the Messiah, God would raise the dead to life again and pass judgment upon them—rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked. Such a resurrection was viewed as a restoration of persons who would possess both physical bodies and spirits, thus reinforcing the traditional philosophy that to be a living person was to be a psycho-physical unit, not an eternal soul temporarily inhabiting a mortal body. More often, however, the references to a judgment of the dead in Judaism recall the scene in the seventh chapter of the Book of Daniel in which the Ancient of Days opens the books of life and passes judgment on the kingdoms of the Earth, rather than on individuals.

According to some circles of Jewish thought, the actual Day of Judgment, *yom hadin*, the resurrection of the dead, will occur when the Messiah comes. On that fateful day, both Israel and the Gentile nations will be summoned to the place of judgment by the blowing of the great *shofar* (ram's horn) to awaken the people from their spiritual slumber. Elijah the prophet will return and set about the task of reconciling families who have become estranged. The day when the Lord judges "will be dark, very dark, without a ray of light" (Amos 5:20). Those who have maintained righteous lives and kept their covenant with God will be taken to the heavenly paradise. Those who have been judged as deserving of punishment for their misdeeds will be sent to Gehenna, to stay there for a length of time commensurate with the seriousness of their transgressions.

A white-bearded rabbi reading the Talmud. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

ANCIENT EGYPT AND THE AFTERLIFE

The ancient Egyptians were preoccupied with the specter of death and the problem of how best to accomplish passage to the other side. There was never an ancient people who insisted upon believing that death was not the final act of a human being, that "it is not death to die," with more emphasis than the Egyptians.

In the cosmology of the early Egyptians, humans were considered the children of the gods, which meant that they had inherited many other elements from their divine progenitors than physical bodies. The *ba*, or soul, was portrayed on the walls of tombs as a human-headed bird leaving the body at death. During a person's lifetime, the *ba* was an intangible essence, associated with the breath. In addition to the *ba*, each person possessed a *ka*, a kind of ghostly double

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MANKIND'S HISTORY OF BURIAL PRACTICES

TIMELINE

70,000 B.C.E.
Earliest discovered burial sites of Neanderthal man.

3600 B.C.E.
Earliest known attempts to mummify bodies in Egypt.

3000 B.C.E.
Ancient Chileans mummify bodies.

1000 B.C.E.
Ancient Greeks cremate their dead.

625 B.C.E.
Mourners in Ancient Greece place metal coins under the tongues of the dead.

600 B.C.E.
Romans cremate their dead.

SOURCES:

Weathersby, Trudy. *About Death and Dying*. http://dying.about.com/blchron1.htm. 9 July 2001.

which was given to each individual at the moment of birth. As long as people kept control of their *ka*, they lived. But as soon as they died, it began a separate existence, still resembling the body that it formerly occupied, and still requiring food for sustenance. Each person also had a *ren*, or name, which could acquire a separate existence and was once the underlying substance of all one's integral aspects. Other facets include the *khu*, or intelligence; the *ab*, or heart (will); the *sakkem*, or life force; the *khaybet*, or shadow; the *ikh*, or glorified spirit; and the *sahu*, or mummy. But the most important of all these facets of a human being was the *ka*, which became the center of the cult of the dead, for it was to the *ka* that all offerings of food and material possessions were made. Those priests who were ordained to carry the offerings to the dead were called "servants of the *ka*."

Upon an Egyptian's death, although the body became inert, no longer capable of motion, the body did not decay, for the greatest care was taken to preserve it as a center of individual spirit manifestation. The body was carefully embalmed and mummified and placed in a coffin, on its side, as if it were only asleep. In the tomb with the mummy were brought all the utensils that a living person might need on a long journey, together with toilet articles, vessels for water and food, and weapons and hunting equipment to protect against robbers and to provide food once the initial supply was depleted.

Based on their writings concerning their concepts of goodness, purity, faithfulness, truth, and justice, beginning in the **Pyramid Texts** and extending onward, most scholars agree that the ancient Egyptians were a highly moral people. The gods Osiris and Isis were exalted as the ideal father and mother, and Set (god of chaos) became the personification of evil. During the time of the Middle Kingdom (c. 2000 B.C.E.,) the story of Osiris became a kind of gospel of righteousness, and justice was exalted in a manner found in few periods of history.

EGYPTIAN BOOK OF THE DEAD

As early as the Eighteenth Dynasty, which began about 1580 B.C.E., most of the religious literature of ancient Egypt, including the **Pyramid Texts**—the oldest extant funerary literature in the world, dating back to as early as the fourth millennium B.C.E.—and certain revised editions of those texts, called the Coffin Texts, were brought together, reedited, and added to, and painted on sarcophagi and written on papyrus. This massive literary effort, the work of many authors and compilers, is now known as the Book of the Dead; its creators called it The Chapters of Coming Forth by Day. Although many known copies of this ancient work exist, no one copy contains all the chapters, which are thought to number around 200. The subject matter of each chapter is the beatification of the dead, but the chapters are as independent of one another as are the psalms in the Old Testament.

The Egyptians did not believe that mummifying a body would enable it to come back to life in the next world. They knew the physical body would remain in this world, but they preserved it, believing that the spirit of the person needed its body as a kind of base or reference point. If a body could not be recovered, had it, for example, been destroyed by fire or lost at sea, it was a serious matter. In cases such as these, a statue or a kind of reconstruction or artistic portrait would be used for the departing spirit.

An important ritual was performed at the funeral service of the departed, called *The Opening of the Mouth*. This ceremony was a "magical treatment" of the mouth and other apertures of the body to ensure the spirit's ability to continue to hear, see, eat, and so forth, should it need to in the spirit world. The Egyptians also performed this ceremony over statues and paintings, to endow them with a form in the afterworld.

EGYPTIAN JOURNEY TO THE NEXT WORLD

SOURCES:

Ruffle, John. "Ancient Egypt: Land of the Priest-King; Egyptian Temples: Houses of Power." In *Eerdman's Handbook to the World's Religions*. Edited by R. Pierce Beaver. Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 1982.

One of the most curious aspects of the Egyptian Book of the Dead is that while the work is filled with realistic and graphic scenes of the preparation of the deceased for mummification, there are no illustrations depicting death and dying. For a people obsessed with the mortuary and funerary aspects of death, the Egyptians seldom dealt with the actual ways in which people lost their lives. Some scholars have observed that it was not so much that the ancient Egyptians wished to avoid the unpleasant topic of death and dying; it was rather that they never really formulated any clear conception of the nature of death or of its cause.

By the time the text of the Book of the Dead was being copied on rolls of papyrus and placed in the tombs of the dead, a great social and religious revolution had taken place. Whereas the Pyramid Texts were meant only to be inscribed on the sarcophagi of the royals, it was now decreed that anyone who could afford the rituals would be entitled to follow the god Osiris into the afterlife. The cult of Osiris had now been extended so that any deceased human, commoner or noble-born, who had the means could become an "Osiris."

UPON an Egyptian's death the greatest care was taken to preserve the body as a center of individual spirit manifestation.

The most important ceremony associated with the preparation of the dead was the opening of the eyes, mouth, ears, and nose of the deceased. This rite was thought to guarantee

In ancient Egypt, dead people's bodies were prepared for mummification. It was believed they would go to an afterlife. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

life to the body and make it possible for the *ba* to reenter its former dwelling. If the deceased's budget allowed, it was also customary to bring into the tomb a number of small figures called *ushabtiu*, whose duty was to speak up and give character witness when the entombed stood before Osiris and the 42 divine judges.

THE *Pyramid Texts were the oldest extant funerary literature in the world, dating back to as early as the fourth millennium* B.C.E.

The Book of the Dead also contained certain holy incantations that were designed to free the *ka* from the tomb and allow it to be incarnated again. The spirit might experience an existence as a hawk, a heron, or even a plant form, such as a lotus or a lily, moving along through various expressions of the life force until, after about 3,000 years, it could once again achieve rebirth as a human.

DELVING DEEPER

Gaster, Theodor H., ed. *The New Golden Bough*. New York: Criterion Books, 1959.

Larousse Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions. New York: Larousse, 1994.

OSIRIS: DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Osiris was called Lord of Lords, King of Kings, and God of Gods by the Egyptians. According to the scholar E. A. W. Budge, "[Osiris] was the god-man who suffered, and died, and rose again, and reigned eternally in heaven. They [the Egyptians] believed that they would inherit eternal life, just as he had done."

The ancient myths proclaim that Osiris first received renown as a peaceful leader of a higher culture in the eastern Delta, then as a powerful ruler over all the Delta, a veritable god of the Nile and its vegetation, growth, life, and culture. He was the husband of Isis, goddess of enchantment and magic; father of the great war god Horus; and finally conqueror of northern Upper Egypt with his principal city at Abydos. It was then that he came into conflict with Set, who killed and dismembered him. The dark mists of death didn't

eliminate Osiris. Quite the opposite, in fact, for Isis, incarnation of the divine mother goddess, used her magic to put him back together. Osiris rose from the dead and became for all of his followers a god of resurrection. The cult of Osiris was established at Abydos, where he became known as the Lord of the Death or Lord of the West, referring to his mastery over all those who had traveled "west" into the sunset of death. The theology of Osiris, which promised resurrection, soon overshadowed that of the sun god Ra and became the dominant feature of all Egyptian religion.

Ra was a creator god, fundamentally solar, a king by nature, whose theology concerned itself with the world, its origin, creation, and the laws that governed it. Osiris and his doctrines were concerned with the problems of life, death, resurrection, and an afterlife. The connection between the two deities was Horus, who was a sky god of the heavens and also the dutiful son and heir of Osiris. The general influence of Ra and Osiris can be traced back to the time of the **Pyramid Texts** and forward to the decline of Egyptian religious history. The cosmology of Osiris may be divided into two periods. The earlier one extended up until the time of the Pyramid Texts, during which he was a peaceful political power, an administrator of a higher culture, the unifying factor in bringing the Delta and northern Upper Egypt into one realm, the ideal husband and father, and after his death, the god of resurrection. The second period extended from the time of the Pyramid Texts to the common era, when he was primarily god of the dead and king of the underworld.

When an ancient Egyptian died, the deceased expected to appear before Osiris, who would be sitting upon his throne, waiting to pass judgment on him or her. The deceased would be led in by the jackal-headed god Anubis, followed by the goddess Isis, the divine enchantress, representing life, and the goddess of the underworld, Nephthys, representing death. There were 42 divine judges to assess the life of the one who stood before them, and the deceased would be allowed to deny 42 misdeeds. Once the deceased had presented his or her case, Osiris indicated a large pair of balances before them with the heart of the deceased and the feather of truth, one in each of the pans. The god Thoth read and recorded the decision. Standing in the shadows was a monstrous creature prepared to devour the deceased, should the feather of truth outweigh his or her heart. In those instances when the heart outweighed the feather—and few devout Egyptians could really believe that their beloved Osiris would condemn them—the deceased was permitted to proceed to the Fields of Aalu, the world, where the gods lived. Because humans were the offspring of the gods, the Fields of Aalu offered an eternal association and loving companionship with the deities. This, the ancient Egyptians believed, was the natural order of things. They had no doubts about immortality. In their cosmology, a blessed afterlife was a certainty.

Osiris, God of the Underworld. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

DELVING DEEPER

Ferm, Vergilious, ed. *Ancient Religions*. New York: The Philosophical Library, 1950.

Gaster, Theodor H., ed. *The New Golden Bough*. New York: Criterion Books, 1959.

Larousse Dictionary of Beliefs and Religions. New York: Larousse, 1994.

MUMMY FACTS

1. Mummification was not limited to Egyptians. Greeks and Romans who resided in Egypt were also mummified in Egyptian fashion.
2. The process of mummification continued in Egypt as late as the fifth century C.E., then slowly tapered off when Christianity took hold.
3. From 400 to 1400 C.E. there was a common belief that *mummia* was a potent medicine with curative powers. This mummia was obtained by grinding up actual mummies.
4. Many travelers who visited Egypt from Europe in the 1600s and 1700s took mummies home and displayed them as centerpieces or in curio cabinets.
5. The study of Egyptian antiquities, known as *Egyptology,* became a popular academic discipline in the 1800s. The event of "unwrapping a mummy" became a most popular attraction and draw to European museums.
6. In 1896, British archaeologist William Flinders Petrie began using X-ray techniques to examine mummies without unwrapping them.
7. In the early 1970s, scientists began using computed tomography, or CAT scans, to create images of the insides of mummies. This aided them in determining information about the embalming and wrapping processes the Egyptians used.
8. During the 1980s and 1990s, scientists extracted DNA from mummies in hopes of gathering information about ancient Egyptian patterns of settlement and migration, as well as information on diseases and genetic characteristics.
9. Recent approaches to studying mummies involve the interdisciplinary cooperation of Egyptologists, physicians, radiologists, physical anthropologists, and specialists in ancient languages.
10. Recent discoveries of mummies in the Sinai Peninsula, the desert oases, and the eastern delta of the Nile River are providing abundant information about the regional mummification styles.

SOURCES:

Teeter, Emily. *Presentation of Maat: Ritual and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt and Scarabs, Scarboids, Seals and Seal Impressions from Medinet Habu.* N.p., n.d.

PYRAMID TEXTS

The Pyramid Texts recorded some of humankind's earliest written insights concerning its concepts about the soul and the afterlife. The texts were inscribed on the stone walls of five pyramids at Saccara during the later part of the Old Kingdom, 2400–2240 B.C.E., and were compiled by priestly scholars from a variety of sources, some dating earlier than the beginning of the historical period, about 3000 B.C.E. Beginning with the Middle Kingdom, about 2000 B.C.E., priests began to copy large portions of the Pyramid Texts onto the sarcophagi of pharoahs and nobles.

Although the texts deal only with the manner in which to guarantee the safe passage of deceased nobility to the other world, they also reflect the general thinking of the common people toward the next world, as well as that of the priesthood and the royal heads of state. It is clear that the Egyptians, even during this remote and long-ago period, thought of themselves as being more than a physical body, but what is not easily understood is exactly what their conception of death might have been. From what can be ascertained from the earliest mortuary texts is that the entire culture was in denial of death and refused to accept it as a natural and inevitable event. In fact the texts allude to a time when death did not exist, but there is no account of how death entered the world, as there are in many other cultures.

All pharaohs were considered to be divine, a belief that had its roots in the myths that gods had ruled Egypt in prehistoric times and that the earliest human rulers were the actual children of these divine beings. Therefore, when a pharaoh died, he could be prepared for death and become an "Osiris," the god of resurrection.

The Egyptians of this period conceived of two nonphysical entities, the *ka* and the *ba*, that made up the whole self and were of equal value to the physical body. Although it is difficult to ascertain a precise understanding of the cosmology of the Egyptian people of such a faraway time, it would appear that the *ka*, often represented in hieroglyphs as two arms upstretched in a gesture of protection, was believed to have been a kind of spiritual double of a living person that also served as his or her guardian spirit. A

HONGSHAN PYRAMID DISCOVERED IN CHINA

In the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in northern China, Chinese archeologists have discovered a pyramid which they have dated to be more than 5,000 years old. Archaeologist Guo Dashun stated that the three-stepped pyramid belongs to the Hongshan culture period of 5,000 to 6,000 years ago, during the Stone Age.

At the top of the pyramid, the archeologists found seven tombs and the ruins of an altar. Also found were many fragments of broken pottery carved with the Chinese character *mi* (rice). They also discovered a bone flute, a stone ring, and a life-sized sculpture of a goddess.

Archeologists believe that the discovery of these relics, as well as of the pyramid itself, will be crucial in learning more about both the spiritual and earthbound life of the peoples of the Hongshan culture.

SOURCES:

"Xinhua." *China Daily*.http://www.chinadaily.net/cndy/2001-07-10/19256.html. 10 July 2001.

person's tomb was called the *het ka*, the "house of the *ka*," suggesting that the Egyptians not only considered the *ka* an essential aspect of a human being, but understood that a provision for it, as well as for the physical body, must be made at the time of death.

The *ba* is generally understood by modern scholars as representing that aspect of the essential self that is commonly referred to as the soul. Often depicted in ancient Egyptian art and hieroglyphs as a bird with a human head—male or female, corresponding to the sex of the person represented—the *ba* hovers near its physical counterpart. In cultures throughout the world, the bird is often utilized as a symbol for the soul. And certainly, in the Egypt of thousands of years ago, the high-flying, free-moving creature of the air would have seemed an obvious representation of the aspect of the self that separates from the body at the time of death.

THE Pyramid Texts were inscribed on the stone walls of five pyramids at Saccara.

While there seems no question that the ancient Egyptian view of the nature of each individual human included both the physical and nonphysical aspects of the whole person, the spiritual, nonmaterial representations were not valued above the material body. Such an assertion is easily demonstrated by the lengthy process of embalmment and the elaborate process of mummification conducted on the physical body of the deceased. The magical rit-

The Chepren pyramid in Giza, Egypt. (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

uals and ceremonies carefully performed to prepare the dead for the afterlife journey indicate that the body was as important an aspect of the complete entity as were the *ka* and the *ba*. Nor can it truly be known if the *ka* and the *ba* were viewed strictly as spiritual entities, for they, as well as their mummified human-self, were left food and drink in the mortuary offerings so they might live on in their roles of overseers.

DELVING DEEPER

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Ferm, Vergilius, ed. *Ancient Religions*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1950.

INDIVIDUAL HUMAN EXPERIENCE WITH DEATH AND THE AFTERLIFE

For the past three hundred years, Western science has been fixated upon the concept that everything in the universe is subject to physical laws and exists only in terms of mass and energy—matter being transformed by energy into a variety of conditions and shapes that come into existence only to pass away eventually in time and space. Death, therefore, is the end of existence for all who succumb to its ultimate withdrawal of the life force.

From time to time, however, highly regarded scientists have protested that such a view of the universe leaves out a sizable portion of reality. British philosopher and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) observed that a strictly materialistic approach to life completely ignored the subjective life of humans—or that area of existence which is commonly called the spiritual. It in no way accounted for emotions—the manner in which human beings experience the feelings of love between a woman and a man, between parents and children; the joy upon hearing a magnificent symphony; the sense of beauty and awe in sighting a rainbow; the inspiration of religious thought.

But the major tenets of Western science hold fast. Such human experiences, material scientists insist, are mere transient illusions—things that people imagine for themselves or dream for themselves—while the only true reality consists in the movement of atoms blindly obeying chemical and physical laws.

This soulless "world machine" was created three centuries ago by the genius of Rene Descartes (1596–1650), Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), and their predecessors; and it has proved useful for the development of physical science. The attempts of Whitehead and others to construct an approach to science that could include the experiences of people's inner lives within the framework of reality has made little impression in contemporary science, which remains rigidly devoted to the seventeenth century "world machine." Everything must be explained in terms of the physical action of material bodies being acted upon by external forces.

But even the most rigid disciple of the materialistic religion of test tubes, chemical compounds, and mathematical formulas still cannot answer the ultimate question—what lies beyond physical death?

Some scientists compromise because their instincts or desires prompt them to hope that life goes on, and they point to the research being done with those men and women who have survived the near-death experience (NDE) and the testimonies of medical personnel who have observed individuals undergoing deathbed visions. While some scientists may argue that the answers that come forth from those who have experienced NDE are subjective, other researchers insist that such reports do provide valuable clues to the dimensions of reality that lie beyond physical death.

Throughout history there have been men and women who have been somehow brought back to life after accidents, severe injuries, surgeries, and other physical traumas, and they have related their own accounts of life beyond death, the journey of the soul, and the process of judgment that awaits the spirits of the deceased on the other side. While the various representatives of religious orthodoxy may often look upon such stories as visions wrought by the severity of a painful ordeal and a subsequent misinterpretation of accepted religious teachings, and while the proponents of the material sciences may consider these experiences delusions, those who have survived such near-death encounters cannot be shaken from the testimony of their own personal experiences, regardless of the accepted dogmas and doctrines taught by the various religious bodies or the physical sciences concerning the afterlife.

Father Andrew Greeley (1928–), who has a Ph.D. in sociology and is a best-selling novelist as well as a Roman Catholic priest, has been keeping tabs on the spiritual experiences of Americans since 1973. Together with colleagues at the University of Chicago, Greeley, a professor of sociology at the University of Arizona, released the following data in the January/February 1987 issue of *American Health:* Seventy-three percent of the adult population in the United States believe in life after death; 74 percent expect to be reunited with their loved ones after death.

In the fall of 1988, the editors at *Better Homes and Gardens* drew more than 80,000 responses when they surveyed their readership regarding their spiritual lives. Eighty-nine percent believed in eternal life; 30 percent believed in a spirit world; and 86 percent believed in miracles.

DEATHBED VISIONS

For thousands of years, many individuals have received personal proof of survival by observing their fellow humans at the moment of death. Reports of deathbed experiences have long intrigued physical researchers, but systematic investigations of such accounts were not attempted until the pilot study of Dr. Karlis Osis (*Deathbed Observations by Physicians and Nurses*, 1961) sought to analyze the experiences of dying persons in search of patterns.

Because of their specialized training, ability to make accurate medical assessments, and proximity to dying patients, Osis selected doctors and nurses as informants. Each of the 640 respondents to Osis's questionnaires had observed an average of 50 to 60 deathbed patients—a total of over 35,000 cases. The

NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES AND THE AFTERLIFE

The Near-Death Experiences and the Afterlife website (http://www.near-death. com) presents a comprehensive overview of the near-death experience and views of the afterlife from the standpoint of all world religions including Christian, New Age, Jewish, Hindu, Atheist, Buddhist, and Muslim. There are also NDEs, (near-death experiences) of children, of those who are blind and those who committed suicide.

Research, analysis, and support are among the many other features on the website. There are interesting and related topics including scientific or psychic research, informative news, books, documentaries, audio, television shows, and films available within the fields of study of the afterlife and the near-death experience. Links are provided to many of the researchers in the field, such as Dr. P. M. H. Atwater and Dr. George Ritchie, as well as to those who have widely written about their own transformative near-death events, such as Bettie Eadie and Dannion Brinkley.

Also, a section called *Films with Afterlife Themes* provides a list of more than 30 films that were made from 1939 to the present. A brief overview and description of the plot is given, in addition to the rating and length of the film.

SOURCES:

Near Death Experiences and the Afterlife. http://www.near-death.com. 15 October 2001.

parapsychologists followed up the initial questionnaire with telephone calls, additional questionnaires, and correspondence.

A total of 385 respondents reported 1,318 cases wherein deathbed patients claimed to have seen apparitions or phantasms. Fifty-two percent of these apparitions represented dead persons who were known to the patients; 28 percent were of living persons; and 20 percent were of religious figures. Visions that either gave the dying patient a view of the traditional heaven or depicted scenes of wondrous beauty and brilliant color were reported by 248 respondents to have been observed in 884 instances. Mood elevation—that is, a shift in the patient's emotions from extreme pain and fear to tranquility—was reported by 169 respondents in 753 cases.

About half of the apparitions reported by the dying patients seemed to have appeared for the purpose of guiding them through the transition from death to the afterlife. One distinct observation emerging from Osis's study was that few patients appeared to die in a state of fear.

Age and sex showed no correlation with the phenomena of deathbed apparitions, visions, or mood elevations. Interestingly enough, the more highly educated patients evidenced more deathbed phenomena than the less well educated, thus contradicting the allegation that the more superstitious are likely to experience deathbed phenomena.

Religious beliefs correlated in a positive manner, as might be expected. Only those patients who believed in life after death experienced visions depicting scenes in the other world. Religious figures were sometimes reported by those with no religious affiliation,

but those with strong beliefs most often identified a biblical or saintly figure.

Another interesting statistic revealed by the study is that visions, apparitions, and mood elevations are reported more often in cases where the dying patient is fully conscious and appears in complete control of his senses. Sedation, high fever, and painkilling drugs seem to decrease, rather than to increase, the ability to experience these phenomena. By the same token, cases of brain damage or brain disease were found unrelated to the kinds of deathbed experiences relevant to Osis's study.

The questionnaire and subsequent follow-up also uncovered some intriguing areas for additional research. There were cases, for example, in which collective viewings of apparitions were reported by those who had gathered around the patient's deathbed. There were numerous instances of "extrasensory" interaction between patients and attending physicians and nurses; and many cases wherein observers underwent a change in their own personal philosophy after witnessing the experience of the dying person.

Among the many patterns disclosed by the study, Osis feels that one of the most consistent was that phenomena relevant to the survival hypothesis occurred most often when the physiological and psychological balance of the patient was not greatly disturbed. According to the research project's findings as reported by Osis, "Trends in line with the survival hypothesis occurred predominantly in patients whose mentality was not disturbed by sedatives or other medications, who had no diagnosed hallucinogenic pathology, and who were fully conscious as well as responsive to their environment." The study found that experiences irrelevant to the survival hypothesis occurred more often in those patients who were generally prone to hallucinate, "such as the sedated patients, those whose pathology was diagnosed as hallucinogenic, or those whose consciousness and contact with the environment was impaired."

Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (1926–) has said that the turning point in her work as a medical doctor occurred in a Chicago hospital in 1969 when a deceased patient appeared before her in fully materialized form. Kubler-Ross had been feeling discouraged about her research with the dying because of the opposition that she had encountered among her colleagues, but the apparition of Mary Schwartz appeared to her to tell her not to abandon her work because life after death was a reality.

"DEATH *is simply a shedding of the physical body, like the butterfly coming out of a cocoon.*"

—DR. ELISABETH KUBLER-ROSS

"Death is simply a shedding of the physical body, like the butterfly coming out of a cocoon," Kubler-Ross has told her lecture audiences in presentations which she had conducted around the world. "Death is a transition into a higher state of consciousness where you continue to perceive, to understand, to laugh, to be able to grow, and the only thing you lose is something that you don't need anymore—and that is your physical body."

The thousands of case histories that Kubler-Ross has studied have demonstrated to her that while, in some cases, dying may be painful, death itself—as described by those who have survived near-death experiences (NDE)—is a completely peaceful experience, free of pain and fear. Kubler-Ross also found that when one of her patients died, someone was always there to help in the transition from life to death, often a deceased family member or friend. Those who had experienced a "comeback" from death to life assured her that to die was to experience a feeling of "peace, freedom, equanimity, a sense of wholeness," and they told her that they were no longer afraid to die.

While the great majority of today's scientists may consider the quest to discover the world beyond death a waste of time and energy when there are so many physical challenges awaiting humankind in the twenty-first century, Dr. Karlis Osis has spoken to this issue and advised his more materialistic colleagues

to take a "wider look toward the far horizons which have attracted the best minds through the centuries." There is, of course, greatness in defeating humankind's diseases and in conquering new worlds in outer space, but, Osis wonders "how the age-old problem, 'What happens when someone dies?,' compares with these material challenges? Is it not equally important to know the certain answer to such a basic question of human existence?"

"To fear death, gentlemen, is nothing other than to think oneself wise when one is not; for it is to think one knows what one does not know. No man knows whether death may not even turn out to be the greater of blessings for a human being, and yet people fear it as if they knew for certain that it is the greatest of evils."

—SOCRATES

In his *A Practical Guide to Death and Dying*, (1988) author John W. White, a founding member of the International Association for Near-Death Studies, quotes the philosopher Socrates' (c. 470–399 B.C.E.) statement just before drinking the hemlock that would kill him: "To fear death, gentlemen, is nothing other than to think oneself wise when one is not; for it is to think one knows what one does not know. No man knows whether death may not even turn out to be the greater of blessings for a human being, and yet people fear it as if they knew for certain that it is the greatest of evils."

White states that, in his opinion, the current research on death and dying indicates that one's personality will survive death of the body and, in all likelihood, will be reincarnated. "Death challenges us to find the meaning of life," he writes, "and with it, genuine happiness. It is nature's way of goading us to discover our true condition, our real self—beyond the transience and ephemerality of this material world. And not only this world, but all worlds."

DELVING DEEPER

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NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES (NDES)

In the mid-1970s, the work of such noted researchers as Drs. Raymond Moody, Melvin Morse, Kenneth Ring, and Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (1926–) brought the subject of the near-death experience (NDE) to the attention of the general public. As accounts of men and women who had been brought back to life and told of having witnessed scenes from the other side received wide circulation, more near-death experiencers felt confident in sharing their own stories of having come back from other-dimensional journeys outside of their bodies. As medical science became increasingly sophisticated and successful in terms of its ability to resuscitate those individuals who might otherwise have died from heart attacks, automobile accidents, and other physical traumas, the more men and women came forward to tell of having perceived the spirits of deceased friends and relatives, guardian angels, and beings of light that met them in a heavenly kind of place and communicated with them before returning them to their bodies.

In 1983, an extensive survey conducted by George Gallup, Jr., found that eight million Americans—5 percent of the adult population—said that they had undergone a near-death experience. A survey conducted in 1991 by Dr. Colin Ross, associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, suggests that as many as one in three people have left their bodies and returned—most often during times of crisis, extreme pain, and near-death. In 1992, a new Gallup Poll survey revealed that around 13 million Americans claimed to have undergone at least one NDE. While such statistics and inspira-

tional stories were new to many men and women, accounts of people who came back to life after clinical death and who told of experiencing proof of life after death had been recorded by researchers for hundreds of years.

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, psychoanalyst Dr. Carl G. Jung (1875–1961) describes a near-death experience he underwent after he had broken a foot and suffered a heart attack. "It seemed to me that I was high up in space," he wrote. "Far below I saw the globe of Earth, bathed in a gloriously blue light.... Below my feet lay Ceylon, and in the distance ahead... the subcontinent of India. My field of vision did not include the whole Earth, but its global shape was plainly distinguishable."

The psychoanalyst described the reddish-yellow desert of Arabia, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean. "The sight of the Earth from this height was the most glorious thing I had ever seen," Jung said, estimating that his consciousness would have had to have been at least a thousand miles up to have perceived such a panoramic view of the planet. He was most emphatic in stressing his belief that the experiences he had during his heart attack were not the products of imagination or a fevered brain. "The visions and experiences were utterly real," he wrote. "There was nothing subjective about them; they all had a quality of absolute objectivity."

Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961), the American author of such works as *The Sun Also Rises* and *The Old Man and the Sea*, wrote of his near-death experience while serving in the trenches near Fossalta, Italy. It was about midnight on July 8, 1918, when a mortar shell exploded near the 19-year-old Hemingway, badly wounding him in the legs. Later, he said that he experienced death at that moment. He had felt his soul coming out of his body "like you'd pull a silk handkerchief out a pocket by one corner. It flew around and then came back and went in again and I wasn't dead any more."

Hemingway used his own near-death experience in *A Farewell to Arms* when he has his fictional hero, Frederick Henry, undergo a similar experience. The novel's protagonist is also positioned in the Italian trenches when "...a blast-furnace door is swung open and a roar that started white and went red...in a rushing wind." Henry feels his spirit rush out of himself and soar with the wind. He believes himself to be dead and realizes that there is an existence beyond physical death. Then "...instead of going on, I felt myself slide back. I breathed and I was back."

Dr. Robert Crookall, a British biologist and botanist, was one of the great pioneers in the clinical study of near-death experiences. Crookall theorized that what metaphysicians had labeled the astral or the etheric body—the soul—is normally "enmeshed in" the physical body so that most people are never aware of its existence. During out-of-body or near-death experiences, however, the Soul Body separates or projects from the physical body and is used temporarily as an instrument of consciousness. According to Crookall, this Soul Body consists of matter "...but it is extremely subtle and may be described as 'superphysical.'"

Crookall perceived the physical body as animated by a semiphysical "vehicle of vitality," which serves as a bridge between the physical body and the Soul Body. This, he believed, was the "breath of life" mentioned in Genesis. In some people, he speculated "...especially (though not necessarily) saintly people," the Soul Body may be less confined to the physical flesh than it is in persons of a more physical or material nature, thus making it easier for the aesthetic to achieve out-of-body experiences.

Among the hundreds of cases of near-death and out-of-body experiences that Crookall collected, he found numerous references to a kind of psychic "umbilical cord" that appears to connect the nonphysical Soul Body to the physical body. Citing such cases from his research, Crookall wrote:

> With regard to form, several [experiencers] have described seeing merely a "cord" and said that it was about half an inch wide. T. D. compared his to a "thread." H. considered, "I am sure that, had a feeble thread between soul and body been severed, I would have remained intact" (i.e., the soul would

have survived the death of the body). The Tibetans also observed that "a strand" subsisted between the [Soul Body] and the [physical] body. Like H., Miss K. realized that once [the cord] was "loosed" the reentry…into the body would have been impossible. She said, "This is what death means."

Those men and women of a Judeo-Christian belief construct who have undergone the near-death experience (NDE) sometimes quote Ecclesiastes 12:5–7 as scriptural testimony to the reality of the spiritual body and its ability to separate itself from the flesh: "Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be broken at the cistern: Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."

One frequently observed quality of the silver cord which appears to connect the Soul Body to the physical body is its elasticity. Numerous persons who have undergone near-death experiences have remarked upon this quality in their descriptions of the experience. Crookall wrote of a man named Edwards who stated that from the pull of his silver cord he would characterize it as being made of some kind of substance similar to "stout elastic." Another of his subjects, a Mrs. Leonard, noted that as her Soul Body neared her physical body, the cord not only became shorter and thicker, as would be expected, but also less elastic, agreeing with the often reported statements that when the Soul Body approaches very near the physical body, it tends to reenter it—in fact it is often "sucked" back.

In the late 1970s, the popular acceptance of the work of Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross brought sharp scientific focus to bear on the question of what happens to humans after the experience of physical death. In her book *Death, the Final Stages of Growth* Kubler-Ross declares that "beyond a shadow of a doubt, there is life after death."

Far from an evangelical tract, Kubler-Ross's publication is actually a textbook that is based on more than a thousand interviews with terminally ill persons, many of whom had recovered from near-death experiences. They describe such sensations as floating above their own physical bodies and being able to transcend the normally accepted limitations of time and space. Nearly all of the near-death survivors told of a sense of euphoria and peace, and many had been confronted by angels and spirit beings who told them that it was not yet time for them to make the final transition to the other side. When the dying do accomplish that ultimate change of dimensions, according to Kubler-Ross's observations, they are "…at peace; they are fully awake; when they float out of their bodies they are without fear, pain, or anxiety; and they have a sense of wholeness."

Dr. Raymond Moody, who is both a medical doctor and the holder of a doctorate in philosophy, discovered an enormous number of similar reports when he became curious about what happened to his patients in the period of time in which they "died" before being revived and returned to life through medical treatment. After interviewing many men and women who had survived near-death experiences, for his book *Life after Life*, Dr. Moody discovered what Dr. Kubler-Ross and numerous other researchers had found: The near-death experiencers had the sensation of moving rapidly through a long, dark tunnel before "popping" outside of their physical bodies. If they were in hospital rooms or other enclosures, they often floated near the ceiling and watched medical teams attempting to revive their physical bodies. Many reported their life literally "flashing" before their eyes, and others said that they were welcomed to the other world by previously deceased relatives or friends. Whether or not they were of a religious background, they often reported an encounter with a brilliant, intense white light that assumed the form of an angel, a guide, a teacher, Father Abraham, or a Christ-figure.

In 1977, Dr. Kenneth Ring, professor of psychology at the University of Connecticut, began a scientific investigation of 102 men and women who had undergone the near-death experience. In his *Life at Death*, published in 1980, Ring released the results of the data that he had compiled. According to his assessment of his subjects' experiences, Ring tabulated that

60 percent of them found that the near-death experience had brought them a sense of peace and well-being; 37 percent reported a separation of consciousness from the physical body; 23 percent mentioned the process of entering a dark tunnel; 16 percent said that they had seen a bright light; and 10 percent claimed that they had entered the light.

Ring concludes his book by dropping his scientific demeanor and admitting that he, personally, believes that humankind has a "conscious existence after our physical death and that the core experience does represent its beginning, a glimpse of things to come." Ring further states that he considers the near-death experience to be a teaching, revelatory experience. In his observation, both those who undergo a near-death experience and those who hear about them from others receive "an intuitive sense of the transcendent aspect of creation." To Ring, the near-death experience clearly implies that "there is something more, something beyond the physical world of the senses, which, in the light of these experiences, now appears to be only the mundane segment of a great spectrum of reality."

Ring has also given some thought to the question of why the study of death became so prominent in the late 1970s and early 80s: "One reason…is to help us to become globally sensitized to the experience of death on a planetary scale which now hangs like the sword of Damocles over our heads. Could this be the universe's way of 'innoculating' us against the fear of death?"

A consensus among those who investigate the near-death experience yields a number of features commonly described by those who have undergone NDE:

- They usually see their physical bodies apart from their spiritual bodies. They experience a soaring sensation, a definite movement out of the body and discover that their consciousness is free of time and space and all prior physical limitations.
- There is often a sense of disorientation and confusion when family, friends, medical personnel, and other people seem unaware of their nonphysical presence.
- The sensation of moving down a tunnel toward a bright light is frequently mentioned.
- A great number of those who have undergone NDE state that they encountered an angelic being, a spirit guardian, or the spirit of someone known by them to have been deceased, such as a friend or a relative.
- Many report having witnessed a kind of life review of their Earth-plane existence.
- A glimpse of paradise or even a guided tour of heaven conducted by an angelic host is recalled by many.
- An extreme reluctance to leave this beautiful state of existence and return to their physical bodies is commonly expressed.
- Upon their return to their bodies, many near-death experiencers discover that their awareness has been expanded far beyond what it was before the NDE. Some report heightened extrasensory abilities, such as **telepathy, clairvoyance,** and **precognition.**

Dr. Antonio Aldo Soldaro, chief surgeon at Rome's main public hospital and a professor of surgery at Rome University, has observed that all NDE subjects "improve their spiritual and social lives. They become more generous, optimistic, and positive."

Dr. Melvin Morse, clinical associate professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington, is another NDE researcher who has found that certain survivors of the near-death experience return with enhanced abilities. Morse, author of such books as *Transformed by the Light*, noted that some of the people he interviewed came back to life with "an increase in the amount of electrical energy their bodies emit," an acceleration of intellect and/or psychic abilities, and even the power to heal themselves.

In one of his investigations, Morse spoke to a 45-year-old woman named Kathy who said that she had been afflicted with incurable thyroid cancer and had been given six months to live. It was at that awful moment that she also developed pneumonia. After she was rushed to a hospital, her heart stopped; and as doctors worked desperately to revive her,

Kathy stated that the real her was "high on top of a beautiful ridge overlooking a beautiful valley. The colors were extremely vivid, and I was filled with joy." A being of light touched her spirit body, and her entire essence was "filled with light."

Later, when she was revived, Kathy's pneumonia had disappeared. A few weeks later, her cancer, too, had inexplicably left her. Morse theorized that Kathy's NDE had a direct influence on healing the cancer. He also stated that he had studied instances in which near-death survivors had returned to life more intelligent than they had been before the experience.

DR. Susan Blackmore of Bristol University in England claims all the phenomena associated with an NDE are manifestations of the "winding down" of brain functions as a person nears death.

Dr. P. M. H. Atwater, of Charlottesville, Virginia, nearly died after hemorrhaging in 1977. After her own dramatic experience, she began to investigate other cases of NDE in which ordinary men and women had survived near-death. By 1988, she had interviewed more than 200 NDE survivors and found that their experiences had triggered something in them that had enhanced certain abilities. She has written a number of books on the subject, such as *Beyond the Light* (1997). In one of her case studies, she tells of a truck driver who had survived a near-fatal crash and who subsequently began to display advanced mathematical abilities. Literally overnight he demonstrated a gift for higher mathematics. He was able to write down complicated mathematical equations about which he had no prior knowledge. Gradually, the man began to understand his new abilities and was eventually able to use them in practical applications.

In those cases in which near-death survivors claim to have been left with after effects, Atwater states that her research indicates that 80 to 90 percent exhibit physiological changes as well as psychological alterations. Among the most frequent after effects reported to Atwater are the following: The near-death experiencer looks and acts more playful. His or her skin brightens, and eyes sparkle. There is an increased sensitivity to any form of light, especially sunlight, and to any form of sound and to noise levels. Boredom levels decrease or increase. He or she has substantially more or less energy. He or she can handle stress easier and heal quicker from hurts and wounds. His or her brain begins to function differently.

If it is true that near-death survivors are physically as well as psychologically changed by their experiences, what does this say about the real power of the experience? Atwater suggests ever larger questions: "Since the part of us that has this experience 'separates' from the body to the extent that it does, is that an indication that not only do we have a soul, we are a soul-resident in a lifeform? If that is true, what else is true about life, about death, about purpose and mission and Source and Creation?"

While skeptics ridicule the "will to believe" in an afterlife as religious wishful thinking, it might be suggested that many of them embrace a "will to disbelieve" with what also amounts to a kind of religious fervor. For many scientists, there can be no consciousness after the physical body dies. The universe is comprised exclusively of material realities, and without the physical organism there can be no mind, no consciousness—and certainly no life after death. Many believe near-death experiences are but hallucinations caused by reasons that may be psychological, pharmacological, or neurological. According to the material scientists, those men and women who claim to be survivors of a near-death experience and who report that their soul left their body and began a journey into an afterlife before being revived are suffering from delusions. Science has proved that there is no aspect of personality within a human being that could travel anywhere without a physical body to propel it.

Dr. Susan Blackmore of Bristol University in England has spent many years investigating the near-death experience and is convinced that all the phenomena associated with an NDE are manifestations of the "winding

down" of brain functions as a person nears death. Blackmore explains the oft-mentioned "tunnel of light" seen by near-death experiencers as a result of the turmoil occurring in the section of the brain that controls vision. As the brain continues to shut down and is increasingly deprived of sensory input, it begins to draw upon memory to answer such questions as "who am I?" and "where am I?" and information stored in the memory supplies images based upon the individual's perception of self and expectations of an afterlife.

In October 2000, the results of a year-long research project that was described as the "first scientific study of near-death experiences" were released by Dr. Peter Fenwick, a consultant and neurophysicist at the Institute of Psychiatry in London, and Dr. Sam Parnia, a clinical research fellow and registrar at Southampton Hospital. Although the doctors were initially skeptical of reports in which people close to death had encounters with bright lights and heavenly beings, their new study concludes that a "number of people have almost certainly had these experiences after they were pronounced clinically dead." By carefully examining medical records, the researchers ruled out the collapse of brain functions caused by low levels of oxygen or that drugs might be responsible for the experiences.

"These people were having these experiences when we wouldn't expect them to happen, when the brain should be able to sustain lucid processes or allow them to form memories that would last," Parnia said. "So [the study] might hold an answer to the question of whether mind or consciousness is actually produced by the brain or whether the brain is a kind of intermediary for the mind, which exists independently."

Fenwick commented, "If the mind and brain can be independent, then that raises questions about the continuation of consciousness after death. It also raises the question about a spiritual component to humans and about a meaningful universe with a purpose rather than a random universe."

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THE MYSTERY SCHOOLS

The great Epic of Gilgamesh, which dates back to the early part of the second millennium B.C.E., portrays an ancient Mesopotamian king's quest for immortality and his despair when he learns that the gods keep the priceless jewel of eternal life for themselves. From clay, the gods shaped humankind and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life. What a cruel trick, then, to snatch back the wind of life at the time of physical death and permit the wonderful piece of work that is man to return once again to dust. The destiny of all humans, regardless of whatever greatness they may achieve or however low they might sink, is the same—death.

Throughout all of humankind's recorded history, there have been those who have sought to guarantee a dignified way of death and to ensure a stylish and safe passage into the afterlife. Many of these individuals who sought to approach death on their own terms formed secret societies and cults which are known by the general name of "mysteries," which comes from the Greek *myein*, "to close," referring to the need of the *mystes*, the initi-

ate, to close the eyes and the lips and to keep secret the rites of the cult.

All of the early mysteries and mystical traditions appear to center around a kind of mystery play or ritual reenactment of the life of such gods as Osiris, Dionysus, and Demeter, divinities most often associated with the underworld, the realm of the dead, the powers of darkness, and the process of rebirth. Because of the importance of the regenerative process, the rites of the mysteries were usually built around a divine female as the agent of transformation and regeneration. While the initiates of the mystery cult enacted the life cycle of the gods who triumphed over death and who were reborn, they also asserted their own path of wisdom that would enable them to conquer death and accomplish resurrection in the afterlife, with rebirth in a new body in a new existence.

THE rites of Dionysus often featured animal sacrifice. This was meant to symbolize the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the divinity.

The origin and substance of the state religion of ancient Greece was a sophisticated kind of nature worship wherein natural elements and phenomena were transformed into divine beings who lived atop Mount Olympus. If the Judeo-Christian tradition proclaimed that humans were fashioned in the image of God, their creator, then it must be said that the gods of ancient Greece were created in the image of humans, their creators. Like the humans who worshipped them, the Olympians lived in communities and had families, friends, and enemies and were controlled by the same emotions, lusts, and loves. The pantheon of the gods of ancient Greece were not cloaked in the mysterious, unfathomable qualities of the deities of the East, but possessed the same vices and virtues as the humans who sought their assistance. Although the Olympians could manifest as all-powerful entities—especially when a rival god wasn't interfering—none of them were omnipotent. Although they were capable of exhibiting wisdom, none of them were omniscient. And they often found themselves as subject to the whims of Fate as the humans who prayed for their guidance.

The Olympians were worshipped by the Greeks most often in small family groups. There existed no highly organized or formally educated priesthood, no strict doctrines, no theologians to interpret the meaning of ambiguous scriptural passages. The followers of the state religion could worship the god or gods of their choosing and believed that they could gain their favor by performing simple ritual acts and sacrifices.

In addition to the state religion into which every Greek belonged automatically at birth, there were also the "mystery religions," which required elaborate processes of purification and initiation before a man or woman could qualify for membership. The mystery religions were concerned with the spiritual welfare of the individual, and their proponents believed in an orderly universe and the unity of all life with God. The relationship of the *mystes*, the initiate, was not taken lightly, as in the official state religion, but was considered to be intimate and close. The aim and promise of the mystical rites was to enable the initiate to feel as though he or she had attained union with the divine. The purifications and processions, the fasting and the feasts, the blazing lights of torches and the musical liturgies played during the performances of the sacred plays—all fueled the imagination and stirred deep emotions. The initiates left the celebration of the mystery feeling that they were now superior to the problems that the uninitiated faced concerning life, death, and immortality. Not only did the initiates believe that their communion with the patron god or goddess would continue after death, but that they would eventually leave Hades to be born again in another life experience.

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DIONYSIAN MYSTERIES

Next to the Eleusinian mysteries in importance and popularity were the Dionysian, which were centered around Dionysus (Bacchus), a god of life, vegetation, and the vine who, because all things growing and green must one day decay and die, was also a divinity of the underworld. Those initiates who entered into communion with Dionysus drank large amounts of wine and celebrated with feasts that encouraged them to dress themselves in leaves and flowers and even to take on the character of the god himself, in an attempt to achieve his power. Once the god had entered into union with the initiates, they would experience a new spiritual rebirth. This divine union with Dionysus marked the beginning of a new life for the initiates, who, thereafter, regarded themselves as superior beings. And since Dionysus was the Lord of Death, as well as the Lord of Life, the initiates believed that their union with him would continue even after death, and that immortality was now within their grasp.

The rites of Dionysus were conducted on a much lower level than those of Eleusis, and often featured the sacrifice of an animal—usually a goat—that was torn to pieces by the initiates, whose savagery was meant to symbolize the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the divinity. Although the cult was not looked upon with high regard by the sages and philosophers of the day, amulets and tablets with fragments of Dionysian hymns upon them have been found dating back to the third century B.C.E. These magical symbols were buried with the dead and meant to protect the soul from the dangers of the underworld.

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ELEUSINIAN MYSTERIES

The sacred Eleusinian mysteries of the Greeks date back to the fifth century B.C.E. and were the most popular and influential of the cults. The rites took place in the city of Eleusis, a small community 14 miles west of Athens, but it was the ruler of Athens, together with a specially selected committee, who was in charge of the general management of the annual event. Although the Dionysian and Orphic rites could be celebrated at any time, the Eleusinian rites were held at a fixed time in the early fall after the seeds had been entrusted to the fields, and were conducted by a hereditary priesthood called the Eumolpedie.

THE Eleusinian rites were held at a fixed time in the early fall after the seeds had been entrusted to the fields, and were conducted by a hereditary priesthood called the Eumolpedie.

Sometime in the month of September, the Eumolpedie removed the Eleusinian holy objects from Eleusis and carried them to the sacred city of Athens, where they were placed in the Eleusinion temple. Three days after the holy relics had been transported, the initiates gathered to hear the exhortations of the priests, who solemnly warned all those who did not consider themselves worthy of initiation to leave at once. Women and even slaves were permitted to join the mysteries of Eleusis, providing that they were either Greeks or Romans, but it was required that all those wishing to be considered as initiates had first undergone the lesser mysteries held in Agrae, a suburb of Athens, six months before. After the rites of purification had been observed, the initiates bathed in the sea and were sprinkled with the blood of pigs as they emerged. A sacrifice was offered to the gods, and a procession began the journey to Eleusis, where, upon the arrival of the priests and the initiates, a midnight feast was celebrated and the new members of the cult were made one with the gods and goddesses by partaking of holy food and drink and enacting the ritual drama.

The Eleusinian drama reenacted the myth of the rape, abduction, and marriage of Kore (Persephone) by Hades, god of the underworld, and her separation from her mother, Demeter, the goddess of grain and vegetation. When, in her despair, Demeter refuses to allow the earth to bear fruit and brings about a time of blight and starvation that threatens to extinguish both humans and the gods, Zeus recalls Persephone from Hades. Filled with joy at the reunion with her daughter, Demeter once again allows the Earth to bear fruit. Persephone, however, will now divide the days of each year between her husband, Hades, in the underworld, and her mother, ensuring a bountiful harvest.

Essentially, the rites imitated the agricultural cycles of planting the seed, nurturing its growth, and harvesting the grain, which, on the symbolical level, represented the birth of the soul, its journey through life, and its death. As the seed of the harvest is planted again and the agricultural cycle is perpetuated, so is the soul harvested by the gods to be resurrected. Membership in the mysteries of Eleusis was undertaken to ensure initiates a happy immortality.

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HERMETIC MYSTERIES

The **Hermes Trismegistus** (the thrice greatest Hermes), who set forth the esoteric doctrines of the ancient Egyptian priesthood, recognized the reincarnation of "impious souls" and the achievement of pious souls when they know God and become "all intelligence." Hermes was the name the Greeks gave to the Egyptian god Thoth, the god of wisdom, learning, and literature. To Hermes was given the title "scribe of the gods," and he is said to have authored 42 sacred books, the Hermetic Mysteries, which contained a wide assortment of secret wisdom. These divine documents were divided into six categories. The first dealt with the education of the priesthood; the second, temple ritual; the third, geographical knowledge; the fourth, astrology; the fifth, hymns in honor of the gods and a guide for the proper behavior of royalty; the sixth, medical commentary. Legend has it that these sacred texts contain all the accumulated wisdom of ancient Egypt, going back in an unbroken tradition to the very earliest time.

As the Hermetic texts continued to influence the growth of European alchemy, astrology, and magic, the author of the books was said to have been Adam's grandson, who built the great pyramids of Egypt; or an Egyptian magician who lived three generations after Moses; or a magus from Babylonia who instructed **Pythagoras.** The Hermetic text decrees against transmigration, the belief that the souls of humans may enter into animals: "Divine law preserves the human soul from such infamy."

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ORPHIC MYSTERIES

Orpheus may have been an actual historic figure, a man capable of charming both man and beast with his music, but god or human, he modified the Dionysian rites by removing their orgiastic elements. Dionysus Zagreus, the horned son of Zeus (king of the Gods) and Persephone (daughter of Zeus and Demeter), was the great god of the Orphic mysteries, who was devoured by the evil Titans while Zeus was otherwise distracted. Athena managed to save Dionysus Zagreus's heart while the enraged Zeus destroyed the Titans with his thunderbolts. Zeus gave the heart of his beloved son to the Earth goddess Semele who dissolved it in a potion, drank thereof, and gave birth to Dionysus, the god of vegetation, whose cycle of birth, death, and rebirth reflects the cycle of growth, decay, and rebirth seen in nature. Orpheus preached that humankind was created from the ashes of the Titans who devoured Dionysus Zagreus; therefore, the physical bodies of humans are formed from the evil of the Titans, but they also contain within them a tiny particle of the divine essence. Within this duality a constant

war rages, so it is the duty of each human to repress the Titanic element and allow the Dionysian an opportunity to assert itself. The final release of the divine essence within, the redemption of the soul, is the utmost goal of the Orphic process. This process may best be obtained by the soul reincarnating in a number of physical bodies in different life experiences.

While other schools of reincarnation see the process of rebirth as an evolving of the soul ever higher with each incarnation, the Orphic concept introduces the aspect of the soul being gradually purged or purified through the sufferings incurred during each physical rebirth. As the soul inhabits the body, it is really doing penance for previous incarnations, a process which gradually purifies the soul. Between lifetimes, when the soul descends to Hades, it can enjoy a brief period of freedom that can be pleasant or unpleasant. Then it must return to the cycle of births and deaths. How many lifespans must the soul endure before the process of purification is completed and its final release is obtained? Plato (c. 428–348 B.C.E.) envisioned three periods of a thousand years each as a possible answer.

According to Orphic teachings, the only way out of the "wheel of birth," the "great circle of necessity," was through an act of divine grace that could possibly be obtained by the supplicant becoming immersed in the writing, ritual acts, and teachings of Orpheus and receiving initiation into the mysteries of the cult. Although there are no available texts clearly setting forth the process of initiation, it likely included fasting, rites of purification, and the reciting of prayers and hymns. It also seems quite certain that the initiates would have enacted a play depicting the life, death, and resurrection of Dionysus Zagreus. In addition, records suggest that a horned bull was sacrificed and the initiates partook of a sacramental feast of its raw flesh as a holy act that brought them in closer union with the god. Once this had been accomplished, the initiates were given secret formulas which would enable them to avoid the snares awaiting the unwary soul as it descended to Hades and would ensure them a blissful stay while they awaited a sign that their participation in the "great circle of necessity" had ended.

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DIONYSUS, *the god of vegetation, whose cycle of birth, death, and rebirth reflects the cycle of growth, decay, and rebirth seen in nature.*

PYTHAGORAS (C. 590–C.520 B.C.E.)

Pythagoras, one of the greatest philosophers and mathematicians of the sixth century B.C.E., is reported to have been the first of the Greeks to teach the doctrine that the soul, passing through the "great circle of necessity," was born at various times to various living bodies. Pythagoras believed in the soul as a "thought of God," and he considered the physical body to be simply one of a succession of "receptacles" for the housing of the soul. Many of his followers became vegetarians, for he taught that the soul might live again in animals.

Because of his importance to early Greek culture, Pythagoras is among those individuals given the status of becoming a myth in his own lifetime. Therefore, the philosopher was said to have been born of the virgin Parthenis and fathered by the god Apollo. Pythagoras's human father, Mnesarchus, a ring merchant from Samos, and his mother consulted the **Delphic Oracle** and were told that he would be born in Sidon in Phoenicia and that he would produce works and wonders that would benefit all humankind. Wishing to please the gods, Mnesarchus demanded that his wife change her name from Parthenis to Pythasis, in order to honor the seeress at Delphi. When it was time for the child to be born, Mnesarchus devised "Pythagoras" to be a name in which each of the specially arranged letters held an individual sacred meaning.

Pythagoras is said to have traveled the known world of his time, accumulating and absorbing wisdom and knowledge. According

to the legends surrounding his life, he was taught by Zoroaster (c. 628–c. 551 B.C.E.), the Persian prophet, and by the Brahmans of India. Although his teachings on past lives formed the essence of so many of the mystery religions, he was initiated into the **Orphic,** Egyptian, Judaic, Chaldean, and many other mystery schools.

At last Pythagoras formed his own school at Crotona in southern Italy. An unyielding taskmaster, he accepted only those students whom he assessed as already having established personal regimens of self-discipline. To further stress the seriousness of his study program, Pythagoras lectured while standing behind a curtain, thereby denying all personal contact with his students until they had achieved progress on a ladder of initiatory degrees that allowed them to reach the higher grades. While separated from them by the curtain, Pythagoras lectured his students on the basic principles of music, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.

Pythagoras called his disciples mathematicians, for he believed that the higher teachings began with the study of numbers. From his perspective, he had fashioned a rational theology. The science of numbers lay in the living forces of divine faculties in action in the world, in universal macrocosm, and in the earthly microcosm of the human being. Numbers were transcendent entities, living virtues of the supreme "One," God, the source of universal harmony.

Devoted to his studies, his travels, and his school, Pythagoras did not marry until he was about 60. The young woman had been one of his disciples, and she bore him seven children. The legendary philosopher died while exercising authority over his strict standards of admittance to his school. He denied a man acceptance because it was apparent that the would-be student had an unruly temper that could easily become violent. The rejected follower fulfilled Pythagoras's negative evaluation by angrily leading a mob against the school and burning down the house where the teacher and 40 students were gathered. Some accounts state that Pythagoras died in the fire; others have it that he died of grief, sorrowing over how difficult a task it was to elevate humanity.

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TRIBAL RELIGIONS

The legends of the dead told by ancient or tribal people are perhaps the most accurate indicators of their religious thought. And from what can be assumed from the burial rites of early humans, they pondered the same kinds of questions concerning the afterlife as humans do today. Where had their friends gone? What do they do and see when they disappear into the unknown? Will they live again? Can their spirits return to communicate? Or are they just gone—forever? Early humans could not answer these great questions, and so, to temper their fear of death, they created rituals, rites, and religions to comfort them.

Although the process of death and the reasons why the once animated body became lifeless were puzzles, aboriginal tribal societies understood that there was something in their departed friends and family members that survived somehow in another existence. The reason for this belief can be easily imagined. As they slept, early humans saw those persons whom they knew to be dead, alive and well in their dreams. Perhaps they themselves had witnessed their friends being killed in a dispute with another tribe or mangled by a predator, yet now they saw them and spoke with them, just as they had before their death. These vivid dreams of the dead undoubtedly led to the belief that there existed an immaterial aspect of human beings, a part that managed to survive the dissolution of the body.

Many Native American tribes believed that the physical body housed two or more souls, which became separated at death. The ancient Chinese affirmed three souls set free at death: one remained in the family house to serve as a kind of protector; another watched over the grave site as "guardian of the tomb"; and the third passed into the invisible realm. The aboriginal people of New Zealand, the Maori, believe that each of the eyes of the

deceased is given a separate immortality: the spirit of the left eye ascends to heaven and is seen as a new dark star in the sky, and the spirit of the right takes flight to *Reinga*, a place beyond the sea.

The Fang people of Gabon envision seven types of souls:

1. a vital principle that resides in the brain until death, when it disappears;
2. the heart, the seat of the conscience, which inspires action during the life experience, but also disappears at the time of death;
3. the person's name, which achieves a kind of individuality after death;
4. the essence of the person, which perpetuates itself after death;
5. the active principle of the soul as long as the body lives;
6. the blending of shadow and soul;
7. the spiritual residue, which can appear to living humans as a ghost.

The aboriginal inhabitants of the Fiji Islands believe that a human has two souls: the "dark spirit" and the "light spirit." The Nootkas of British Columbia regarded the soul as a tiny facsimile of the person that lived in the crown of the head.

Early humans generally did not accept death as due to natural causes. Death was either the result of acts of violence caused by human or animal enemies, or it was caused by evil and unseen demons. To the primitive mind, if a man or a woman, without wound or injury, fell silently asleep and never awakened, they had to have been the victim of malevolent spirits.

Some of the earliest rituals revolving around death concerned the interaction between the living and the body of the newly dead. Some tribal cultures believed that an evil spirit inhabited the corpse, and it should not be touched for fear of providing the malevolent entity with a living body to possess. Some anthropologists have theorized that it was fear of the dead body that led early humans to dispose of it. Since evil spirits had caused the "long sleep," they must undoubtedly still be lurking near the body to seize new victims. Therefore, the practical thing to do was to bury or burn or otherwise dispose of the body, thereby removing both the dead and the demons at the same time.

The Australian aborigines showed their fear of the dead by burning all the deceased's property and running away to establish a new village. They believed that the demon resided not only in the dead body, but in all the deceased's belongings. Early tribes in Greenland threw everything out of the house that had been owned by the dead person. At Batta funerals, the natives marched behind the body, brandishing swords to frighten away the death demons. The Galibis of Guiana dance on the newly covered grave to stamp down the spirits. The Winnebago tribe had a fear of evil spirits troubling the corpses of their deceased loved ones, so they swept the grass around the grave in a circle from six to 20 feet in diameter, a ritual that they believed prevented the evil spirits from approaching the departed's final earthly resting place.

The cosmology of certain eastern Native American tribes placed two powerful manitous, representatives of the Great Spirit, on duty in the Land of the Departed. One of the manitous, Chibiabos, like the Egyptian god Osiris and the Hindu judge of the dead, Yama, was master over the realm of the dead and escorted the newly arriving souls into their new environment. Sometimes there was a process of judgment involved, in which the worthy souls would be allowed to dwell in the Land of the Departed and the unworthy would be set adrift in space. The other manitou, Pauguk, protected the realm of the dead from unwelcome intruders with his bow and arrows.

Many Native American tribes believed that spirits of the dead lingered among the living until certain rites had been performed that would aid the spirits in their passage to the other world. Among the Ogallala Sioux, it was maintained that the spirit of the dead passed into the spirit world, by degrees, at the completion of necessary rituals that became the duty of the deceased person's family. Like fleeting shadows, the spirits of the dead slowly migrated to the **Land of the Grandparents,** gaining strength for their journey from the

energy received from their living relatives, who performed a long and demanding rite known as the Shadow or Ghost Ceremony. The time needed to complete the ritual successfully could amount to as long as two years, during which period the immediate family and close relatives endured great privation to ensure the safe passage of the departed spirit.

These extensive rites were conducted in special Ghost Lodges, and it was here that the body of the deceased was kept prior to burial and where the ceremonies on the part of the deceased were held long after his or her interment. The Ogallala most often kept Ghost Lodges when the death was a particularly sad one, such as the passing of a child by accident or illness.

AMONG *most tribal cultures, it is customary to dance and feast at the time of death to please the spirit of the departed and to stamp upon the ground to frighten away evil spirits.*

Among the Ojibway people it is customary to cut the hair of a child who has died and make a little doll of it, which they call the "doll of sorrow." This doll takes the place of the deceased child, and the mother carries it with her everywhere for a year. They believe that during this period of time, the soul of the child is transferred through the hair from the dead body to the doll.

The ghost land or spirit land of tribal people is equivalent to the concept of a heaven or a paradise: It is a place free from worry, illness, war, and the fear of death. It seems a general belief among many different tribal cultures that the afterlife of the soul is concerned with the same kind of pursuits that the entity followed as a living person. The spirit land would feature good hunting and fishing, beautiful new lands to explore, and no warfare or tribal rivalries.

Because the deceased individuals would be continuing a life similar to their life on Earth, they would need their valuables, their tools and weapons, and, of course, food and drink. Therefore, in nearly all tribal religions, it was customary to bury material things with the body. For the Papuans, Tahitians, Polynesians, Malanans, ancient Peruvians, Brazilians, and countless others, food and drink was left with the corpse. In Patagonia, it was the annual custom to open the burial chambers and reclothe the dead. Each year the Eskimo take clothes as a gift to the dead. Among the Kukis, the widow is compelled to remain for a year beside the tomb of her deceased husband, while other members of the family bring food daily for her and the spirit of the deceased. In the Mosquito tribe, the widow is obligated to supply the grave of her husband with provisions for a year.

It has been suggested that the religious aspects of funerals grew out of the belief that death was nothing more than a journey to another world and that the newly dead expect to have ceremonies performed for them to hasten their travels and to lessen the dangers of the journey. Among most tribal cultures, therefore, it is customary to dance and feast at the time of death for purposes of pleasing the spirit of the departed and to stamp upon the ground to frighten away evil spirits.

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BURIAL MOUNDS

Rising out of the earth in Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and other states are the huge earthworks of the mysterious Mound Builders. The earthworks, also known as "effigy mounds" because of their bird and animal shapes, are scattered throughout the Midwest and were apparently raised by the same unknown people. Along with skeletal remains, the earthworks contain weapons, pottery, and numerous other artifacts, thus indicating that the Mound Builders believed that the dead buried in these earthworks were beginning a journey into the afterlife.

The burial mounds that depict animals quite likely represent the **totem animal** of the deceased buried within the earthwork. To the Native American tribes, the totems were sacred beings to which great importance was attributed. To have the mound shaped in such a design would ensure a positive afterlife destiny for the deceased. There are also ancient mounds shaped in a combination of animal and human forms, very likely indicating the name of a great chief, such as Standing Bear or Strong Eagle.

Excavation of certain mounds indicate that one or several bodies were buried at various levels, either on the floor, above it, or in a pit beneath it. In the effigy mounds shaped as birds or animals, the placement of the bodies was in the head or heart region. In the round mounds, the bodies were interred in the center; and in the linear earthworks, they were found along the central axis. The most common burial position was the flexed, with arms and legs over the chest.

Early settlers in the Ohio Valley in the 1700s were greatly impressed by the Great Serpent Mound on Brush Creek in Adams County, Ohio. The mound is approximately five feet high, and its length is 30 feet, diminishing in height toward the head and the tail of the "serpent." Near the open jaws of the serpent is another much smaller, oval mound. There are other such serpentine mounds near the Mississippi River at McGregor, Iowa; another structure in Licking County, Ohio, resembles an alligator.

At Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, there is a circular mound enclosing a pentagram. The outer circle measures 1200 feet, and the pentagon is 200 feet on each side. The mound is 36 feet in diameter and 12 feet high. Its summit is composed of white pipe-clay, beneath which has been found a large quantity of mica. Four miles away, on the low lands of the Kickapoo River, is a mound with eight radiating points, very likely representing the sun. This mound is 60 feet in diameter at the base and three feet high, the points extending about nine feet. Surrounding this mound are five crescent-shaped mounds, arranged in a circle.

The size and number of the earthworks suggest that the construction of the burial mounds was a community project. Hundreds of tribespeople had to dig soil from nearby areas, then over a period of weeks or months carry innumerable baskets or buckets, and dump them on the growing mound. The work may have been directed by a **shaman,** for it appears from the presence of fire pits in some of the mounds that religious ceremonies were conducted and funeral rites were observed.

THE construction of the burial mounds was a community project.

In Pike County, Ohio, on the banks of the Scioto River, there is a mound consisting of a circle and square, constructed with great geometric accuracy. In Native American pictography, the ring or circle is generally an emblem of the sun, the stars, and the Great Spirit, the divine being. The oval also represents the Creator or the act of creation. The square designates the four cardinal directions. If it is assumed that the ancient Mound Builders had similar religious philosophies, then some insight may be gained into their beliefs about destiny and life after death.

One of the largest of the effigy mounds is a huge bird earthwork that is located on the Mendota Hospital grounds near Madison, Wisconsin. The bird is six feet high with a wingspread of 624 feet. A panther mound at Buffalo Lake in Marquette County, Wisconsin, is 575 feet in length, including its remarkably long tail. The largest of all earthworks yet discovered is Cahokia Mound (c. 1000) near St. Louis, Missouri, which is 998 feet long, 721 feet wide, and 99 feet high. Archaeologists have also discovered 45 mounds of smaller dimensions in the same area.

Who the Mound Builders were and why they stopped constructing their massive earthworks may never be known. There is nothing to point to their destruction by enemies or catastrophes. The most likely theory of their destiny is that their descendants were eventually absorbed into the Native American tribes

that greeted the European explorers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

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LAND OF THE GRANDPARENTS

It was a general belief among most Native American tribes that the world of spirit, the Land of the Grandparents, was similar to the physical world in its tasks and pursuits, hence the common reference to the "happy hunting ground," a place where all needs would be easily met. In this respect, the ghost land, the Land of the Grandparents, is equivalent to the Elysian Fields of the ancient Greeks, the Valhalla of the Vikings, and the general concept of a heaven or a paradise that awaits the virtuous soul after death.

Some tribes believed that their eternal abode would be in the stars. To these people, the Milky Way was known as the Pathway of the Dead; and it was their custom to light fires upon the graves of the dead for four days to give the spirits ample time to arrive safely on the glorious path in the sky.

For other tribes, the Land of the Grandparents, the Place of the Souls, was located under the earth, where the sun would shine during the time of its disappearance from the topside world at night. Others believed the place of the departed spirits was far away in the south.

Medicine priests among the Algonquin people taught that two souls resided in the physical body. One of the souls kept the body animate and remained with it during sleep. The other, less attached to the material plane, moved about at will, free to travel to faraway places and even to the spirit world. It was for the soul that remained with the physical body that the tribespeople left food beside their dead.

The Dakota, among other tribes, believed that each person possessed four souls: One animated the body and required food; a second watched over the body, somewhat like a guardian spirit; a third hovered around the village; the fourth went to the Land of the Grandparents at the time of physical death.

In the Chippewa cosmology, the soul passed to another world immediately after death. Once in the dimension of the afterlife, the soul would arrive in a beautiful lake and be ferried across by a spirit ancestor in a stone canoe. In the middle of the lake was a magic island of good spirits, and the soul must remain in the stone canoe to await judgment for its conduct during life. If its good actions predominated, the soul would be permitted to reside on the island of good spirits. If the soul in its physical incarnation had spent a life seeking only carnal and material satisfactions, the stone canoe would sink at once and leave only the soul's head above the water. This imagery is reminiscent of the Greek belief that after death the soul must have ready its fee for Charon, ferryman of the Styx, to transport it to the afterlife.

Among many of the eastern tribes, there was a tendency to believe that the spirit stayed near the body for a time before it went to the paradise of the happy hunting grounds. The Iroquois left small holes in the grave so that the spirit could go in and out as it pleased until it left for the Land of the Grandparents. The tribes of the Ohio followed a similar custom of boring holes in the burial casket to allow the spirit to leave at a time of its own choosing.

For the Native American tribes, the color black was the symbol of death, evil, and mourning, as it seems to be so often throughout the world. In Native American tribal art or sign-writing, a black circle signified the departure of the soul, whose travel to the Land of the Grandparents occurred at night, after the sun had gone down.

The human soul was represented among some tribes as a dark and somber image, complete with feet, hands, and head. Because the soul still existed in human shape, it, like the *ka* of the ancient Egyptians, still needed to be provided with nourishment. Some tribal members burned the best part of their food as an offering to the souls of the departed.

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Pope John Paul II places a signed note into a crack in the Western Wall in Israel. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

How the Major Religions View Reincarnation

Reincarnation, the belief that the soul of a man or woman who has died will later be born again into another physical body, is an ancient doctrine, ancient even at the time of the Greek and Roman empires. Plato (c. 428–348 B.C.E.) alludes to reincarnation in many of his essays, and he seems to be speaking of the law of karma, the spiritual balance of cause and effect, in Book X of *Laws* when he says: "Know that if you become worse, you will go to the worst souls, or if better, to the better; and in every succession of life and death you will do and suffer what life may fitly suffer at the hands of life."

Cicero's (106–43 B.C.E.) *Treatise on Glory* concedes that "the counsels of the Divine Mind had some glimpse of truth when they said that men are born in order to suffer the penalty for some sins committed in a former life." Plotinus (205–270 C.E.), in the *Second Ennead*, writes that reincarnation is "a dogma recognized throughout antiquity…the soul expiates its sins in the darkness of the infernal regions and…afterwards…passes into new bodies, there to undergo new trials."

Reincarnation is not an approved doctrine in any of the orthodox Christian, Islamic, or Judaic religions, which all hold fast to the belief that there is but one lifetime, one Day of Judgment, and a heavenly resurrection of the body for the righteous. Reincarnation, the great Wheel of Return set in motion by one's karma, is accepted as a reality in the Hindu and Buddhist religions, as well as certain mystical sects in Judaism and Islam.

In the early days of Christianity, however, even the Church's greatest leaders, such as St. Clement of Alexandria (150–215 C.E.) in his *Exhortations to the Pagans*, stated their beliefs in the soul's preexistence: "We were in being long before the foundation of the world. We existed in the eye of God, for it is our destiny to live in Him. We are the reasonable creatures of the Divine Word; therefore, we have existed from the beginning, for in the beginning was the Word.… Not for the first time does He show pity on us in our wanderings; He pitied us from the very beginning."

The Christian philosopher St. Augustine (354–430 C.E.) asked the eternal question in his *Confessions:* "Say, Lord…did my infancy succeed another age of mine that died before it? Was it that which I spent within my mother's womb?…and what before that life again, O God…was I anywhere or in any body?"

REINCARNATION is not an approved doctrine in any of the orthodox Christian, Islamic, or Judaic religions.

Even though the majority of Eastern cultures maintain a belief in reincarnation as an integral element in their religious faiths, people—young children, in particular—are not encouraged to "remember" past lives. Regardless of such admonitions against pursuing the

CHINESE TAOIST JOURNEY TO THE NEXT LIFE

The Chinese Taoists believe that after death, the soul crosses a bridge to the next life where it undergoes a process of judgment. Once on the other side of the bridge, judges in ten courts decide whether the deceased person has lived a good or bad life. If the person has lived a good life, the soul is allowed to pass through the courts and go to heaven. If the person was judged to have been bad, a punishment is ordered before the soul can go any further.

Following the burial of the coffin, paper models of houses, cars, and money are burned to assist the soul in the afterlife. It is believed that these items will help the deceased "pay his or her way" through the courts of judgment. The son of the deceased burns the most important and "influential" paper models.

Ten years after the burial, the coffin is then dug up. The remains, or the bones of the deceased are taken to be cleaned and then placed in a pot which is then sealed by a priest. The priest finds the "right place" to bury the pot in a special ceremony called *feng-shui.* They believed it important to bury the bones in a place where the dead person will be happy, or else his or her ghost might return to punish the family. Annually, the Chinese festival, *Ching-Ming,* is held to pay tribute to and honor the deceased.

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knowledge of karma acquired from prior life experiences, the holy books of Eastern faiths teach reincarnation with none of the reluctance of the West.

The chief theological work of the Hindus, the Upanishads, expresses the doctrine of rebirth in the poetic imagery of a goldsmith who takes a raw piece of gold and shapes it into another more beautiful form. "So verily, the Self, having cast off this body and having put away ignorance, makes another new and more beautiful form."

The Anguttara Nikaya, a Buddhist text, observes that "the wise priest knows he now must reap the fruits of deeds of former births. For be they many or but few, deeds done in covetousness or hate, or through infatuation's power, [he] must bear their needful consequence."

Although the Qur'an, the holy book received by the prophet Muhammed, doesn't really address the concept of past lives and rebirth, Sufism, a mystical sect of Islam, accepts transmigration of souls as a reality. In the words of the Sufi teacher Sharf-U'D Din-Maneri: "O Brother, know for certain that this work has been before thee and me in byone ages....No one has begun this work for the first time."

Orthodox Judaism also rejects reincarnation as doctrine, but the Hasidic sect and those who follow the teachings of the Kabbalah, a collection of mystical texts first published in 1280, accept the belief in the transmigration of souls as a firm and infallible doctrine. Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel (1604–1657), the revered theologian and English statesman, said that reincarnation was a fundamental point of their religion: "We are therefore duty bound to obey

and accept this dogma with acclamation…as the truth of it has been incontestably demonstrated by the Zohar, and all the books of the Kabbalists."

In *Religion and Immortality*, G. Lowes Dickinson presents his view that reincarnation offers "…a really consoling idea that our present capacities are determined by our previous actions and that our present actions again will determine our future character." Such a philosophy, Dickinson observes, liberates people from the bonds of an external fate and places them in charge of their destiny: "If we have formed here a beautiful relationship, it will not perish at death, but be perpetuated, albeit unconsciously, in some future life. If we have developed a faculty here, it will not be destroyed, but will be the starting point of later developments. Again, if we suffer…from imperfections and misfortunes, it would be consoling to believe that these were punishments of our own acts in the past, not mere effects of the acts of other people, or of an indifferent nature over which we have no control."

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BUDDHISM

The Buddha (563–483 B.C.E.) believed in the karmic laws that gripped and held those who did not understand the true nature of life and death. But because the universe and reality are always in a state of flux, forever changing and reshaping themselves, there can be no single, unique soul of any individual that is caught up in the cycle of death and rebirth. The various components that make up a human being are in a perpetual process of change but always held by the laws of karma, which determine the nature of a person's rebirth.

THE Buddha believes the laws of karma determines the nature of a person's rebirth.

There are many schools of Buddhism, and certain scholars point out that the so-called "Northern Buddhism" of Tibet, China, and Japan, emphasizes the doctrine of a permanent identity which serves to unite all the incarnations of a single individual. Such an emphasis is closer to the Hindu interpretation of a continuity of a soul linked to its karma than the strict Buddhist teaching that only psychic residues remain of an individual's traits of personality and character. As might be expected, Northern Buddhism claims to have preserved the true teaching given by the Buddha to his initiated disciples. Since karma is one of the key teachings of the Buddha, they insist that the concept becomes virtually meaningless unless it is applied to the idea of a single reincarnating ego. The teachers of Northern Buddhism also recall that according to tradition, the Buddha's dying words were: "All compounds are perishable. Spirit is the sole, elementary, and primordial unity, and each of its rays is immortal, infinite, and indestructible. Beware of the illusions of matter."

CHRISTIANITY

Although many of the great minds who have shaped the intellectual and religious climate of the West held firm beliefs in reincarnation, historically, at least since the fourth century, Christian theologians have spoken out against the doctrine of rebirth. Reincarnation is not taught in any of the mainstream Christian churches, and most denominations condemn the concept.

Origen (185–254 C.E.) devoted his life to the preservation of the original gospels and is considered by many scholars to have been the most prominent of all the church fathers, with the possible exception of Augustine (354–430

Six-year-old Gyaltsen Norbu is installed as the eleventh Panchen Lama in Bejing, China. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

C.E.). A prolific Christian writer and leader, Origen preached a relationship between faith and knowledge and explained the sinfulness of all men and women by the doctrine of the preexistence of all souls. In *Contra Celsum* he asked, "Is it not rational that souls should be introduced into bodies in accordance with their merits and previous deeds, and that those who have used their bodies in doing the utmost possible good should have a right to bodies endowed with qualities superior to the bodies of others?" In response to the query, Origen continues: "The soul, which is immaterial and invisible in its nature, exists in no material place without having a body suited to the nature of that place; accordingly, it at one time puts off one body, which is necessary before, but which is no longer adequate in its changed state, and it exchanges it for a second."

In the *Des Principiis*, Origen states that every soul comes into this world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of its previous life. The soul's place in this world in terms of dwelling within a physical body of honor or dishonor is determined by its previous merits or demerits. Its work in this world determines its place in the world to follow.

At the Council of Nicaea in 325, Origenism was excluded from the doctrines of the Christian Church and 15 anathemas were proposed against Origen himself. The Origenists, those who favored including the ethics of karma and the doctrine of preexistence in the official Church teachings, had lost by only one vote. But, as stated by Head and Cranston in *Reincarnation: An East-West Anthology* (1968), "Catholic scholars are beginning to claim that the Roman church never took any part in the anathemas against Origen....However, one disastrous result of the mistake still persists, namely, the exclusion from the Christian creed of the teaching

THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE

In England, until the fourteenth century, the Christian Bible was considered the preserve of the priestly classes. *The Vulgate* was a Latin translation by Saint Jerome, read and interpreted only by the clergy, as the Church deliberately discouraged common people from reading vernacular bibles. They believed those outside the Church would misinterpret the text in the Bible, which would then lead to heresy. In fact, it was a crime to possess a vernacular bible.

In the centuries that followed, however, the efforts of men who challenged the Church, and the invention of the printing press, made the Bible available in plain English, to ordinary men and women.

In his *New York Times* article "Where Is it Written? Right Here," Simon Winchester discusses the men who sought to put the Bible in commoners' hands. Among them is William Tyndale, who was strangled and burned at the stake for "such a heretical presumption." Winchester also comments on two interesting books, which go into detail about how the Bible revolutionized England: *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired,* by Benson Bobrick, and *In the Beginning: The Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language and a Culture,* by Alister McGrath.

Winchester states that the more important points in these books are about the realizations that came from the brave actions taken to make the Bible available to all, and how the popularization of the Bible led to the establishment of the individual's inviolable rights and the formation of equal government, for and of the people. "In other words, the essentials of popular democracy were inspired by writings first set down on papyrus and in manuscript two millenniums ago in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek—words since translated and then printed for the benefit of all, by the courageous and long-suffering heroes," Winchester said.

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of the preexistence of the soul, and, by implication, reincarnation."

REINCARNATION *is not taught in any of the mainstream Christian churches, and most denominations condemn the concept.*

While the official position of the Christian churches still holds with those anathemas against reincarnation, a more liberal attitude exists among many Christian laypeople, who, in modern times, need not fear being branded as heretics and threatened with burning at the stake. A 2001 Gallup poll of public opinion indicate that nearly 25 percent of the people in the United States, including Christians, believe that they may have past-life memories of their own. Those Christians who accept at least the possibility of reincarnation insist that there are many passages in the New Testament that imply a belief on the part of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–30 C.E.) and his disciples in the reality of past lives.

In his *Lux Orientalis* (c. 1670), Joseph Glanvil states that the preexistence of humankind was a philosophy commonly held by the Jews; and he maintains that such a theological position is illustrated by the disciples' ready questioning of Jesus when they asked (John 9:1–4): "Master, was it for this man's sin or his father's that he was born blind?" If the disciples had not believed that the blind man had lived another life in which he might have sinned, Glanvil argues, the question would have been senseless and impertinent.

When Jesus asked his disciples who the crowds said he was, they answered that some said John the Baptist, others Elijah, others Jeremiah or one of the prophets (Matthew 16:13–14). Again, Glanvil reasons that such a response on the part of the disciples demonstrates their belief in preexistence.

At another time, Jesus' disciples asked him why the scribes had said that Elijah must come first before the Messiah, to which Jesus answered (Matthew 17:10–13), "Elijah truly shall first come and restore all things. But I say unto you that Elijah has already come, and they knew him not!" The disciples then understood that Jesus was referring to John the Baptist.

Information gained from the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were discovered near Qumran in 1947 and are slowly being translated and released to the public, may have a great effect on both the Jewish and Christian religions. These scrolls refer often to a great Teacher of Righteousness and a great warfare between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness. The Qumran sect, known as the Essenes, forms a definite link between Judaism and Christianity, and many scholars have suggested that Jesus was a member of the group. The Nag-Hammadi scrolls, discovered in Egypt in 1945, also give a strong indication that Jesus may have been an Essene, a student of the Essenes, or at least closely associated with this apocalyptic sect during the so-called "silent years of Jesus," ages 12 to 30. It is generally believed that the Essenes incorporated certain aspects of reincarnation in their teachings. Certain scholars have also speculated that Jesus may have studied various mystical traditions in Egypt, India, and Tibet, all of which would have introduced him to the teachings of reincarnation.

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HINDUISM

The Bhagavad-Gita, the holy text of the Hindus, observes that "...as the dweller in the body experiences childhood, youth, old age, so passes he on to another body." In 2:19–25, the holy book declares that a man who regards himself as a slayer, or another who thinks he is the slain, are both ignorant:

> You are never born; you will never die. You have never changed; you can never change. Unborn, eternal, immutable, immemorial, you do not die when the body dies. Realizing that which is indestructible, eternal, unborn, and unchanging, how can you slay or cause another to be slain? As a man abandons his worn-out clothes and acquires new ones, so when the body is worn out a new one is acquired by the Self, who lives within. The Self cannot be pierced with weapons or burned with fire; water cannot wet it, nor can the wind dry it. The Self cannot be pierced or burned, made wet or dry. It is everlasting and infinite, standing on the motionless foundation of eternity. The Self is unmanifested, beyond all thought, beyond all change. Knowing this, you should not grieve.

Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952), the founder of the Self-Realization Fellowship, which seeks to blend Hindu and Christian concepts, once presented three truths to be employed by those who wished to rise above karma. The first truth, the Yogi said, is that when the mind is strong and the heart is pure, we are free. "It is the mind that connects you with pain in the body," he said. "When you think pure thoughts and are mentally strong, you can endure the painful effects of evil karma." The second truth is that in subconscious sleep, we are free. Truth number three, he revealed, is when we are in ecstasy, identified with God, we have no karma. "This is why the saints say, 'Pray unceasingly.' When you continuously pray and meditate, you go into the land of superconsciousness, where no troubles can reach you."

Krishna, one of the main gods in Hinduism, represented in a thirteenth-century relief. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

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ISLAM

The Qur'an (or Koran), the holy book of Islam, has no direct reference to reincarnation, and there are only a few passages that may suggest a concept of rebirth, such as the following: "God generates beings and sends them back over and over again, 'til they return to Him." Orthodox Islamic scholars generally frown upon the concept of transmigration.

THE Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, has no direct reference to reincarnation.

However, the Islamic mystical sect of Persia, the Sufis, carries on the ancient teachings of rebirth as espoused by Moorish and Saracenic philosophers in the schools of Baghdad and Cordova. The Sufis claim to keep alive the Islamic esoteric philosophies and

maintain that reincarnation is an important doctrine. The Sufi poet Jalalu 'D-Din Rumi (1207–1273) wrote these lines that are often quoted as containing the essence of transmigration: "I died as mineral and became a plant; I died as plant and rose to animal; I died as animal and I was Man.... Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar with angels blest; but even from angelhood I must pass on...."

JUDAISM

The Hebrew term for the passage of a soul after death into another physical form—human, animal, or inanimate—is *gilgul neshamot*. Although reincarnation as a doctrine is generally renounced by Jewish theologians and philosophers, the Karaites, a Jewish sect which rejected Rabbinism and Talmudism, taught transmigration of the soul. Anan ben David, who founded the Karaites in Baghdad about 765, said that all human souls have a common origin in the primordial human, Adam Kadmon, whose spiritual essence sends forth sparks which form individual souls. When the later Adam of Genesis committed sin in the Garden of Eden, his fall brought about confusion among higher and lower souls throughout creation, which resulted in the need for every soul to pass through a series of incarnations. Although Anan ben David's teachings were severely criticized as contrary to Orthodox belief, *gilgul* became a part of the Kabbalah, the compilation of mystical works collected in thirteenth-century Spain. Transmigration of souls is also a universal belief in Hasidism.

TRANSMIGRATION *of souls is a universal belief in Hasidism.*

According to Alan Unterman in his *Dictionary of Jewish Lore and Legend* (1994): "Transmigration gave a new meaning to many aspects of life....The deaths of young children were less tragic, since they were being punished for previous sins and would be reborn in a new life....Proselytes to Judaism were Jewish souls which had been incarnated in Gentile bodies. [Transmigration] also allowed for the gradual perfection of the individual souls through different lives."

The Zohar (Hebrew for "Splendor"), the main work of the Kabbalah, describes the esoteric reality that lies behind everyday experience, and insists that the real meaning of the Torah lies in its mystical secrets. Although tradition declares Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai (c. 80 C.E.) as its author, later scholarship acknowledges the contribution of Rabbi Moses De Leon (1240–1305) and other Hebrew scholars in the thirteenth century. The Zohar states that since the human soul is rooted in the divine, the redemption of the world will be achieved when each individual has undergone the process of the transmigration of souls and completes his or her task of unification. Because humans cannot know the Most High's plans for each individual, they cannot know how they are being judged at all times, both before and after coming into the world and when they leave it. Because the goal of all human souls is to reenter the absolute from which they originally emerged, it is necessary for them to develop the level of perfection that will find them worthy of reunion with God. Since it is unlikely that such perfection can be achieved in one lifetime, the souls must continue their spiritual growth from lifetime to lifetime until they are fit to return to the divine.

Although the study of the Kabbalah undergoes cycles of popularity and esteem, reincarnation is not generally taught today in the three main branches of Judaism—Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox—but is accepted by those in the Hasidic sect. Rabbi Yonassan Gershom, a neo-Hasidic rabbi, has said that although Jews are generally reluctant to speak of their personal spiritual experiences in public, it doesn't mean that some of them aren't having memories of past lives.

"There are many teachings about reincarnation in Jewish mysticism," Gershom said. "The Hebrew word *gilgul* comes from the same root as the Hebrew word for 'circle' or 'cycle.' So the essence of its meaning is similar to the ideal of the Wheel of Karma."

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CONTEMPORARY MYSTERY SCHOOLS AND REINCARNATION

Since the earliest days of organized religious expression there have always been those who preferred seeking the individual mystical experience as their personal doorway to other dimensions of reality and the world beyond death. These mystics found the doctrines and dogmas of structured religion to be too inhibiting, too restrictive, and not at all conducive to the kind of personal relationship with the holy which they so desperately sought. Regardless of the religion or the culture from which they sprang, all mystics have as their goal the transcendence of the earthly self and union with the Absolute.

While the ancient mystery schools were built upon the worship of a particular god or goddess, the contemporary mystery schools have been built around the charisma and the spiritual teachings of a psychic sensitive, a **medium,** or a prophet. Since the latter part of the nineteenth century, in Europe, Great Britain, Canada, and the United States, the men and women who are most often attracted to the modern mystery schools are those who have grown dissatisfied with the teachings of Christianity and what they consider to be its restrictive religious doctrines concerning the afterlife and rebirth. Each of the contemporary mystery schools examined in this section—Anthroposophy, the Association for Research and Enlightenment, and Theosophy—accept the concept of reincarnation and blend many of the beliefs of Christianity and Judaism with traditional teachings of Hinduism and Buddhism.

In his classic work, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, **William James** (1842–1910) has this to say regarding the oneness and unity of the mystical traditions: "This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. This is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of climate or creed. In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism…we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity…perpetually telling of the unity of man with God."

CONTEMPORARY *mystery schools have been built around teachings of a psychic sensitive, a medium, or a prophet.*

Many scholars of the early Christian church believed strongly that the various church councils had erred in removing reincarnation from official doctrine. The **Gnostics,** who strongly influenced early Christian doctrine, believed in reincarnation, and when the teachings of Origen (185 C.E.–254 C.E.), who championed preexistence, was anathematized in 553, they, along with other believers in reincarnation, were condemned as heretics. In later centuries, those who held Gnostic views were forced to remain silent regarding their beliefs in reincarnation, so they very often formed their own sects and schools of thought, such as the **Cathars,** the **Knights Templar,** the **Rosicrucians,** and the Albigenses.

Because many serious-minded Christians believe that there is evidence in the gospels that Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–30 C.E.) himself believed in reincarnation, they are comfortable with

Hindu and Buddhist concepts of past lives and karma and see no conflict with their traditional belief in Christianity. Dr. Gladys McGarey is a member of the Association for Research and Enlightenment, the contemporary mystery school based on the medical and past-life readings of **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945). The daughter of Christian missionaries and a medical doctor who employs the concepts of past lives in her practice, McGarey has expressed her belief that Jesus came to offer humankind the law of grace to supersede the law of karma.

"I believe sincerely that when Jesus said that he came to fulfill the law and not destroy it, he was referring to the law of karma, the law of cause and effect, which is superseded by the law of grace," she said. "If we are functioning under the law of karma, it is as if we are walking away from the Sun and walking into our own shadow—which means we are walking into darkness. But if we turn around and walk toward the Sun, then we are walking toward the Light, and that is great. To me, the light of the Sun—whether you spell it *son* or *sun* is a symbol of moving in the law of grace. The law of grace does not take away the karmic pattern, it just makes it so I don't have to hurt myself as I move through the karma that I have created."

In *A Psychological and Poetic Approach to the Study of Christ in the Fourth Gospel* (1923), Eva Gore-Booth explains the role of Jesus the Christ from the perspective of a reincarnationist and states that he is the way-shower in God's Great Plan, the intercessor who offers humankind release from the cycle of rebirth, the "circle of wanderings." In this view, Jesus became the anointed one who achieved Christ consciousness and thereby was allowed to offer eternal life to all people, a "deliverance from reincarnation, from the life and death circle of this earthly living."

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Charles Fillmore (1854–1948) and his wife founded what eventually became known as Unity School of Christianity. Fillmore once observed that a large part of the Western world looked upon reincarnation as a heathen doctrine and that many people closed the doors of their mind without waiting to find out what message it may have for them, interpreted in the Light of Truth. According to Fillmore's view, Christ released humanity from the bondage of karmic law, thereby allowing each individual to make the most of each incarnation.

Edgar Cayce (1877–1945), the famous "sleeping prophet" of Virginia Beach, was a solid Baptist and a Sunday school teacher, but while in a trance, he gave past-life readings to thousands of men and women. Cayce believed that each soul enters the material plane not by chance, but through grace and the mercy of a loving Father-God. As to whether the soul is developed or retarded during these various incarnations is left to the free will of the individuals as they live through the errors incumbent in the life process or rise above them in their journey toward Oneness.

Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) was the head of the German Theosophical Society until 1912, when he broke away to form his Anthroposophical Society. Steiner's objections with the Theosophists were mainly that they didn't revere Jesus and Christianity as special. However, he had no problem incorporating reincarnation and karma into his beliefs.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), the founder of Theosophy in collaboration with Henry Steele Olcott (1832–1907), had no problem with Christianity, but she preferred focusing on its esoteric traditions, which united it with all other religions. She popularized the study of reincarnation and past lives in Europe and the United States and introduced many occult and metaphysical concepts which flourished in the New Age Movement of the 1970s.

The contemporary mystery schools accept the doctrine of reincarnation as completely as did the ancient mystery religions. And just as the ancient mysteries departed from the state religions to form secret groups that required special initiations to ensure oneness with the gods, so have the contemporary mysteries departed from the organized religions of their cultures to form groups that require special memberships to establish a mystical union with the Absolute.

AKASHIC RECORDS

Some metaphysicians believe that they have the ability to perceive and to read the Akashic Records, eternal accountings of individual human life patterns which have been somehow impressed on the celestial ether or astral light that fills all of space. These records are said to detail each lifetime and are perpetuated like vast computer-like memory banks in the collective unconscious. Certain psychic sensitives claim to enter altered states of consciousness, such as **trance** or meditation, and thereby achieve the ability to read the past lives of individuals who seek such knowledge. When these seers return to the mundane world, they may recount these memories in such a way as to aid men and women to avoid certain errors in their present life experience which were committed in earlier lifetimes.

According to many readers of the Akashic Records, they possess an accounting of the divine laws of debt (karma) and duty (dharma). It is as the Christian gospels declare; they say, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." So do the psychic forces that emanate from an individual also come full circle and return to that person.

Most readers of the Akashic Records will present their clients with the events of certain past lives that are affecting them today in their present lives. It depends on the judgment of the Akashic readers to give whatever lives and whatever events they think may be causing the present problems and to offer suggestions on how to resolve them.

Paul Twitchell (d. 1971) the modern exponent of **Eckankar,** once explained that to read the Akashic Records, he had to project himself via his soul body so that he might rise above the time track and study the lives of whomever had requested a reading. Twitchell said that it didn't make any difference where his subjects might be, Australia or the Arctic Circle: "Once I rise above the time track in my soul body, I can read the lives of anyone. I must look at the lives of my clients, spread out like a fan of hundreds of playing cards. And I must look at the millions of little file cards, which are memories of past lives, in order to select what I believe to be most important to my clients and the problems that they are facing today. Next, it is up to me to make suggestions about how they might go about dissolving the karmic debts that they have accumulated."

ACCORDING *to readers of the Akashic Records, they possess an accounting of the divine laws of debt (karma) and duty (dharma).*

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ANTHROPOSOPHY

When he was in his late 30s, **Rudolf Steiner** (1861–1925), the founder of Anthroposophy, received a revelation of what he believed was the turning point in human spiritual history, the incarnation of the divine being known as the Christ. In the twentieth century, Steiner said, humankind began to enter the "fullness of time" when the Christ principle, cosmic consciousness, might once again become manifest. Steiner defined "Christ consciousness" as a transformative energy that greatly transcended orthodox Christianity. In Steiner's view, the Master Jesus became "christed" and thereby was able to present humankind with a dramatic example of what it means to achieve a complete activation of the spiritual seed within all human souls and to rise above all material considerations.

Steiner was born in Krajevic, Austria-Hungary (now Serbia-Montenegro), on February 27, 1861. Although he had experienced encounters with the mystical and the unknown as a young child and was introduced to the occult by an adept he would only refer to as the "Master," Steiner's early academic accomplishments were in the scientific fields. His father wanted him to become a railway engineer, so that had led Steiner into a study of mathematics, which seemed only to whet his appetite for

The Symbol of the Theosophical Society. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

the material sciences, leading him to pursue studies in medicine, chemistry, and physics, as well as agriculture, architecture, art, drama, literature, and philosophy. Fascinated by the works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), Steiner began the extensive task of editing Goethe's scientific papers, and from 1889 to 1896 worked on this project. It was also during this period that Steiner wrote his own highly acclaimed *The Philosophy of Freedom*.

RUDOLF *Steiner defined "Christ consciousness" as a transformative energy that transcended orthodox Christianity.*

Steiner grew increasingly interested in the occult and mystical doctrines, and he later claimed to be endowed with the ability to read the **Akashic Records,** from which he had been able to envision the true history of human evolution. According to his interpretation of humankind's prehistory, many present-day men and women were descended from the people of the lost continent of **Atlantis,** who had been guided to achieve illumination by a higher order of beings. Eventually, the smartest, strongest, and most intellectually flexible of the Atlanteans evolved into demigods, semidivine beings, who were able to relay instructions from higher intelligences. Consequently, within the contemporary mass of evolving humans are individuals who are descendants of those divine human-hybrid beings, men and women who are animated by higher ideals and who regard themselves as children of a universal power. Steiner perceived these individuals as members of the emerging "Sixth Post-Atlantean Race," who, imbued with divine universal power, would be able to initiate the more advanced members of the larger mass of humankind. The catalyst for this acceleration of humanity, in Steiner's vision, was the Christ energy, which the rest of the species must begin to imitate.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Steiner found that his lectures were well-received by those in the audience who were members of the **Theosophical Society,** so he began to make himself more familiar with their philosophy. In 1902, he became the general secretary of the German Section of the society, but he began to feel uncomfortable with what he perceived to be their lack of enthusiasm about the place of Jesus and Christ consciousness in the overall scheme of spiritual evolution. Although he accepted most of their teachings on reincarnation and highly approved of meditation, he came to believe that **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** (1831–1891) and other high-ranking Theosophists were distorting many of the Eastern doctrines that they claimed to espouse.

In 1913, Steiner made a formal break with the Theosophical Society and set about forming his own group, which he declared would be about the utilization of "human wisdom" (anthro ' man; sophy ' wisdom) to achieve contact with the spiritual world. The human intellect, Steiner insisted, could be trained to rise above material concerns and to perceive a greater spiritual reality. The human consciousness had the ability to activate the seed that the great Spirit Beings had implanted within their human offspring.

Steiner recognized that while the physical seeds of male and female intermingled to pro-

duce the whole human being, there was also something in each human that did not arise from the blending of two physical seeds. Something ineffable and indescribable somehow flowed into the process of germination of the seed of the Spirit Beings within, something that could be accessed by human consciousness and directed by the Christ principle.

Steiner emphasized that the path to such contact might best be attained by a proper application of meditation. When human consciousness had been raised to the spiritual level, where it can experience the eternal element that is limited by neither birth nor death, then it can comprehend its own eternality and its ability to be born again in subsequent life existences. Steiner taught that the process of spiritual evolution enabled those who died in one period of history to be reborn in other epochs to experience various levels of Earth-existence.

In *Lecture V, Earthly and Cosmic Man* (1948) Steiner stated that in rejecting the doctrine of reincarnation, Christian thought had lost something vital that the East had always possessed, and he urged that such knowledge be reacquired. Western religion and culture is in the process of passing through a period during which individuals were "split up" into separate personalities, Steiner said, but now men and women of the West "...stand on the threshold of a deepening of thought and experience...they will themselves be aware of a longing to find the thread uniting the fragments which make their appearance in the life of a human being between birth and death...."

In 1914, Steiner married Marie von Sievers, an actress, who had been secretary of the German Section of the Theosophical Society. Together they established a school for esoteric research near Basel, Switzerland, and developed new approaches to the teaching of speech and drama, which led to "eurythmy," an art of movement. Later, Steiner originated the Waldorf School Movement, an innovative educational system, which still maintains 80 schools in Europe and the United States. Rudolf Steiner died on March 30, 1925, in Dornach, Switzerland.

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ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH AND ENLIGHTENMENT

When **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945) died at the age of 67, he had given nearly 9,000 medical readings while in a state of clairvoyant **trance.** In addition, the "sleeping prophet" also gave life readings dealing with the vocational, psychological, and human-relations problems of individuals. It was through these life readings that the concepts of reincarnation and the possibility of past lives were introduced. All together, more than 14,000 Cayce readings have been recorded on 200,000 permanent file cards and cross-referenced into 10,000 major subjects.

IN 1931, the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE) was chartered in Virginia as a nonprofit organization to conduct scientific and psychical research.

In 1931, the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE) was chartered in the state of Virginia as a nonprofit organization to conduct scientific and psychical research. In 1947, two years after Cayce's death, the Edgar Cayce Foundation was established. The original ARE has become the membership arm of the Cayce programs. The foundation is the custodian of the original Cayce readings, and the memorabilia of the great contemporary seer's life and career. Both are headquartered in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and there are more than 1,500 ARE study groups around the world.

Since the establishment of the ARE, thousands of people from every corner of the

Edgar Cayce (1877–1945). (CORBIS CORPORATION)

nation, as well as from around the world, have journeyed to Virginia Beach to attend lectures and conferences and to investigate the information in the Cayce readings. Many of the skeptics who came to expose Cayce stayed on to support his work. Among these have been Jess Stearn, author of *Edgar Cayce: the Sleeping Prophet* (1967), and Thomas Sugrue, author of *There Is a River: The Story of Edgar Cayce* (1942), both of which are important books about the life and work of Edgar Cayce.

Cayce's son, Hugh Lynn Cayce (1907–1982), once commented that his father had said that everyone was psychic, "but for many people manifestation of this ability can be very disturbing, very upsetting, and in fact, it can even destroy the personality if it runs rampant in the person's life. This can be very damaging if the individual does not use these abilities constructively. If he takes ego trips with it, or begins to fake it, the result can be very destructive to the personality, particularly that of young children."

With these concerns in mind, before he died Edgar told Hugh Lynn that the Association for Research and Enlightenment had better make certain that they were doing the research before they did too much enlightening. To fulfill Edgar's wish, the ARE maintains an extensive library of information concerning the entire field of psychical research and metaphysics, as well as the Cayce materials. It also sponsors regular seminars, publishes a journal, and established Atlantic University as an environment in which various psychic attributes can be examined and developed.

Cayce believed that in an earlier incarnation, he had been wounded in battle and left in the field for dead. However, he had managed to live for several days, conscious and in extreme pain. He was not able to help himself in any way, having only his mind as a weapon against pain. Just prior to his physical death, he had been able to elevate his mind beyond the reach of his body and its suffering. Since no achievement, good or bad, is ever lost, the ability to subdue the body and its feelings became part of the pattern of his individuality—and he was able to use this ability in his physical incarnation as Edgar Cayce.

In a trance state, Cayce was able to give complete medical diagnoses, prescribe remedies, and review the past lives of his clients. Cayce learned that each existence on Earth is a purposeful experience, and the place in which people find themselves provides them with the opportunities to use their present-life abilities, weaknesses, or virtues in fulfilling the purpose for which their souls decided to manifest in the three-dimensional plane of Earth. In Cayce's opinion, no soul is placed here accidentally. Humans are all where they are today because they have "chosen" to be there in an effort to work out their soul development.

"My father's unconscious mind was able to tap the unconscious minds of other people and draw information from them," Hugh Lynn Cayce said. "He insisted that there is a river of thought forms and intelligence at another level of consciousness, and that this was the source of his information. This procedure apparently had nothing to do with **medi-**

umship as we understand it. He had no guides or anything like that. He had to do his own legwork, so to speak."

Hugh Lynn Cayce died on July 4, 1982, in Virginia Beach. Posthumously, a collection of his speeches concerning Edgar Cayce's teachings on Jesus and Christianity was published under the title *The Jesus I Knew* (1982). Hugh Lynn's son Charles Thomas Cayce (1942–) became the president of the ARE in 1976 after his father suffered a heart attack, and he still serves the organization in that position.

Dr. Gina Cerminara, a trained psychologist with a specialty in semantics, conducted an extensive study of the Edgar Cayce past-life readings while she was residing in Virginia Beach. In Chapter XXIV, "A Philosophy to Live By," in her book *Many Mansions* (1950), Cerminara presented the ethics of karma as delineated in the Cayce readings. In outline form, the pattern that she discovered is as follows:

- God exists, and every soul is a portion of God. (You are a soul; you inhabit a body.)
- Life is purposeful and continuous.
- All human life operates under the law of karma and reincarnation.
- Love fulfills that law.
- The will of all humans creates their destiny.
- The mind of all humans has formative powers.
- The answer to all problems is within the Self.

In accordance with the above postulates, humankind is enjoined as follows:

- Realize first your relationship to the Creative Forces of the Universe: God.
- Formulate your ideas and purpose in life. Strive to achieve those ideals.
- Be active. Be patient. Be joyous. Leave the results to God.
- Do not seek to evade any problem.
- Be a channel of good to other people.

Dr. Gladys McGarey is a medical doctor who employs various concepts from the Edgar Cayce material in her practice at the Association for Research and Enlightenment Clinic in Phoenix, Arizona. McGarey gave new life to the Temple Beautiful program as it was described in Cayce's readings of the lost continent of **Atlantis.** The daughter of Christian missionaries, McGarey has said that her work with the Cayce readings had not changed her basic attitude toward life and death, religion and immortality. "It is still Christ-centered with a basic Christian foundation. The part that has changed is the addition of reincarnation and the concept that comes from the Cayce material that gives impact and reality to the importance of us as ongoing beings. We are as rays of light and love that are involved in this three-dimensional world."

Rather than taking her away from the church, McGarey stated that the concepts of reincarnation had actually given her a deeper understanding of Christian ritual and the belief structures of the Christian faith. She also said that the concept of past lives had helped her to be a better physician, because they had enabled her to share responsibility with her patients, "rather than take responsibility from them."

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THEOSOPHY

Theosophy (divine wisdom) is an eclectic blend of many earlier philosophies and cult teachings, all of which claim to have been handed down to contemporary seekers of spiritual truth by disciples of ancient wisdom. The Theosophical Society, cofounded by **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** (1831–1891) in New York in 1875, is an esoteric blend of Zoroastrianism, **Hinduism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism,** the Kabbalah, and the philosophy of Plato (c. 428 B.C.E.–c. 348 B.C.E.) and other mystics, combined with the teachings of mysterious

masters who dwell in secret places in the Himalayas and communicate with their initiates through their psychic abilities and their projected astral bodies. Whereas **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945) and **Rudolf Steiner** (1861–1925) evolved their spiritual teachings primarily through their own revelations, inspirations, and psychic abilities, Blavatsky claimed to be able to draw upon the ancient wisdom of the Masters Koot Hoomi and Morya to abet the considerable knowledge that she had distilled from various mystery schools, Hindu religious thought, Jewish mysticism, and Christian sects. Many of the concepts and the spiritual eclecticism professed by Blavatsky in the 1880s would be revised on a large scale in the 1970s, in what has loosely been called the New Age Movement. In addition to such contributions as occult masters and guides, Blavatsky introduced the legend of the lost continent of Lemuria, the return of the Maitreya (world savior), and was greatly responsible for popularizing the concepts of reincarnation and past lives in Europe and the United States.

THE Theosophical Society is an esoteric blend of Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism, the Kabbalah, and the philosophy of Plato.

At the time of her death in 1891, Blavatsky's detractors considered her to have been a hoaxster, a fraud, and a deceiver, while her followers revered her as a genius, a veritable saint, and a woman of monumental courage who had struggled against an incredible array of adversities and adversaries to fashion a modern mystery school without equal. Foe and follower alike conceded that she was a unique, sometimes overpowering, personality who had apparently traveled the world in search of spiritual truths and who had survived physical crises and challenges that would certainly have discouraged—or killed—a less indomitable individual.

Born Helena Petrovna Hahn on July 30, 1831, in Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk) in the Ukraine, she began displaying mediumistic abilities as a young girl. Just before her seventeenth birthday, she married the much older General Nicephore Blavatsky, a Russian official in Caucasia. Three months later, she left her husband and her homeland to travel freely and widely throughout the world, exploring the occult wisdom and teachings of many traditions.

In 1858, Blavatsky arrived in Paris, where she met the famous spirit medium **Daniel Dunglas Home** (1833–1886). By this time, she had herself acquired a modest reputation for **mediumship,** and she began to practice these talents more openly. In Cairo, Egypt, in 1871, Blavatsky founded a spiritualist group that was forced to disband after accusations of having produced fraudulent phenomena to deceive its patrons. In 1873, she settled in New York City and resumed the practice of her mediumship in association with the brothers William and Horatio Eddy, two well-known materialization mediums. Her participation in numerous seances in New England brought her to the attention of Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), a newspaperman fascinated with psychic phenomena, who established a group centered around her mediumship.

In 1875, Blavatsky, Olcott, and William Q. Judge (1851–1896), an attorney, made the decision to move beyond the precepts of **Spiritualism** and create a more sophisticated approach to spirit contact and mysticism, which they named the Theosophical Society. The threefold purpose of the society was

1. to form a universal brotherhood of man;
2. to study and make known the ancient religions, philosophies, and sciences;
3. to investigate the laws of nature and develop the divine powers latent in humankind.

In 1877, Blavatsky published her worldview of the occult, *Isis Unveiled*. In this work, she argues that the reason metempsychosis (reincarnation) has been ridiculed by scientists and orthodox theologians in the West is because it has never been properly understood. While learned individuals accept the

indestructibility of energy, she reasons, how can they believe that

> "man, the living, thinking, reasoning entity, the indwelling deity of our nature's crowning masterpiece, will evacuate his casket and be no more! Would the principle of continuity which exists even for the so-called inorganic matter, for a floating atom, be denied to the spirit, whose attributes are consciousness, memory, mind, *love!* Really, the very idea is preposterous....If the Pythagorean metempsychosis should be thoroughly explained and compared with the modern theory of evolution it would be found to supply every 'missing link' in the chain of the latter. There was not a philosopher of any notoriety who did not hold to this doctrine, as taught by the Brahmans, Buddhists, and later by the Pythagoreans."

In 1878, Blavatsky and Olcott moved to Bombay, India, to be nearer the mahatmas and masters, the members of the Great White Brotherhood who appeared to her in their astral bodies to relay metaphysical teachings. After a turbulent period in India, which she left under charges of fraud to settle in London in 1887, Blavatsky began work on her magnum opus, *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), a massive statement of her theosophical philosophy, including her views on reincarnation.

Only a constant series of rebirths of one and the same individual, passing through the "Circle of Necessity," can fully explain the age-old problems of good and evil and the apparent injustices of life, Blavatsky argues. Only a system wherein one is rewarded or punished for the deeds or crimes committed in a former life can explain the inequalities of "birth and fortune, of intellect and capacities." When a person's life is beset by injustice and misfortune, only the "blessed knowledge of Karma" can prevent one "from cursing life and men, as well as their supposed Creator." Those individuals who believe in karma have to believe in destiny, which, Blavatsky states in *The Secret Doctrine,* "from birth to death, every man is weaving, thread by thread, around himself, as a spider does his cobweb....Karma creates nothing, nor does it design. It is man who plants and creates causes, and karmic law adjusts the effects, which adjustment is not an act but universal harmony....Karma has never sought to destroy intellectual and individual liberty....On the contrary, he who unveils through study and meditation its intricate paths, and throws light on those dark ways...is working for the good of his fellow men...."

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EXPERIENTIAL QUESTS INTO PAST LIVES

Some speculate that the phenomenon of past lives can answer troubling questions in the present and explain deja vu, a feeling that one has seen or heard something before. Many people report that they have walked down a street in a strange city and been overwhelmed with the sudden familiarity of its shop windows, sidewalks, and store fronts. Others say that hidden memories have been stimulated by witnessing a dramatic reenactment of some scene from the past in a motion picture or television production.

In recent years, men and women in Western cultures have begun to explore the possibility that reincarnation is a spiritual reality.

Throughout the centuries, millions of individuals, especially those who live in India and Asia, believe that they have lived before, and in recent years increasing numbers of men and women in the Western cultures have begun to explore the possibility that reincarnation is a spiritual reality.

Olga Worrall (1906–1985) doing spiritual healing. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

Accomplished Broadway lyricist Alan Jay Lerner (1918–1986) said that the first-act ending of his musical *Brigadoon* (1946), which features an outdoor wedding ceremony in seventeenth-century Scotland, seemed at first to have sprung spontaneously from his mind. Several years later, when Lerner was in London, he came into possession of a book entitled *Everyday Life in Old Scotland* and found "his" marriage ceremony word for word. Lerner's later musical success, *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*, openly declared his fascination with the subject of reincarnation. The storyline tells of a Brooklyn model who is hypnotically regressed to an earlier life in eighteenth-century England.

British psychiatrist Dr. Denys Kelsey believed that his acceptance of the cycle of rebirth enabled him to show his patients how they might begin anew at any given moment. He was also convinced that it was occasionally possible for subjects to recall experiences that were felt centuries before their present incarnation. Belief in the doctrine of rebirth may have come somewhat easier to Kelsey than it might to the average psychiatrist because he was married to Joan Grant, an author who claimed to be 25,000 years old and to have soul memories of 30 prior-life experiences. Grant wrote seven popular historical novels without doing a bit of research, yet none of the material in her books has ever been successfully challenged by skeptical scholars. To the contrary, a good deal of the material in her books that was considered controversial at the time of publication has since been validated by archaeologists and historians. Every time, when queried how she could have acquired such knowledge, she attributed her accuracy to memories of her past lives.

Winged Pharaoh, the novel that Joan Grant wrote in 1937, described her life as a woman pharaoh in the first dynasty of Egypt, 4,000 years ago. On those frequent occasions when she was asked to comment on the book's almost biblical style, she replied that the words had just come out that way. She insisted that she never did any research at all and that she had previously known nothing of Egypt on the conscious level, yet Egyptologists had been unable to fault the book. Grant stated that even her critics had said that she couldn't possibly have made it all up, so she must have experienced it all to write in such detail.

Yonassan Gershom, a neo-Hasidic rabbi who lives in Minnesota, tells in his book *Beyond the Ashes: Cases of Reincarnation from the Holocaust* (1992) of hearing the terrible memories of concentration camps, gas chambers, barbed wire, swastikas, and the sadistic henchmen of Nazi Germany not from elderly Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, but from young people, many of them blonde, blue-eyed Gentiles of Nordic descent, who were being forced to deal with what appeared to be past-life memories of having died as victims of Hitler's "final solution" to the "Jewish problem." At the time he was writing his book, Gershom stated that out of the hundreds of people who had told him their dreams, visions, regressions, or intuitions of having died as Jews in the Holocaust, two-thirds had been reborn as non-Jews. Later samplings, however, indicated that many more Jews have also experienced such past-life memories. Gershom's later book, *From Ashes to Healing* (1996), focused on stories about the acts of

physical or spiritual healing that have resulted from the act of recalling a Holocaust lifetime.

The aspect of physical and spiritual healing that accompanies a past-life recall is one of the principal motives in regression into prior-life experiences for therapeutic reasons. Benjamin Smith of Port Orchard, Washington, has been involved in past-lives therapy for over 25 years, and he stated that when he first began doing regressions, he was concerned with establishing dates, names, and locations associated with the past-life personality of his clients. "Then I discovered that they didn't really care if they would be able to trace and to prove a particular lifetime. All they were interested in was removing the personal problem that they had come to me for help in solving. I quit worrying whether reincarnation was real or not. The important thing to my clients was whether or not they discovered the origins of their pains, their traumas, and their problems. If the solution came from their previous lifetime or from their Higher Self, it really didn't make any difference to them."

In Volume 9 of *Collected Works* (1981) Dr. Carl G. Jung (1875–1961) expressed his opinion that "the mere fact that people talk about rebirth and that there is such a concept at all, means that a store of psychic experiences designated by that term must actually exist. Rebirth is an affirmation that must be counted among the primordial affirmations of mankind."

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790) saw the whole matter of past lives and rebirth as a practical cosmic recycling: "When I see nothing annihilated [in the works of God] and not a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls, or believe that He will suffer the daily waste of millions of minds ready-made that now exist, and put Himself to the continual trouble of making new ones. Thus, finding myself to exist in the world, I believe I shall…always exist; and with all the inconveniences human life is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine, hoping, however, that the errata of the last may be corrected."

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HYPNOTIC REGRESSION INTO PAST LIVES

Richard Sutphen (1937–) began his hypnosis and past-lives regression work in 1972 and was probably the first to develop a technique whereby a hypnotist might regress large numbers of men and women to alleged former lifetimes at the same time and in the same room. Sutphen began fine-tuning his style in his Phoenix, Arizona, home with a roomful of people at a time. He continued perfecting his technique in area colleges and high schools and at metaphysical gatherings in the Southwest. In 1973, he founded and directed a hypnosis/metaphysical center in Scottsdale, Arizona. The convenience of working at an established center provided him with the structure that he needed to experiment extensively with both individual and group techniques and the opportunity to amass a large number of case histories for comparison and contrast.

In 1976, Sutphen created and marketed the first prerecorded hypnosis tapes through his Valley of the Sun publishing company. In 1978, Pocket Books published Sutphen's *You Were Born Again to Be Together*, case histories of men and women who had found themselves and their loves once again after the separation of many lifetimes. The book became a national best-seller, and soon thousands of people wanted to be regressed by Sutphen and explore the possibilities of their past lives. To meet the sudden demand for his hypnotic abilities, he began holding past-life seminars in major cities throughout the United States and hosting an

annual Super Seminar in Scottsdale. By the 1990s, over 100,000 people had attended a Sutphen seminar; his inventory had grown to include 380 audio and video titles; and he had written 18 books, including *Past Lives, Future Loves* (1978), *The Master of Life Manual* (1980), and *Unseen Influences* (1982).

"Past-life hypnotic regression can be used as an extremely valuable therapeutic tool to explore the cause of unconscious anxiety, repressed hostilities, hidden fears, hangups, and interpersonal relationship conflicts," Sutphen said. He cautioned, however, that past-life therapy is not a magic wand, and the past-life causes don't always surface immediately. "But it does work," he stated, "and it can be for many the first stop in letting go of a problem. Psychiatrists often spend months or even years searching for the cause of their patient's problem. They are aware that in understanding the cause they can begin to mitigate and, eventually, eliminate the effect. Yet by limiting their search to the time frame of only one lifetime, they may never find the origin of the present-life problem."

During one of his seminars, Sutphen spoke with a woman named Barbara who had driven hundreds of miles to be in attendance because it was important to her to experience past-life regression. She told Sutphen that she had several problems, some he could see plainly, others he couldn't. He could see that Barbara was obviously referring to her excessive weight when she spoke of some of her problems being easily visible. The attractive 29-year-old woman weighed 225 pounds.

As the seminar sessions progressed, Sutphen observed Barbara during two group regressions, trying to be comfortable in two chairs because her weight made lying down on the floor with everyone else too difficult. He could see, though, that she was a good deep-level hypnotic subject, for she had practically fallen off the chairs almost immediately after he had begun the process. During an evening session, Sutphen asked Barbara to join 11 other subjects on the platform for a demonstration of individual regression work.

During the group hypnosis of the 12 volunteers, Sutphen instructed them to think about something in their life that they would like to change—any kind of problem, habit, or personal situation. As he counted backward from three to one, they would move back in time to the cause of their present problem, whether it should be in their past, in their present life experience or in any of their previous lives. They would see clearly and relive the situation before their inner eyes, thereby understanding the problem and be able to release it.

That night a man cried out as he relived an ancient battle. A young woman relived the fear of being lost in the woods as a small child. A middle-aged woman was recalling starving to death in an African village. But when Sutphen came to Barbara, she cried out, screamed, and began to shake. Her voice became that of a young girl on the edge of panic. The hypnotist quickly redirected her from the alarming memory to a state of peaceful sleep. Later, after all the other subjects had been awakened, Sutphen asked if Barbara wished to explore in greater detail the prior life on which she had touched so emotionally. She eagerly agreed, and Sutphen once again induced the trance state.

In a few moments, Barbara was speaking in the voice and persona of a 12-year-old French girl, describing her luxurious home and her perfect life in eighteenth-century France at the time of the Revolution. When the hypnotist moved her forward in time, she experienced the arrival of soldiers who had orders to take her family to prison. Numerous humiliations followed, and the young girl was eventually killed by the revolutionaries.

After her death experience in that lifetime, Sutphen directed a question to Barbara's Higher Self: How had events from the past life in France related to her present life problems? From the depths of her hypnotic sleep, Barbara cried out that pretty people got hurt. She had been very pretty in that life in France and the soldiers had humiliated and killed her. "The only way to be safe is to remain ugly in the world," she said."

After she was once again awakened from the trance state, Barbara provided additional information about her weight problems. She explained how she had attended the best and

most highly recommended weight-loss centers, but she could never shed the pounds. In some cases, she had begun to lose a little, then she would go on an eating binge and bring her weight right back to 225. One well-known specialist had told her that once she found out why she psychologically needed to retain weight, then she would be able to keep it off.

"You know you can do that now, don't you, Barbara?" Sutphen asked. She answered with a smile that now she knew that she could.

Sutphen has never been dogmatic in his definition of what reincarnation may be, but he remains convinced that regardless of how the question of rebirth is viewed philosophically, it would appear that which is perceived as the past is somehow affecting the present. And once one has pondered the significance of one's past lives, one learns how to transform the present into a meaningful growth experience and in this manner prepare for as significant a future as possible.

One of the best documented cases of reincarnation in recent times had another incarnation of its own when, on May 17, 1994, CBS presented a television movie "inspired by an actual case history," *Search for Grace*, starring Lisa Hartman and Ken Wahl. As fictionalized for mass viewing, the television drama is a thriller about an attractive young woman named Ivy who becomes ensnared by an overwhelming attraction for a powerful, suspicious stranger who turns physically abusive. When Ivy seeks psychological therapy for this irrational compulsion and for related nightmares, she is hypnotically regressed and begins to relive the events leading to the brutal death of a woman, Grace Lovel, which had taken place more than 60 years before. In her waking state, Ivy has never heard of the woman, and she has never been to the city in which her murder occurred. Ivy's confusion and terror grow as she learns that Grace Lovel actually did live and die exactly as she relived in the hypnotic trance. Even more frightening is the uncomfortable awareness that Ivy's violent new lover, John, bears an eerie resemblance to Grace's murderous boyfriend, Jake.

All of the above makes for an exciting evening in front of the television set, but it was based on an actual case researched and documented by renowned hypnotherapist Dr. Bruce Goldberg and reported in detail in his book *The Search for Grace: A Documented Case of Murder and Reincarnation* (1994). "Ivy's past-life regression revealed an eternal love triangle, a terrifying karmic dance of passion and murder, culminating in the short tragic career of one Grace Doze, a headstrong flapper from Buffalo, New York, whose reckless love life ended in murder," Goldberg states in his book. Exhaustive research enabled Goldberg to discover that even the smallest details of Grace's life and death could be explicitly documented through contemporary newspapers and police reports.

In Goldberg's actual transcript of the regression in which Ivy/Grace recalled the details of the murder that took place on Tuesday night, May 17, 1927, Grace had ditched her "boring" husband Chester and gone shopping. Although her new bobbed hairstyle, short skirt, and red shoes might be everything that dull old Chester hates, Jake finds them magnetically appealing. When he picks her up that night, Jake has already had a few too many drinks.

As Goldberg listened to Ivy/Grace altering her voice to speak both parts, Jake's foul temper is displayed, and the two of them get into a heated argument as they drive. Jake is angry that she dresses so cheaply and is still flirting with other men, and he punches her on the jaw. Although she is in pain, Grace is still conscious when Jake stops the car, threatening to teach her a lesson. He beats her badly, strangles her, and dumps her body in Ellicott Creek.

Goldberg guided Ivy/Grace to the superconscious mind level and asked her if she knew Jake in her current lifetime. She answered without hesitation that he was John.

As a therapist, Goldberg was not particularly interested in obtaining documentation for his various patients' claims to past lives, but a search of old files from Buffalo, New York, newspapers for May 19–21, 1927, produced accounts of a "handsome bob-haired woman found floating in Ellicott Creek," who had been strangled to death "before she was

thrown in the water." At first there was doubt that the identity of "the beautiful young woman" would ever be determined. And then, on June 1, 1927, the *Buffalo Courier* reported the find of a "small black suitcase owned by *Mrs. Grace Doze* and carried by her the night she was thrown into the Ellicott Creek." When the police showed the suitcase to "*Chester Doze*," husband of the murdered woman, he identified the bag and contents as the property of his wife.

Goldberg's book contains an astonishing 54 pages of documentation—death and birth certificates, newspaper accounts, police reports, and so forth—that prove to any reasonable person that Grace Doze, the victim of a murder in 1927, did most certainly exist. Exactly how Ivy's psyche gained that information remains a mystery. "Could it have been the unquiet spirit of the murdered young woman, working through her reincarnation as Ivy, that demanded at long last public resolution of the mystery of her death?" Goldberg asks.

One more eerie "coincidence" regarding the case must be mentioned. When *Search for Grace* was telecast on that Tuesday night in May 1994, it was 67 years to the hour since Grace Doze was murdered.

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BRIDEY MURPHY

To a great number of Americans, the name Bridey Murphy has become synonymous with reincarnation and accounts of past lives. The story of the Pueblo, Colorado, housewife who remembered a prior incarnation as a nineteenth-century Irish woman while under hypnosis made a dramatic impact upon the public imagination. Newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals debated the validity of the "memory," and the controversy surrounding this alleged case of reincarnation has not resolved itself to this day.

William J. Barker of the *Denver Post* published the first account of this now-famous case in that newspaper's *Empire* magazine. Barker told how Morey Bernstein, a young Pueblo business executive, first noticed what an excellent subject "Mrs. S." was for deep trance when he was asked to demonstrate hypnosis at a party in October of 1952. It was some weeks later, on the evening of November 29, that Bernstein gained the woman's consent to participate in an experiment in age-regression.

The amateur hypnotist had heard stories of researchers having led their subjects back into past lives, but he had always scoffed at such accounts. He had been particularly skeptical about the testimony of the British psychiatrist Sir Alexander Cannon, who reported that he had investigated over a thousand cases wherein hypnotized individuals had recalled past incarnations.

Mrs. S., who later became identified as Ruth Simmons (and many years later by her actual name, Virginia Tighe), was not particularly interested in hypnotism, either, nor in becoming a guinea pig for Bernstein's attempt to test the theses of those psychical researchers who had claimed the revelation of past lives. She was, at that time, 28 years old, a housewife who enjoyed playing bridge and attending ball games with her husband.

With Rex Simmons and Hazel Bernstein as witnesses, the hypnotist placed Simmons in a trance and began to lead her back through significant periods of her childhood. Then he told her that she would go back until she found herself in another place and time and that she would be able to talk to him and tell him what she saw. She began to breathe heavily and her first words from an alleged previous memory were more puzzling than dramatic. She said that she was scratching the paint off her bed because she was angry over having just received an awful spanking. She identified herself by a name that Bernstein first heard as "Friday," then clarified as "Bridey," and the

Under hypnotism, Virginia Tighe claimed to be the incarnation of an Irish woman named Bridey Murphy. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

strange search for evidence of a former incarnation had begun.

Bridey—short for Bridget—Murphy began to use words and expressions that were completely out of character for Ruth Simmons. Bridey told of playing hide'n'seek with her brother Duncan, who had reddish hair like hers (Simmons was a brunette). She spoke of attending Mrs. Strayne's school in Cork where she spent her time "studying to be a lady." With sensitivity she recreated her marriage to Brian MacCarthy, a young lawyer, who took her to live in Belfast in a cottage back of his grandmother's house, not far from St. Theresa's Church.

TO a number of Americans, "Bridey Murphy" has become synonymous with reincarnation and accounts of past lives.

In her melodic Irish brogue, Bridey told of a life without children, a life laced with an edge of conflict because she was Protestant while Brian was Catholic; then in a tired and querulous voice, she told how she had fallen down a flight of stairs in 1864 when she was 66. After the fall, she was left crippled and had to be carried about wherever she went.

Then one Sunday while her husband was at church, Bridey died. Her death upset Brian terribly, she said. Her spirit lingered beside him, trying to establish communication with him, trying to let him know that he should not grieve for her. Bridey told the astonished hypnotist and the witnesses that her spirit had waited around Belfast until Father John, a priest friend of her husband's, had passed away. She wanted to point out to him that he had been wrong about purgatory, she said, and added that he admitted it.

The spirit world, Bridey said, was one in which "you couldn't talk to anybody very long…they'd go away." In the spirit realm, one did not sleep, never ate, and never became tired. Bridey thought that her spirit had resided there for about 40 Earth years before she was born as Ruth Simmons. (Ruth/Virginia had been born in 1923, so Bridey's spirit had spent nearly 60 years in that timeless dimension.)

At a second session, Bridey again stressed that the afterlife was painless, with nothing to fear. There was neither love nor hate, and relatives did not stay together in clannish groups. Her father, she recalled, said he saw her mother, but she hadn't. The spirit world was simply a place where the soul waited to pass on to "another form of existence."

Details of Bridey Murphy's physical life in Ireland began to amass on Morey Bernstein's tape recorders. Business associates who heard the tapes encouraged Bernstein to continue his experiments, but to allow someone else, a disinterested third party, to check Bridey's statements in old Irish records or wherever such evidence might be found. Ruth Simmons was not eager to continue, but the high regard that she and her husband had for Bernstein led her to consent to additional sessions.

Utilizing her present-life incarnation as Ruth Simmons, Bridey Murphy demonstrated a graceful and lively rendition of an Irish folk dance which she called the "Morning Jig." Her favorite songs were "Sean," "The Minstrel's March," and "Londonderry Air." Ruth Simmons had no interest in musical activities.

William Barker of the *Denver Post* asked Bernstein if the case for Bridey Murphy could be explained by genetic memory which had been transferred through Simmons's ancestors, for she was one-third Irish. Bernstein conceded that such a theory might make the story more acceptable to the general public, but he felt the hypothesis fell apart when it is remembered that Bridey had no children. He also pointed out that other researchers who have regressed subjects back into alleged previous-life memories have found that blood line and heredity have nothing to do with former incarnations. Many have spoken of the afterlife as a kind of "stockpile of souls." When a particular type of spirit is required to inhabit and animate a body that is about to be born, that certain spirit is selected and introduced into that body. Bernstein observed that a person who boasts of

having noble French ancestry might have been a slave or a concubine on his or her prior visit to the physical plane of existence.

In Bernstein's opinion, one could take only one of two points of view in regard to the strange case of Bridey Murphy. One might conclude that the whole thing had been a hoax without a motive. This conclusion would hold that Ruth Simmons was not the "normal young gal" she appeared to be, but actually a frustrated actress who proved to be a consummate performer in her interpretation of a script dreamed up by Bernstein because he "likes to fool people." Or if one did not accept that particular hypothesis, Bernstein said, then the public must admit that the experiment may have opened a hidden door that provided a glimpse of immortality.

Doubleday published Morey Bernstein's *The Search for Bridey Murphy* in 1956. Skeptics and serious investigators alike were interested in testing the validity of Bernstein's experiments and in determining whether or not they might demonstrate the reality of past lives.

In mid-January of 1956, the Chicago *Daily News* sent its London representative on a three-day quest to check out Cork, Dublin, and Belfast and attempt to uncover any evidence that might serve as verification for the Bridey Murphy claims. With only one day for each city, it is not surprising that the newsman reported that he could find nothing of significance.

In February, the *Denver Post* sent William Barker, the journalist who first reported the story of the search for Bridey Murphy, to conduct a thorough investigation of the mystery. Barker felt that certain strong supportive points had already been established by Irish investigators and had been detailed in Bernstein's book. Bridey (Irish spelling of the name is Bridie) had said that her father-in-law, John MacCarthy, had been a barrister (lawyer) in Cork. The records revealed that a John MacCarthy from Cork, a Roman Catholic educated at Clongowes School, was listed in the Registry of Kings Inn. Bridey had mentioned a "green-grocer," John Carrigan, with whom she had traded in Belfast. A Belfast librarian attested to the fact that there had been a man of that name and trade at 90 Northumberland during the time in which Bridey claimed to have lived there. The librarian also verified Bridey's statement that there had been a William Farr who had sold foodstuffs during this same period. One of the most significant bits of information had to do with a place that Bridey called Mourne. Such a place was not shown on any modern maps of Ireland, but its existence was substantiated through the British Information Service.

While under hypnosis, Ruth Simmons had "remembered" that Catholics could teach at Queen's University, Belfast, even though it was a Protestant institution. American investigators made a hasty prejudgment when they challenged the likelihood of such an interdenominational teaching arrangement. In Ireland, however, such a fact was common knowledge, and Bridey scored another hit. Then there were such details as Bridey knowing about the old Irish custom of dancing at weddings and putting money in the bride's pockets. There was also her familiarity with the currency of that period, the types of crops grown in the region, the contemporary musical pieces, and the folklore of the area.

When Barker dined with Kenneth Besson, a hotel owner who was interested in the search, the newsman questioned Bridey's references to certain food being prepared in "flats," an unfamiliar term to Americans. Besson waved a waiter to their table and asked him to bring some flats. When the waiter returned, Barker saw that the mysterious flats were but serving platters.

Some scholars believed that they had caught Bridey in a gross error when she mentioned the custom of kissing the Blarney Stone. Such a superstition was a late nineteenth-century notion, stated Dermot Foley, the Cork city librarian. Later, however, Foley made an apology to Bridey when he discovered that T. Crofton Cronker, in his *Researches in the South of Ireland* (1824), mentions the custom of kissing the Blarney Stone as early as 1820.

Bridey was correct about other matters that at first were thought to be wrong by scholars and authorities. For example, certain authorities discredited her statement about the iron bed she had scratched with her fin-

gernails after the "awful spanking" on the grounds that iron beds had not yet been introduced into Ireland during the period in which Bridey claimed to have lived. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, however, states that iron beds did appear in Bridey's era in Ireland and were advertised as being "free from the insects which sometimes infect wooden bedsteads." Bridey's claims to have eaten muffins as a child and to have obtained books from a lending library in Belfast were at first judged to be out of proper time context. Later, her challengers actually uncovered historical substantiation for such statements.

Throughout the regressions conducted by Morey Bernstein, one of the most convincing aspects of the experiments had been the vocabulary expressed by the hypnotized subject. The personality of Bridey Murphy never faltered in her almost poetic speech, and of the hundreds of words of jargon and colloquial phrases she uttered, nearly all were found to be appropriate for the time in which she claimed to have lived. The songs that Bridey sang, her graphic word pictures of wake and marriage customs, were all acclaimed by Irish folklorists as being accurate. Her grim reference to the "black something" that took the life of her baby brother probably referred to famine or disease. The Irish use of "black" in this context means "malignant" or "evil" and would have nothing to do with the actual color of the pestilence.

Bridey Murphy did not always score hits, though. Numerous Irish historians and scholars felt that she must have been more Scottish than Irish, especially when she gave the name Duncan for her father and brother. Certain experts sympathetically suggested that she may have been attempting to say Dunnock, rather than Duncan.

William Barker could find no complete birth data for either Bridey or her kin, and he learned that she had shocked most Irish researchers with her crude term "ditched" to describe her burial. The Colorado journalist was informed that the Irish are much too reverent about the dead to employ such a brutal word.

Bridey demonstrated little knowledge of Ireland's history from 1800 to 1860. Bridey and Brian's honeymoon route was hopelessly untraceable and appeared to be confused with the trip that she had made to Antrim as a child of 10. The principal difficulty in accepting the whole of Bridey's story lay in the fact that so much of the testimony was unverifiable.

While most psychical researchers agree that the Bridey Murphy case is not a consciously contrived fraud, they will not rule out the role that some psychic or extrasensory ability may have played in the "memory" of the Irish woman allegedly reborn in a Colorado housewife. Other investigators have suggested that Mrs. S., Virginia Tighe, could have had several acquaintances throughout her life who were familiar with Ireland and who may each have imparted a bit of the memory of Bridey Murphy as it was mined from her subconscious by the hypnotic trance induced by Morey Bernstein.

As other researchers explored the claims of *The Search for Bridey Murphy*, the phenomenon of cryptomensia was also applied to the case when reporters for the *Chicago American* discovered that a woman named Bridie Murphey Corkell had lived across the street where Virginia Tighe had grown up. To say that cryptomensia was responsible for Tighe's alleged memories of a nineteenth-century Irishwoman is to propose that she had forgotten both the source of her "memory" and the fact that she had ever obtained it. Then, under hypnosis, such memories could be recalled so dramatically that they could be presented as a past-life memory.

The attempts to discredit Bridey Murphy as a manifestation of cryptomensia fail in the estimation of researchers C. J. Ducasse and Dr. **Ian Stevenson** (1918–). In Stevenson's estimation, the critics of the Bridey Murphy case provided only suppositions of possible sources of information, not evidence that these had been the sources.

The controversy over Bridey Murphy and the value of past-life regressions still rages. Those who champion the case state that it cannot be denied that Bridey/Virginia possessed a knowledge of nineteenth-century Ireland that contained a number of details that were unfamiliar even to historians and authorities. Such

details, when checked for accuracy after elaborate research, were found to be correct in Bridey's favor. Others insist that such data could have been acquired paranormally, through extrasensory means, and therefore does not prove reincarnation. Skeptics dismiss the evidence of Bridey Murphy's alleged past-life memories by stating that they originated in her childhood, rather than in a prior incarnation.

On July 12, 1995, Virginia Tighe Morrow died in her suburban Denver home. She had never again submitted to hypnosis by any researcher seeking to test her story. Although she never became a true believer in reincarnation, she always stood by the entranced recollections as recorded in *The Search for Bridey Murphy*.

DELVING DEEPER

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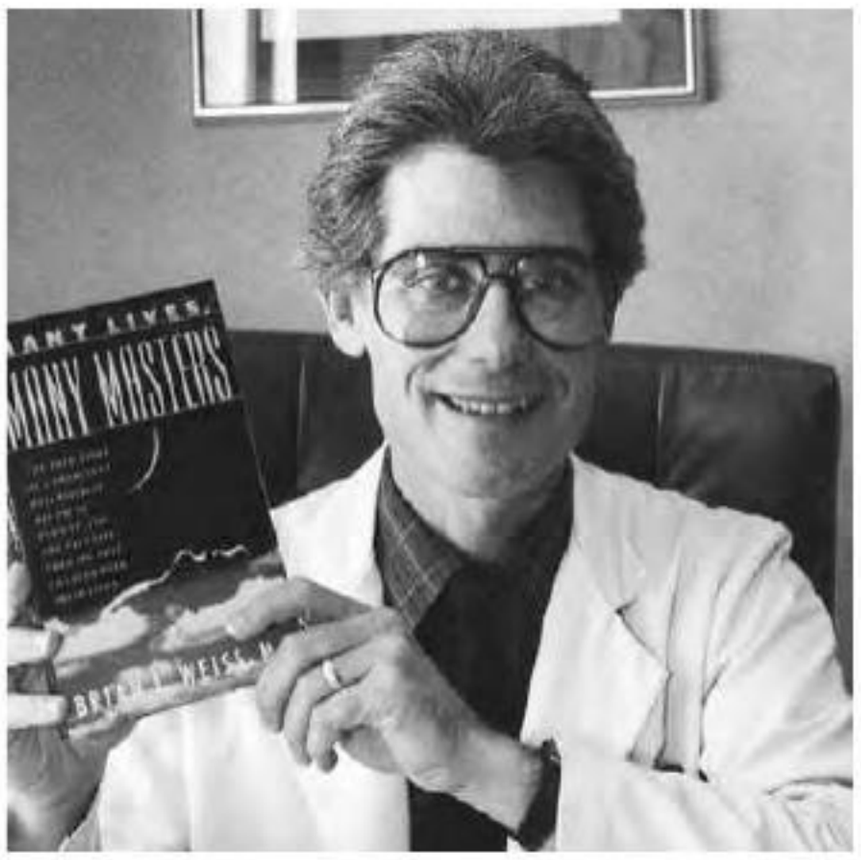
PAST-LIFE THERAPY

In past-life therapy, subjects arrive at the office of a past-life therapist with a phobia, an obsession, or a compulsion that seems unrelated to anything they can remember in their present life experience. Their problem has increasingly begun to become awkward, stressful, or embarrassing. When they relive a past life during a hypnotic regression or in a dream or a vision, they view a scenario in which they see themselves setting in motion that karma, the initial action or deed that created their phobia, obsession, or compulsion. Dissociated from their present life experience, they become capable of accepting responsibility for a past action that was performed in a prior existence. Once the subjects have made the transfer of responsibility to the present life and have recognized that the "fault" or the trauma lies in a time far removed from current concerns, they are able to deal with the matter with a new perspective and without embarrassment or shame.

Today, a great number of past-life therapists have learned that it really doesn't matter whether past-life recall is pure fantasy or the actual memory of a prior existence. What does



Dr. Brian Weiss with his book on reincarnation. One of his patients in his book claims to have 86 past lives. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

matter to the therapists is their claim that thousands of men and women have obtained a definite and profound release from a present pain or phobia by reliving the origin of their problems in some real or imagined former existence.

While skeptics may scoff at men and women who claim to recall past lives while under hypnosis, and even question their mental balance, psychiatrist Reima Kampman of the University of Oulu in Finland has said that her research demonstrates that people who are able to display multiple personalities or alleged past lives under hypnosis are actually healthier than those who cannot. According to Kampman, one of her subjects, a 28-year-old woman, revealed eight different personalities in progressive chronological order, ranging from a young woman who lived in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution to an eighteenth-century titled English lady to a girl named Bessina who said that she lived in Babylonia. Contrary to what the established psychiatric literature would lead one to believe, Kampman stated, these were not troubled minds on the verge of fragmentation.

Compared with those who could not rise to the hypnotist's challenge, the multiple-personality group had greater stress tolerance, more adaptability, and far less guilt. Internal identity diffusion—a neurotic quality defined as the discrepancy between what one feels about oneself and how one feels that others

perceive one—was also greater in the nonresponsive group.

Kampman suggests that in the ego-threatening situation induced by the hypnotist's request for other personalities, only the mentally healthy can afford to respond creatively: "Creating multiple personalities is evidence of a highly specialized ability of the personality to extricate itself adaptively by a deep regression of the conflict situation created by the hypnotist" (*Human Behavior,* May 1977).

Bettye B. Binder, former president of the Association for Past-Life Research and Therapies, has conducted over 3,600 individual past-life regressions and has taught nearly 20,000 students in workshops and classes since 1980. The author of six books on past lives, her *Past Life Regression Guidebook* (1992) has become a popular textbook in the field. When asked to provide a case history demonstrating the benefits of past-life regression, she often makes reference to the case of "Darrell," whose story was featured on the television programs *Sightings* and *20/20*.

A native of Toronto who has lived in Southern California for many years, Darrell came to Bettye Binder with a terror of drowning in the middle of the ocean. He was not frightened of seashores, swimming pools, or other bodies of water, but he would not venture far into the ocean because of a morbid fear of drowning there. In three separate regressions with Binder, Darrell discovered that he drowned in the middle of the ocean in three previous lifetimes. In one, he was a black slave in the South, about 1840, who tried to escape in a small boat that sank due to an explosion on board. In 1940, before the United States entered World War II, he was a young man from Pennsylvania who joined the Canadian Air Force and was shot down over the Pacific Ocean. His death on the *Titanic*, however, was the most important experience related to his phobia.

In regression, Darrell experienced being a crew member on the *Titanic*, which sank after striking an iceberg in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean in April 1912. He was asleep in his bunk when the crisis began. He was awakened and told to go to the boiler room where he worked. It was flooded, so he went to the next available boiler room that was still free of seawater. He and his workmates did their best to get the ship moving, but it soon became evident that the huge ship was sinking. Darrell's last memory in that lifetime was being tangled up in ropes as the ship began to lurch and dive into the depths of the sea.

Binder has had Darrell undergo this particular regression on many different occasions, both as a demonstration before students and for television. Each time, she has observed, Darrell receives more resolution from such explorations of his past life as a victim of the *Titanic* disaster. In June 1992, when she regressed him for a television crew, Darrell saw his angels leading him away from the body that was entangled in heavy ropes and being pulled down into the ocean. He felt peace and light come over him as he rose toward the heavens, and he also experienced great compassion for the man that he had been.

What is most significant about Darrell's case, Binder pointed out, is how the experience of past-life regression has turned his life around. When he had first come to her, she said, he was a timid, withdrawn, fearful young man, whose life and career were going nowhere. He had dreams of becoming an animator for a major movie or television studio, but those aspirations were not being realized. After a series of regressions in 1992, Darrell's career began to move in an exciting new direction. He began to exhibit a sense of peace and happiness that he had never before known. He became poised and self-assured. He was hired as an animator on a major feature film, and at Christmas in 1994, he was hired to direct an animated feature film, a huge career breakthrough.

According to Binder, "Darrell has learned lessons that he was unable to learn in his previous past lives in which he drowned, and he is no longer phobic about the ocean. Today, Darrell is a man who smiles easily and who is doing what he loves most in life. He has gained a spiritual peace for the first time in several lifetimes."

In her view of past-life exploration, Binder believes that the key to making reincarnation

acceptable in the Western world lies in the culture learning to acknowledge individuals' true identities as souls that exist in a multidimensional universe where time is not limited to a linear construction. Through the altered states of consciousness available in meditation or hypnosis, one can experience what "multidimensionality" and "simultaneous time" feel like even if one does not yet understand what the words mean.

A teacher of reincarnation since 1980, Binder frequently emphasizes in her classes that individuals don't *have* souls, they *are* souls. "All of us are souls who chose to become human beings, but our human identity is limited to being in this body," she said. "The soul is pure energy, and energy cannot be destroyed. The soul's existence is independent of the body it occupies. It is the soul that continues to exist after the human body dies, and it is the soul that reincarnates lifetime after lifetime."

Dr. Russell C. Davis was editor of *The Journal of Regression Therapy* and practiced past-life therapy for 40 years before his death in 1998. According to Davis, the concept of an eternal part of oneself that moves from lifetime to lifetime is fundamental to conducting past-life regressions. Whether one chooses to call this "eternal part" the soul or the Higher Self, it is "the very core of the person that is accessed during the experience and in which is stored that collective awareness of what is and what was. Over the years, I have come to call this 'the part of us that knows and understands,' and it is this element of the person that I address during the regression experience. In essence, in conducting a past-life regression, this 'part [of the subject] which knows and understands,' the 'Higher Self,' is asked to reveal to the client's conscious awareness information and understanding about a past life (or lives) and what its meaning is to the present."

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IAN STEVENSON (1918–)

Dr. Ian Stevenson is the former head of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia, and now is director of that school's Division of Personality. In the more than 40 years that he has devoted to the documentation of past-life memories, Stevenson has done a great deal to put a serious study of reincarnation on a scientific basis. His classic work, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*, which was published by the American Society for Psychical Research in 1966, is an exhaustive exercise in research in which Stevenson dons the mantle of historian, lawyer, and psychiatrist to gather evidence from as many percipients as possible.

Stevenson has now collected over 3,000 cases of past-life memories of children from all over the world, and in 1997 published *Reincarnation and Biology: A Contribution to the Etiology of Birthmarks and Birth Defects*. In the first volume of this massive work, he primarily describes the various kinds of birthmarks, those uniquely distinguishing marks on a newborn's skin cannot be explained only by inheritance. The second volume focuses on deformities and other anomalous markings with which certain children are born and cannot be traced back to inheritance, prenatal, or perinatal (formed during birth) occurrences.

Although Stevenson concedes that nobody has "as yet thought up a way that reincarnation could be proved in a laboratory test tube," he argues that even in the laboratory the scientist cannot escape from human testimony of one kind or another. In his essay "The Evidence for Survival from Claimed Memories of Former Incarnations," which won the American **Society for Psychical Research**'s 1960 contest in honor of **William James** (1842–1910), Stevenson discussed a

number of hypotheses that he feels deserve consideration in attempting to comprehend data from cases suggestive of reincarnation. Among these hypotheses are the following:

Unconscious Fraud. In some cases, other individuals have attributed statements to the subjects alleging past lives that they never made, and in this way have permitted the initial claim to grow out of proportion. Stevenson terms this a kind of "collective hallucination" in which further statements are imaginatively attributed to the subjects.

Derivation of the "Memories" through Normal Means with Subsequent Forgetting of the Source. Stevenson holds this hypothesis to be most often responsible for the many cases of pseudo-reincarnation. He quotes from the work of E. S. Zolik, who studied the ability of students to create fictitious former lives while under hypnosis. These fantasy personalities were the products of bits and pieces of characters in novels, motion pictures, and remembered childhood acquaintances. Because of the remarkable ability of the human mind to acquire paranormal information and to create fantasy personalities all its own, Stevenson cites another difficulty in serious research into cases suggestive of reincarnation: "We need to remember that items normally acquired can become mingled with those paranormally derived in the productions of persons apparently remembering past lives."

Racial Memory. Stevenson, a medical doctor as well as a psychiatrist, is well aware that science has not yet discovered the parameters of genetic transmission. He feels, however, that such a theory applied to the alleged memories of previous lives will encounter serious obstacles. While he concedes that the hypothesis of "remembering" our ancestors' lives might apply in those instances where it can be shown that the subject having the past-life memories belongs to a genetic line descending from the personality whom he or she claims to be, in most cases, Stevenson believes that the separation of time and place makes "...impossible any transmission of information from the first to the second person along genetic lines."

Extrasensory Perception of the Items of the Apparent Recollections in the Minds of Living Persons. Stevenson finds it difficult to accept the theory that an individual gifted with paranormal talents should limit the exercise of such abilities only to communication with the specific living persons who might have relevant bits of information about the deceased personalities from whom the subjects claim to derive their memories.

Retrocognition. Stevenson is receptive to the notion that the psychic ability known as retrocognition could be responsible for some cases suggestive of reincarnation. The subjects in such cases could be stimulated by being at the scene of historical events, by some object connected with the events themselves or persons who participated in them, or in an altered state of consciousness, such as staring at a crystal ball or being in a trance.

Possession. The doctor recognizes the plausibility of temporary possession as an explanation for some apparent memories of former incarnations. But he makes a very important distinction: In cases of possession, the entity that has accomplished the transformation of personality usually does so solely for the purpose of communication with its loved ones on the physical plane, and it never claims to be a former incarnation of the subject who has temporarily provided a physical body. In true cases suggestive of reincarnation, there is no other personality claiming to occupy the body of the subject and the entity speaks of a former life, not of communication with surviving loved ones.

DELVING DEEPER

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

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.

clairvoyance The ability to see, visualize, or sense things beyond the normal range of human vision or senses.

cosmology The philosophical study and explanation of the nature of the universe or the scientific study of the origin and structure of the universe.

cryptomensia 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.

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.

hieroglyphs A system of writing which uses symbols or pictures to denote an object, concept, sound, or sequence of sounds. The word comes from an ancient Greek term meaning "sacred carving," to describe the characters carved on Egyptian tombs.

incantations Ritual chanting or recitation of verbal charms or spells to produce a supposed magic effect.

Kabbalah (Cabala, Cabbala, Kabala, or Kabbala) A 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.

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."

precognition The direct knowledge of 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.

retrocognition 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Chapter Exploration

Shamanism
Spirit Guide
Totem Animal
Vision Quest

Spirit Mediumship
Ouija Board
Seance
Spirit Control
Trance

Mediums and Channelers
Sylvia Browne
Florence Cook
Mina "Margery" Crandon
John Edward
Arthur Augustus Ford
Eileen Garrett
Daniel Dunglas Home
J. Z. Knight
Carlos Mirabelli
Eusapia Palladino
Leonora E. Piper
James Van Praagh
Jach Pursel
Jane Roberts
Rudi Schneider
Witch of Endor

Spiritualism
Andrew Jackson Davis
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
The Fox Sisters
Allen Kardec

Mystics
Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
Rudolf Steiner
Emanuel Swedenborg

Researchers into the Mystery of Spirit Contact
Hereward Carrington
Sir William Crookes
Harry Houdini
William James
Sir Oliver Lodge
Fredric W. H. Myers
Society for Psychical Research (SPR)

Chapter 2
Mediums and Mystics

Throughout history, certain men and women have claimed that they can speak to the deceased on the other side and relay messages to those who yearn for such confirmation that there is life after death. In this chapter, the colorful and controversial lives of such mystics and mediums will be examined and their philosophies, techniques, and spiritual tools identified.

INTRODUCTION

The belief in an afterlife in which the soul continues a conscious and rational existence is an intensely powerful human longing. While even those of deep religious faiths may still have apprehensions when it comes to facing death and standing on the edge of the boundaries of the unknown, throughout history there have been those men and women who claim that they can not only conceive of a future life, but also directly experience it and communicate with those souls who have died and gone there. These individuals who claim such extraordinary abilities are known as mystics, mediums, or channels, and they are as sought after by those who seek reassurance of the afterlife in the twenty-first century as they were in the days of the pharaohs.

For traditional shamans in aboriginal cultures throughout the world, the barrier between the world of spirits and the world of humans was a very thin one, and the ability to communicate with the spirits and to travel in their dimension of reality was an essential facet of the shamans' responsibility to their people. It was also true of the medicine people and shamans of the various Native American tribes, and a belief in a total partnership with the world of spirits and the ability to make personal contact with those who had changed planes of existence was a basic tenet in their spiritual practice.

Whether the man or woman who claims contact with the spirit world is a traditional shaman or a contemporary channeler, he or she will most likely establish that communication through the ethereal services of a spirit guide or spirit control. This entity serves the medium as a link between the worlds of flesh and spirit. It is said to have the ability to usher the spirits of the departed to a level of the medium's consciousness that permits him or her to relay messages to those who have come to hear words of comfort and inspiration.

While most of the major religions condemn those who claim to be able to speak to the dead or deny their abilities, mediums have countered by questioning the lack of logic displayed by members of orthodox faiths who say that it is all right to hope for survival after death but wrong to prove it. For centuries, various investigators of mediumistic phenomena have argued that if it could be proved that sincere and honest mediums were able to contact the dead, then the mysteries of the afterlife could be answered, and organized religion's hope of the future life would be transformed from an ethereal promise to a demonstrable guarantee.

Those scientists who have been intrigued enough by spiritistic phenomena to study it in a serious manner under laboratory conditions are known as psychical researchers, and they have been examining mediums and mystics in a structured and determined process since the establishment of the British Society of Psychical Research in 1882 and the American Society in 1885.

Most mediums, however, feel that they can get along well without psychical researchers. Successful mediums do not need to prove anything to their followers, who already believe in their abilities. The tests of the psychical researchers are often tedious and set up to be administered by objective and unemotional personnel. The mediums argue that the laboratory certainly does not offer the mood and atmosphere to be found in the seance parlor, and the bright lights are not as conducive to the trance state as the dimly lighted room. Psychical researchers counter such arguments by pointing out that laboratory controls are necessary to unmask the charlatans, because there are those who deceive people during their period of grieving for a deceased loved one.

This chapter will introduce some extraordinarily colorful and fascinating men and women and explore the remarkable claims of mediums who insist that they can summon spirits from the world beyond death. There are passionate believers, determined debunkers, and individuals who believe that they have proved scientifically and conclusively that a future existence awaits the soul of each human who passes from life to death.

Rolling Thunder

A Native American Indian medicine man, spiritual leader, philosopher, and acknowledged spokesman and intertribal shaman for the Cherokee and Shoshone tribes, Rolling Thunder, served as a consultant to the popular films *Billy Jack* (1971), and its sequel, *Billy Jack II* (1972). His way of life as a powerful healer, teacher, and activist gave him widespread fame following the films. Internationally known, Rolling Thunder's spiritual counsel and tribal skills were sought on a regular basis by many in the entertainment industry.

Rolling Thunder was among the first ever to be studied by mainstream institutions and undergo many laboratory tests to determine the authenticity of his shamanic skills. It had been said that his powers over the elements of nature surpassed any seen in recent times. Reports of Rolling Thunder's ability to "make rain" on a clear day, to heal disease and wounds, to transport or teleport objects through the air, and his telepathic skills were legendary until he agreed to submit himself to testing. His abilities have been investigated and documented by such organizations as the Menninger Foundation.

An advocate for Native American rights, as well as for ecological harmony, Rolling Thunder traveled widely and was in great demand worldwide for his insight and teachings. He himself joked that he had to make it rain and thunder "in order to clean the polluted air" before he spoke in a new city. Speaking before spiritual, ecological, psychological, and healing gatherings, Rolling Thunder participated in conferences sponsored by the Association for Research and Enlightenment (Edgar Cayce's Foundation), the Menninger Foundation, the East West Academy of the Healing Arts, the Stockholm United Nations Conference on the Environment, the World Conference of Spiritual Leaders of the United Nations, and the World Humanity Conference in Vancouver, B.C., among others.

Often controversial, and regarded even militant at times, Rolling Thunder was known for being outspoken and "telling it like it is." "The Great Spirit guides me to tell people what they need to know, not what they want to know," he often said. Never making claims for his special powers, he reminded those who called him a medicine man, or who spoke of his healing abilities, that "All power belongs to the Great Spirit." Then he would add, "You call him God." In response to the charges of being militant, Rolling Thunder said, "Yes, I'm a militant. So was your great healer they call Jesus Christ."

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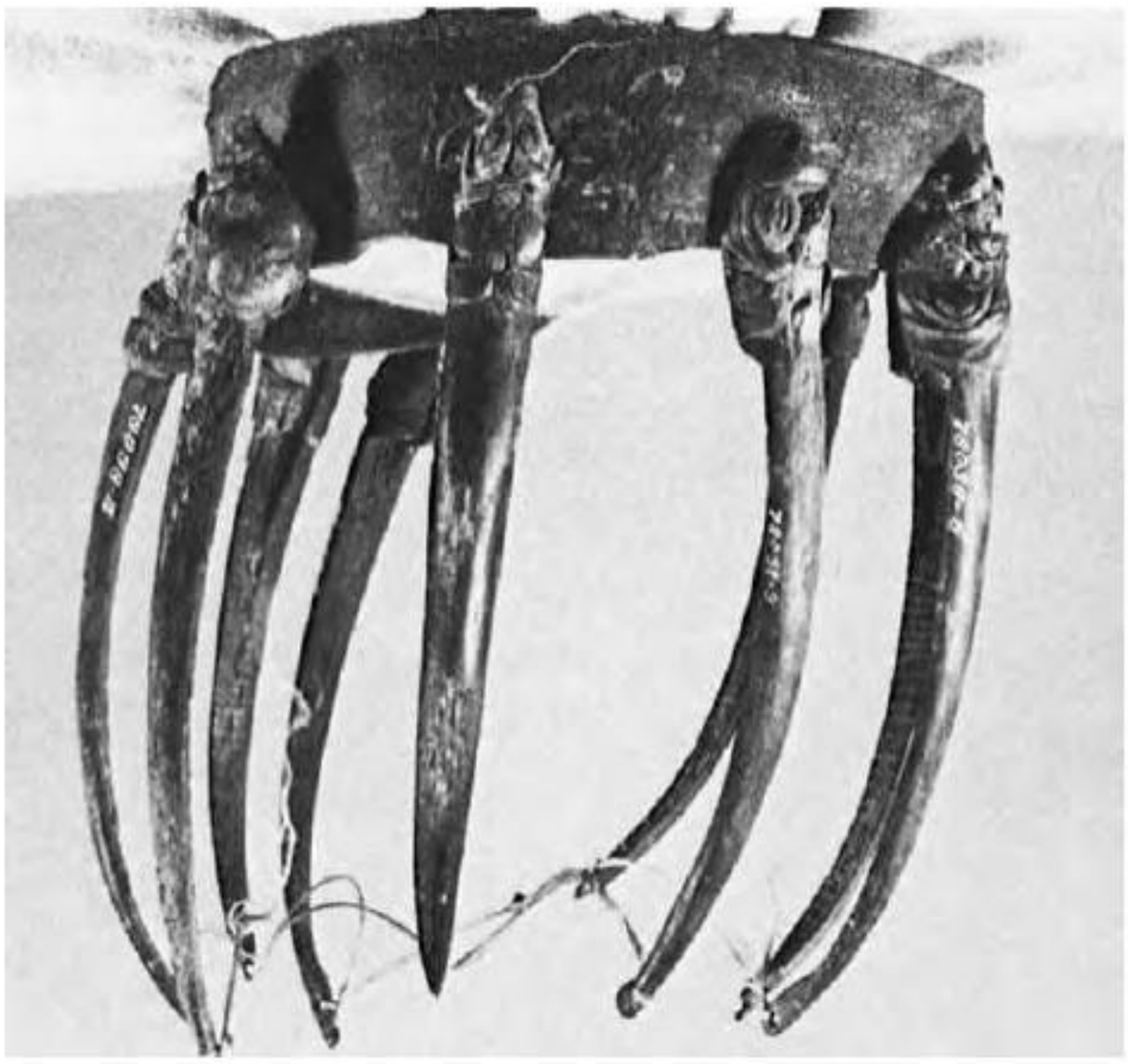


Shaman's headdress. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

SHAMANISM

A shaman is one who serves his people by acting as an intermediary to the spirit world. The claimed ability to communicate with the world beyond death is at least as old as the time when early humans first conceived the idea that some part of them somehow survived physical death and existed in some other place in spirit form. The grief that came with the sorrowful thought of losing all contact with a loved one was lessened by the assertion of a fellow tribesperson that he or she could still communicate with the spirit of the one who lay in the grave. Among early humans, those individuals who claimed to be able to visit the place of the dead were known as shamans, and the messages that they relayed from the spirit world were sought by the elders regarding every major tribal decision. Originally, the term "shaman" was applied to the spirit doctors and exorcists of the Tungus of Siberia, but in recent years the title has been applied as well to the medicine men and women of the various North American tribes who also serve as mediums, healers, and visionaries for their people. Many tribal traditionalists still revere the wisdom that is shared by those men and women who maintain the shamanic traditions and who travel to the other side in the company of their spirit helper.

In the introduction to his book *The Way of the Shaman* (1982) anthropologist Michael Harner writes that shamans "...whom we in the 'civilized' world have called 'medicine men' and 'witchdoctors' are the keepers of a remarkable body of ancient techniques that they use to achieve and maintain well-being and healing for themselves and members of their communities." Harner states that shamanic methods are remarkably similar throughout the world, "even for those peoples whose cultures are quite different in other respects, and who have been separated by oceans and continents for tens of thousands of years."

The anthropologist Ivar Lissner, who spent a great deal of time among the Tungus of Siberia, as well as native peoples in North America, defines a shaman as one "...who knows how to deal with spirits and influence them....The essential characteristic of the shaman is his excitement, his ecstasy and trancelike condition....[The elements which constitute this ecstasy are] a form of self-severance from mundane existence, a state of heightened sensibility, and spiritual awareness. The shaman loses outward consciousness and becomes inspired or enraptured. While in this state of enthusiasm, he sees dreamlike apparitions, hears voices, and receives visions of truth. More than that, his soul sometimes leaves his body to go wandering."

It is believed that during those times when the souls of shamans go wandering, they project their consciousness to faraway places on Earth as well as to the shadow world of spirits. These soul journeys may inform those who seek their shaman's counsel of everything from where to find the choicest herds of game to how to banish a troublesome spirit from their home. Those men and women who aspire to learning such techniques for themselves may pay a shamanic practitioner for the privilege of undergoing an arduous course of training that would include periods of fasting, going on vision quests, and encounters with the world of spirits—a regimen that may take the student many years to accomplish.

In 1865, the great warrior Roman Nose, who had studied under the tutelage of White Bull, an elderly Cheyenne medicine man, lay on a raft for four days in the midst of a sacred lake. Roman Nose partook of no food or water, and he suffered a relentless sun by day and a pouring rain by night. But he felt none of these distractions, for Roman Nose was in a **trance** so deep that he appeared to be dead.

When he returned from the **Land of the Grandparents,** the place of spirits, Roman Nose had obtained the necessary vision teachings to attack the white man's cavalry who were invading the Powder River country. On the day of battle, Roman Nose mounted his white pony and told the assembled warriors not to accompany his charge until the Blue Coat soldiers had emptied their rifles at him. The power that he had received from the spirits during his "little death" had rendered him impervious to their bullets.

Roman Nose broke away from the rest of the war party and urged his pony into a run toward the ranks of white soldiers standing behind their wagons. When he was so near that he could see their faces, Roman Nose wheeled his mount and rode parallel to their ranks and their rifles. He made three or four passes before volley after volley from the soldiers' Springfield rifles. He remained untouched, unscratched. Finally a musket ball knocked his pony out from under him, but Roman Nose rose untouched and signaled his warriors to attack. They believed that magic he had received from the spirits kept him safe that day from all the bullets.

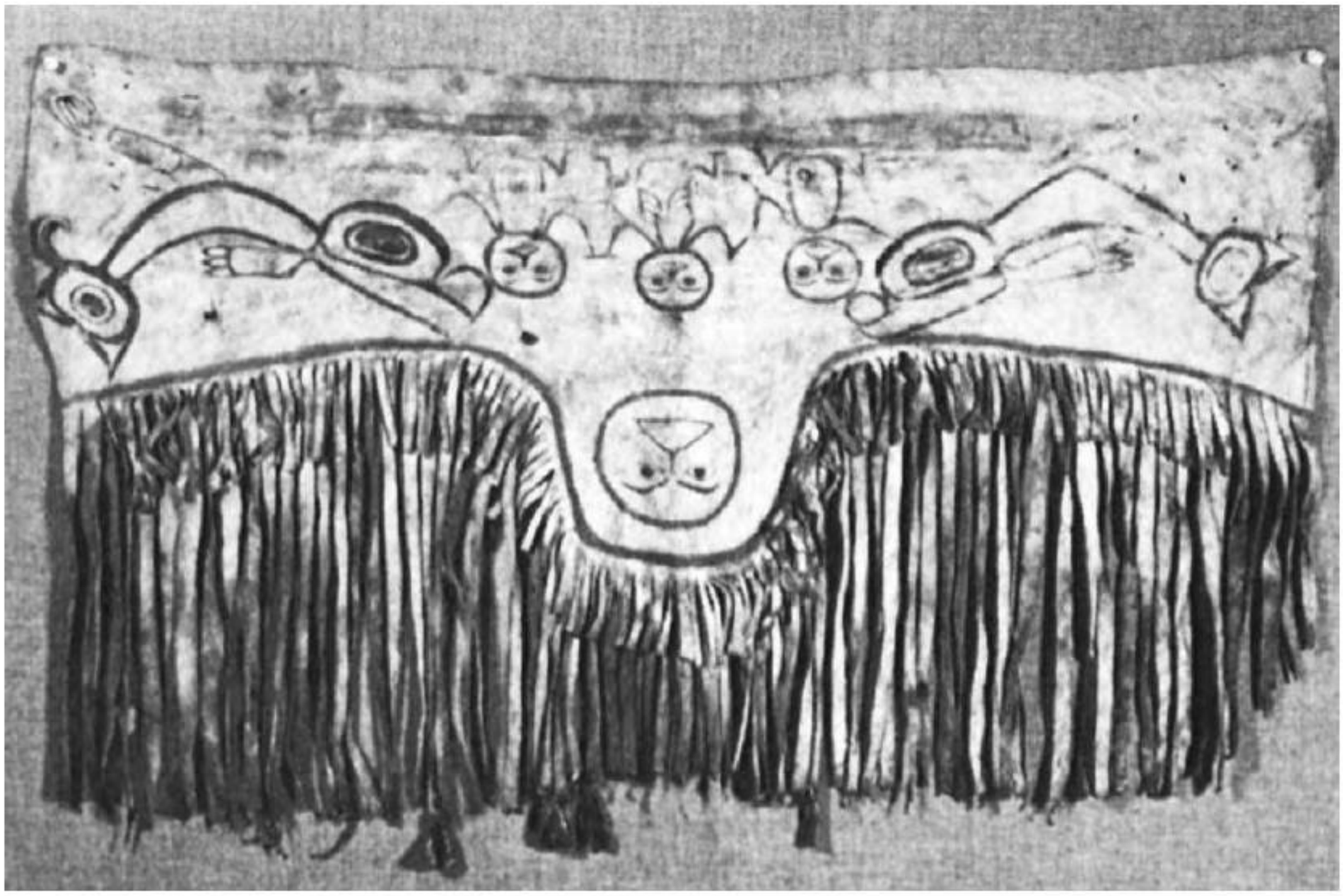
While one can pursue the path of becoming a medicine man or woman by undergoing a **vision quest,** receiving a **spirit guide,** and serving an apprenticeship under the direction of an established medicine person, traditionally, it seems, the greatest shamans are created by spiritual intervention in the shape of a sudden and severe illness, spells of fever, epileptic seizures, or possession by tutelary spirits. It would appear that those who become the most effective intermediaries between the worlds of flesh and spirit must have their physical bodies purged and nearly destroyed before they can establish contact with spirits.

Twylzh selecting medicine stones. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

Black Elk (1863–1950), the respected medicine practitioner/shaman of the Oglala Sioux, became a "hole," a port of entry for spirits to enter the physical world, when he fell terribly ill as a boy of nine. He heard voices telling him that it was time for him to receive his first great vision, and he was taken out of his body by two spirit guides who informed him that they were to take him to the land of his grandfathers. Here, in the land of the spirits, Black Elk received the great vision that was to sustain him all of his life. When he was returned to his body, his parents greeted the first flutterings of his eyelids with great joy. The boy had been lying as if dead for 12 days.

A shaman is one who acts as an intermediary to the spirit world.

As he grew to maturity and learned to focus his healing and **clairvoyant** energies, Black Elk never failed to credit the other world for his accomplishments and to explain that he was but a "hole" through which the spirits entered this world. Rather than the



Shaman's kilt. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

term "hole," today's counterparts of the shamanic mission might say that they are **spirit mediums** or channels through which the power from the spirit world might flow.

In many tribal societies, the pseudo-death, or **near-death experience,** appears to be nearly a precondition that must be met by those who aspire to the role of the most prestigious of shamans.

A crucial element in shamanism is the ability to rise above the constrictions and restraints of linear time.

In 1890, Jack Wilson, a Paiute who worked as a hired hand for a white rancher, came down with a terrible fever. His sickness became so bad that for three days he lay as if dead. When he returned to consciousness, he told the Paiutes who had assembled around his "corpse" that his spirit had walked with God, the Old Man, for those three days; and the Old Man had given him a powerful vision to share with the Paiute people.

His vision proclaimed that the dead of many tribes were all alive, waiting to be reborn. If the native peoples wished the buffalo to return, the grasses to grow tall, and the rivers to run clean, they must not injure anyone; they must not do harm to any living thing. They must not make war. They must lead lives of purity, cease gambling, put away strong drink, and guard themselves against all lusts of the flesh.

Jack Wilson's grandfather had been the esteemed prophet Wodziwob. His father had been the respected holy man Tavibo. Among his own people, Wilson was known as Wovoka; and now he, too, had spent his time of initiation in death and had emerged as a holy man and a prophet.

The most important part of the vision that the Great Spirit had given to Wovoka was the

Ghost Dance. The Paiute prophet told his people that the dance had never been performed anywhere on Earth. It was the dance of the spirit people of the Other World. To perform this dance was to insure that the Great Mystery's blessings would be bestowed upon the tribe. Wovoka said that the Old Man had spoken to him as if he were his son and assured him that many miracles would be worked through him. The native people had received their shamanic messiah.

A crucial element in shamanism is the ability to rise above the constrictions and restraints of linear time. In his text for *American Indian Ceremonial Dances* (1972), John Collier comments upon the shaman's and the traditional native people's possession of a time sense that is different from the present societal understanding of the passages of minutes, hours, and days. At one time everyone possessed such freedom, Collier says, but the mechanized world took it away. If humans could exist, as the native people in their whole lives affirmed, "in a dimension of time, a reality of time—not linear, not clock-measured, clock-controlled, and clock-ended," Collier suggests that they should gladly enter it, for individuals would expand their consciousness by being there. "In solitary, mystical experience many of ourselves do enter another time dimension," he continues. But the "frown of clockwork time" demands a return to chronological time. The shaman, however, recognizes that this other time dimension originated "within the germ plasm and the organic rhythms…of moveless eternity. It is life's instinct and environment and human society's instinct and environment. To realize it or not realize it makes an enormous difference."

Achieving a deep **trance** state appears to be the most effective way that shamans regularly abandon linear time restrictions in order to gain entrance to that other dimension of time. By singing their special songs received in vision quests or dreams, shamans put themselves into trances that permit them to travel with their spirit helpers to the Land of the Grandparents, a place free of "clockwork time," where they gain the knowledge to predict the future, to heal, and to relay messages of wisdom from the spirit people.

Shaman's mask. ***(Archives of Brad Steiger)***

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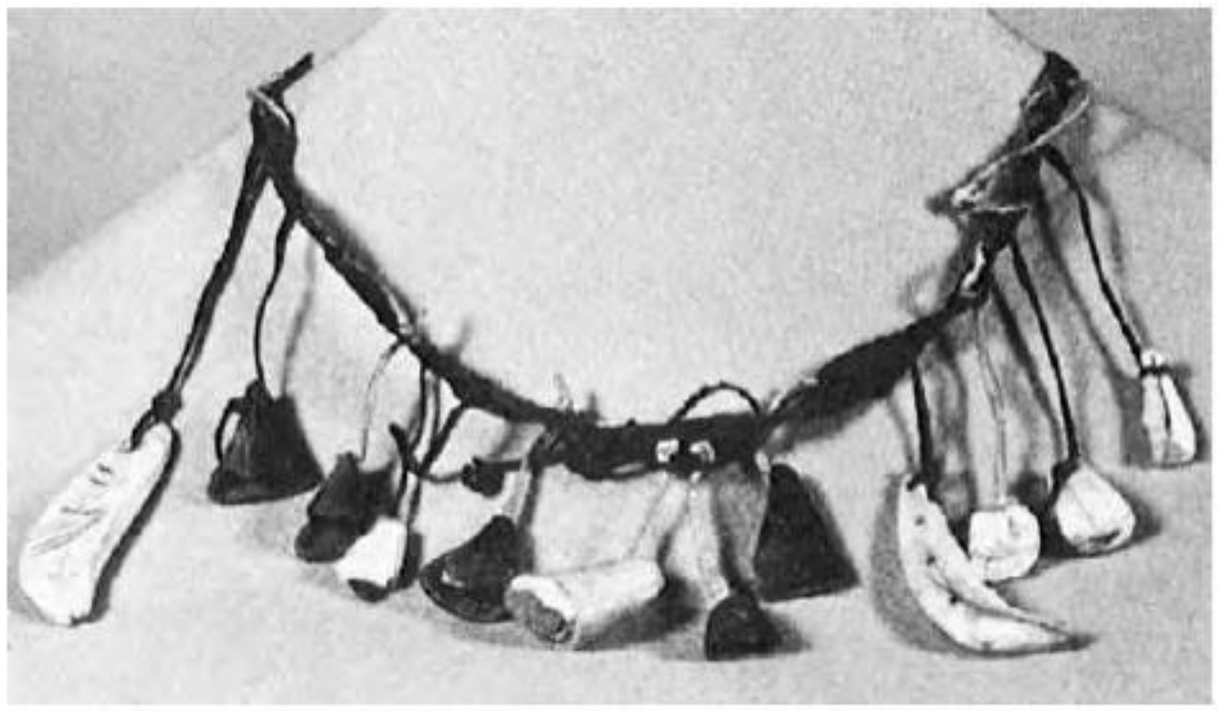
Spirit Guide

When **spirit mediums** speak of their control or guide, they are referring to the entity from the world beyond physical death who assists them in establishing contact with deceased humans. The spirit guides of mediums usually claim to have lived as humans on Earth before the time of their death and their graduation to higher realms of being.

In the shamanic tradition, the spirit guide or spirit helper is usually received by those who choose to participate in a vision quest. Before initiates embark upon this ordeal, tribal elders and shamans tutor them for many weeks on what to expect and what is expected of them. In many shamanic traditions, the



Shaman's necklace. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

A spirit guide or spirit helper is received by those who choose to participate in a vision quest.

For the more contemporary spirit mediums, who often prefer to call themselves "channels," the guide may represent itself as a being who once lived as a human on Earth or as a Light Being, an extraterrestrial, or even an angel. Regardless of the semantics involved, today's mediums and channels follow the basic procedures of ancient shamanic traditions.

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TOTEM ANIMAL

Among the shamanic or medicine teachings of the traditional Native Americans, the totem animal represents the physical form of one's spirit helper, the guide, who will lead the shaman into the spirit world and return him or her safely to the physical world. Contrary to the misinterpretations of early missionaries, the native people did not worship these animal representations of their guides as gods.

Latvian ethnologist Ivar Lissner stated in his *Man, God, and Magic* (1961) that his 17 years of expeditions among the shamans and people of the Tungus, Polynesians, Malaysians, Australian Aborigines, Ainus, Chinese, Mongols, and North American tribes demonstrated to him quite clearly that totemism is not religion. While all these diverse people lived in a world filled with animate beings, they all believed in a single supreme deity.

Aside from a few Venus-type mother-goddess statuettes, there remains a rather strange collection of ghostly creatures and a great variety of two-legged beings with the heads of animals and birds. Why, so many anthropologists have wondered, did these cave painters, despite their remarkable artistic gifts, never pass on an accurate idea of their features? Why did they confine themselves to portraying beings that were half-human, half-animal?

And then Lissner has an inspiration. It is quite possible that the Stone-Age artists really were portraying themselves, but in something more than in human shape. Perhaps they were depicting themselves "...in the guise of intermediary beings who were stronger than common men and able to penetrate more deeply into the mysteries of fate, that unfathomable interrelationship between animals, men, and gods." Lissner suggests that what the ancient cave painters may have been relaying is that the "road to supernatural powers is easier to follow in animal shape and that spirits can only be reached with an animal's assistance." The ancient artists may have been portraying themselves after all, but in animal guise, shamanistically.

The **spirit guides,** appearing as totemic animals, guide the shamans to the mysterious, transcendent reality beyond the material

world and lead them into another dimension of time and space wherein dwell the inhabitants of the spirit world. It is through such a portal that mediumistic shamans must pass to gain their contact with the grandfathers and grandmothers who reside there. With their spirit guide at their side in the form of a totem animal, they can communicate with the spirits and derive wisdom and knowledge which will serve their tribe or those who have come to seek specific information from the world beyond death.

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Vision Quest

The personal revelatory experience and the contact with the spirit world received during the vision quest becomes the fundamental guiding force in the shaman's power (medicine). In addition to those who would be shamans, all traditional young men and women may partake of the vision quest, setting out alone in the wilderness to fast, to exhaust the physical body, to pray, to establish their own contact with the dimension of spirit, and to receive their individual "medicine" power. The dogma of tribal rituals and the religious expressions of others become secondary to the guidance that one receives from his or her own personal visions.

"The seeker goes forth solitary," writes Hartley Burr Alexander in *The World's Rim* (1967) "carrying his pipe and with an offering of tobacco. There in the wilderness alone, he chants his song and utters his prayers while he waits, fasting, such revelation as the Powers may grant."

The vision quest is basic to all traditional Native American religious experience, but one may certainly see similarities between the youthful tribal members presenting themselves to the Great Mystery as helpless, shelterless, and humble supplicants and the initiates of other religious traditions who fast, flagellate, and prostrate themselves before their concept of a Supreme Being. In Christianity, the questing devotees kneel before a personal deity and beseech insight from the Son of God, whom they hope to please with their example of piety and self-sacrifice. In the Native American tribal traditions, the power granted by the vision quest comes from a vast and impersonal repository of spiritual energy; and those who partake of the quest receive their personal guardian spirit and a great vision that will grant them insight into the spiritual dimensions beyond physical reality.

Totem animals represent the physical form of one's spirit helper, the guide, who will lead a shaman into the spirit world and return him or her safely to the physical world.

For the traditional Native American, the vision quest may be likened to the first Communion in Christianity. Far from being a goal achieved, the vision quest marks the beginning of the traditionalist's lifelong search for knowledge and wisdom. Nor are the spiritual mechanics of the vision quest ignored once the youths have established contact with their guardian spirit and with the forces that are to aid them in the shaping of their destiny. At any stressful period of their life, the traditionalists may go into the wilderness to fast and to seek insight into the particular problems that beset them.

Hartley Burr Alexander saw the continued quest for wisdom of body and mind—the search for the single essential force at the core of every thought and deed—as the perpetually accumulating elements in medicine power. The reason the term "medicine" became applied to this life-career function is simply because those attaining stature as men and women who had acquired this special kind of wisdom were so often also great healers. The true meaning of "medicine" extends beyond the arts of healing to **clairvoyance, precognition,** and the control of weather elements.

The power received in the vision quest enables the practitioner to obtain personal contact with the invisible world of spirits and to pierce the sensory world of illusion which veils the Great Mystery.

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SPIRIT MEDIUMSHIP

A spirit medium is a person who has become qualified in some special way to form a link between the living and the dead. Through the physical agency of the medium, the spirits of the deceased may speak to their family and friends and relay messages of comfort, support, and personal information. While some mediums gain impressions from the spirit world in a fully conscious state, others place themselves into a trance, which is often accompanied by manifestations that appear to defy known physical laws, such as moving objects without touching them, levitating the mediums' own body, and materializing spirit forms of the deceased.

A spirit medium is a person who has become qualified in some special way to form a link between the living and the dead.

The essential attribute that qualifies one to be a medium is an extreme or abnormal sensitivity which seemingly allows the spirits more easily to control the individual's psyche. For this reason, mediums are often referred to as "sensitives."

During **seances,** spirit mediums, often working in a **trance** state, claim to be under the direction of a spirit control or **spirit guide** that serves as an intermediary between themselves and the spirits of deceased men and women. Once contact has been made with particular spirits in the other world, the guide speaks through the medium and relays messages to the sitters, those men and women who have assembled in the seance room for the opportunity of hearing words of comfort or guidance from their departed loved ones.

Spirit mediums argue that while Christianity, Judaism, and Islam promise their followers a life eternal whose reality must be taken on faith alone, for thousands of years those who visit mediums have been able to base their hope for a life beyond the grave on the tangible evidence provided by the phenomena provided in the seance room. Although they have been condemned as cultists, scorned as **satanists,** and reprimanded for communing with evil spirits by most of the major religions, mediums have remained thick-skinned toward their critics among the various clergy.

In addition to any religious objections one might have toward the kind of evidence that spirit mediums present as proof of life after death, an important factor that has long contributed to the layperson's skepticism toward mediums is the fact that few areas of human relationships are so open to cruel deceptions. It has taken neither scientific training nor orthodox religious views to expose many spirit mediums as charlatans preying upon such human emotions as grief and sorrow over the loss of a loved one.

Beginning in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, **Spiritualists** and spirit mediums began to contend with an increasingly materialistic and mechanistic science that did a great deal to obliterate the idea of a soul and the duality of mind and body. The concept of an eternal soul was being steadily eroded by an emphasis on brain cells, conditioned responses, and memory patterns that could exist only while the body remained alive.

When the British Society for Psychical Research (BSPR) was established in 1882 and the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) was formed in 1885, leading spirit mediums such as **Florence Cook** (1856–1904), **Mina "Margery" Crandon** (1888–1941), **Leonora E. Piper** (1857–1950), and **Daniel**

Are Spooky Things All in the Mind?

Spooky phenomena like levitating tables and ghostly goings-on that occur at seances are most likely manifestations of the power of suggestion, say some researchers.

At *Fortean Times* conventions in London, paranormal investigator Dr. Richard Wiseman arranged two fake seances in which participants were told they would be taking part in a reenactment in which the "medium" would be an actor. Even though they were told it was not a "real" seance, 30 percent of those who participated were convinced they saw a luminous-edged table levitate in the air —when it was suggested by the staged medium that it would do so.

The "seance" was filmed in infrared light so they had proof that the table did not move, yet 30 percent of people believed it had levitated, Wiseman stated. Wiseman said, "These seances are pretty spooky. We're arguing that some seance phenomena are down to the power of suggestion." Conceding that there might indeed be other explanations, and sometimes even an element of fraud or trickery, Wiseman expressed there were no supernatural forces at work.

The experiments were carried out with Emma Greening, also from the University of Hertfordshire, and Dr. Matthew Smith from Liverpool Hope University College.

In another study, with people who claimed to be highly intuitive, Wiseman and his colleague, Dr. Paul Rogers, produced results to show their claims might be something else. Their findings indicated that being highly intuitive may be a result of their simply being good at assessing strangers' personality traits.

Wendy Snowden and Kei Ito, both researchers from the University of Buckingham, reported in another study that the feeling of having been there before, known as "deja vu," was a very common experience associated with the particular personality traits of extroversion and emotional disorders.

The researchers' findings were presented at the European Congress of Psychology, organized by the British Psychological Society in London.

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C. P. WEBSTER'S PARANORMAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Researcher and artist Dr. Christopher Webster presents an interesting website of paranormal photography (especially the relationship between the crisis in belief and spirit photographs in the nineteenth century). Webster describes his work as being "to some degree a visual equivalent of automatic writing." He explores photography as a tool for recording the paranormal.

SOURCES:

C. P. Webster's Homepage and Paranormal Photography. http://users.aber.ac.uk/cpw/mainpage.html. 15 October 2001.

Dunglas Home (1833–1886) allowed themselves to be subjected to extensive tests conducted by psychical researchers, most of whom at least believed that man and mind were something more than physical things. However, as the experiments progressed year after year with spirit guides, materialized beings, and levitated objects, the researchers came more to believe in the enormous reach and abilities of the human psyche. They began to see the medium's spirit control as evidence that the human mind was capable of projecting a segment of itself unhampered by time and space, that one level of mind might be able to give "birth" to new personalities, that one level of the subconscious might telepathically gain knowledge of a departed individual from a sitter's memories while yet another level dramatized that knowledge into an imitation of the deceased's voice. In other words, the more the psychical researchers learned about the range and power of the human mind, the less credence they tended to grant to the spirit medium's "proof" of survival.

Spirit mediums have never felt that the phenomena of the seance room can be properly or fairly transferred to the sterile environment of the laboratory with any degree of success. In answering the criticism that spiritistic phenomena cannot be repeated again under individually controlled conditions as demanded of a scientific experiment, Maurice Barbanell (1902–1981) wrote in *This Is Spiritualism* (1966) that such was not possible "because mediumship involves the use of human beings. Whenever you deal with human beings, the human factor can be wayward and liable to upset the most intricate calculations."

Sometime in the 1940s, Dr. **J. B. Rhine** (1895–1980) summarized the research on survival evidence provided by spirit mediums in the laboratory to be a draw. While hardly anyone would claim that all the investigations conducted by psychical researchers since the 1880s could disprove the claim that "if a man shall die he shall in some manner or other be capable of living again," Rhine stated, "On the other hand, no serious scientific student of the field of investigation could say that a clear, defensible, scientific confrontation has been reached."

However, in March of 2001, scientists involved in a unique study of spirit mediums at the University of Arizona announced that their findings were so extraordinary that they raised fundamental questions about the survival of human consciousness after death. Professor Gary Schwartz, who led the team of researchers, concluded that highly skilled spirit mediums were able to deal directly with the dead, rather than merely with the minds of the sitters. In the opinion of the scientists, all the data they gathered was "consistently in accord with survival of consciousness after death." Based on all their data to date, Schwartz said, "The most parsimonious explanation is that the mediums are in direct communication with the deceased."

Ouija boards were created in the 1890s and used by spirit mediums to contact people in the afterlife. It was used in seances and as a parlor game. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

OUIJA BOARD

A Ouija board is used by some **spirit mediums** for purposes of contacting the other side. The instrument has two parts: a large smooth board, approximately 22 by 15 inches, and a three-legged triangular or heart-shaped pointer called a planchette, which slides easily across the face of the board. On the board the letters of the alphabet are arrayed in large, easily read characters in two curved lines; above to the right and left, respectively, are the words "yes" and "no." At the bottom are the words "Good Bye" (on some boards the word "Maybe" is added). During a **seance,** spirit mediums who use a Ouija board will place their fingers lightly on the planchette, and the spirits will provide the energy to move it to answer yes or no questions or to spell out names and more detailed information. On certain occasions, mediums may invite one or more sitters to place their own hands on the planchette so that they may feel the spiritual force controlling its movements and determine that the medium is not responsible for its actions.

Spirit mediums and certain psychical researchers maintain that the Ouija board has been instrumental in producing volumes of impressive communications from the other side and has also helped to develop hundreds of psychic-sensitives who have become adept at spirit contact.

The Ouija board was first available for the American public in 1890 and was marketed as a parlor game. According to its creators, E. C. Reiche, Elijah Bond, and Charles Kennard, the name of the board was derived from the ancient Egyptian word for good luck. Egyptologists flatly stated that "ouija" was not an ancient blessing, and William Fuld, a foreman at Kennard's company, agreed, protesting that he was the one who had really invented the board, fashioning its name by splicing together the German (ja) and the French (oui)

words for "yes." In 1892, Kennard lost his company, and the selling of the Ouija boards was taken over by Fuld.

It seems likely that the Ouija board was inspired by the planchette that has been used by spirit mediums for centuries as they received automatic writing from their control. This planchette is a roughly triangular or heart-shaped object about four inches long and three inches wide, approximately one-eighth on an inch thick, and is mounted on two small legs which are generally padded with felt or equipped with small wheels or casters. At the tip of the planchette is a hole through which a soft pencil or ballpoint pen can be inserted point downward to serve as a third leg. When the planchette is placed on a plain sheet of paper and the medium places his or her fingers lightly on its surface, the planchette will move across the paper and write messages for those sitters in attendance at the seance.

THE *Ouija board was first available for the American public in 1890 and was marketed as a parlor game.*

The idea of the Ouija board may also be a modern adaptation of glass writing, a method still favored by some spirit mediums. In glass writing, a fairly large sheet of paper on which the letters of the alphabet are printed in a wide circle is placed on a table. On it, upside down, is placed a thin wine glass or a light water tumbler. Then the sitters, usually two and never more than four, place their fingertips on the bottom of the upturned glass. After a while, spirit energy is believed to enter the glass. As the glass moves, it will come to rest over certain letters which, when written out on a separate sheet of paper, will spell out intelligent messages.

Skeptics believe that those mediums who use such devices as a Ouija board are not summoning spirits to provide the answers to questions put to the board, but are either consciously or unconsciously moving the planchette to spell out the desired answers. The same thing is true of those persons who use the Ouija board as a kind of parlor game and who may receive "spirit communications" that appear on first examination to be baffling and indicative of unseen intelligences hovering nearby. These people may have permitted themselves to become suggestible by the mood provoked by seeking spirit contact and may have allowed the answers provided by the planchette to reflect their unconscious thoughts, fears, or wishes.

Both psychical researchers and skeptical investigators agree that impressionable children should not use the Ouija board as a game to be played late at night during slumber parties or sleep-overs. Often the messages relayed by the planchette—whether by spirits or the human unconscious—are of a profane and vile nature, revealing psychological weaknesses and primal fears.

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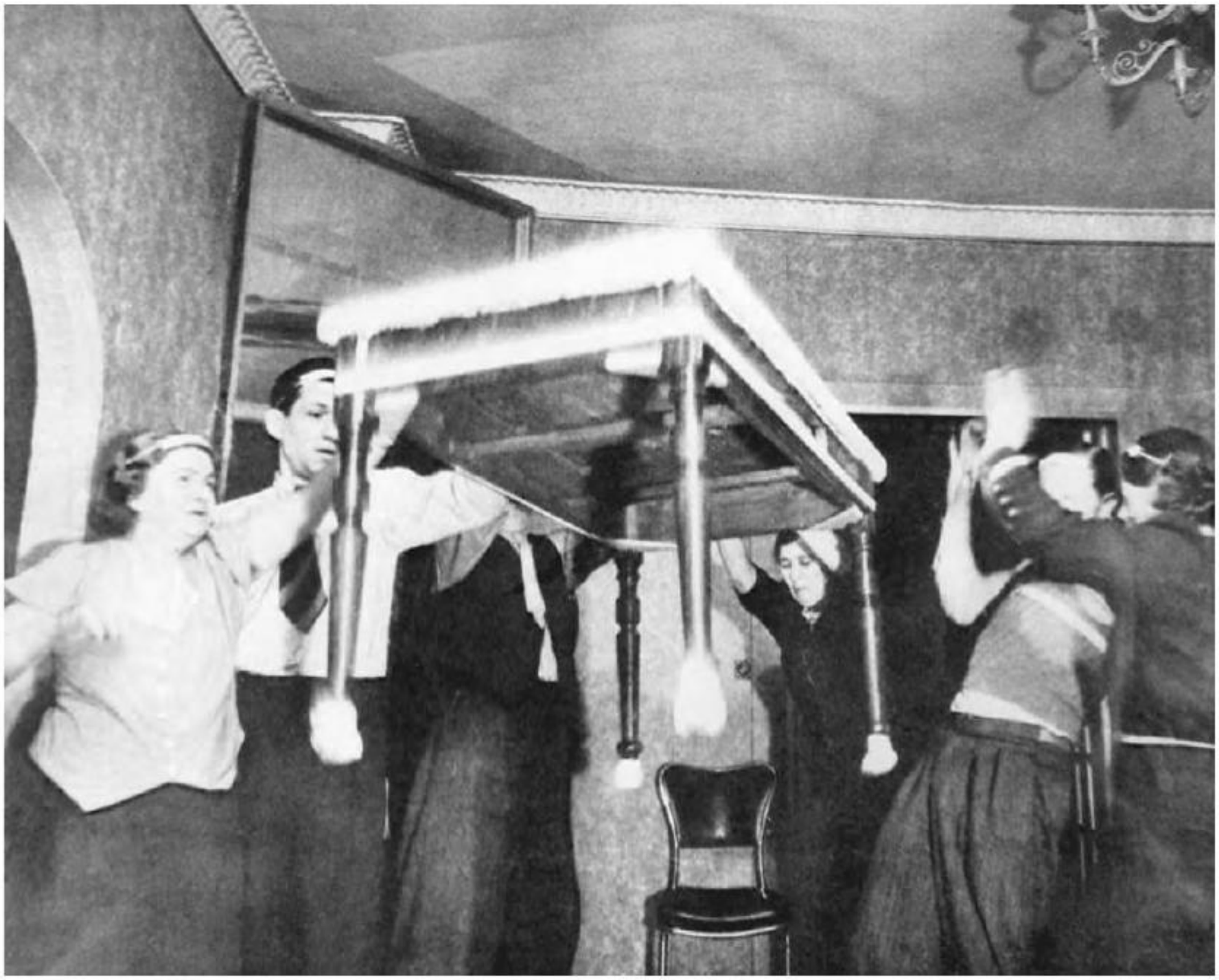
SEANCE

Those who accept the teachings of **Spiritualism** believe that the varied phenomena associated with a seance, such as the levitation of objects, the materialization of spirit forms, or the acquisition of information beyond the normal sensory channels, emanate from spirits of the dead. Nonspiritualists who attend seances may hold a wide variety of religious and philosophical views, but they are likely to believe that some part of their being survives physical death, and they are willing to base their hope for life eternal on the phenomena of the seance room and the messages that they receive from discarnate beings.

After the sitters have been ushered into the seance room with its subdued lighting, they are invited to be seated, generally forming a circle around a large round table. The successful medium of an established reputa-



A group of men and women levitating a table. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

tion usually begins the seance in a friendly manner, making light conversation with each of the sitters. Such an approach relaxes the sitters and encourages them to express their wishes or any concerns that they might have about their communicating with the deceased. The medium is quite certain that their very presence at a seance indicates some degree of receptivity to the idea of communication with the dead. By the time the medium has entered the meditative state that induces the trance which summons the spirit guide, the sitters have been prepared by the medium's confidence and by their own beliefs and expectancy to accept the reality of an outside intelligence occupying the medium's physical body.

Mediums usually make it quite clear to neophyte sitters that the best manner in which to secure a demonstration of genuine spiritistic phenomena is to assure the medium of one's good will. The sitter should also let the medium know that he or she is assured of the medium's honesty and abilities. The sitter should not hurry the medium, but keep in mind that the greatest guarantee of a successful seance is the medium's serene state of mind.

Often the spirit voices of the deceased speak through a metal trumpet that has been coated with luminous paint and which floats around the seance room. At trumpet seances—almost invariably conducted in complete darkness—the horn rises, apparently lifted by spirit hands, and the voices of the departed are heard speaking through the instrument. Theoretically, these voices manifest independently from the medium. Trumpet

mediums are popular at Spiritualist camps, and husband and wife teams often travel the circle of summer camps giving demonstrations. Skeptics suggest that the reason for such male and female partnerships among trumpet mediums is the simple fact that many more voice tones may be imitated by the mediums during the course of a seance.

The materialization of an old coin, a ring, a bracelet, or a semiprecious stone from the spirit world to a sitter attending a seance is called an "apport" (from the French *apporter*, "to bring"). According to mediums, spirit friends bring these objects from great distances to lay before the sitters. Sometimes, according to mediums, these objects come from old treasure chests that have lain lost and forgotten beneath the land or sea for ages. On other occasions, the apports are said to be items lost by owners who are now dead and presented as gifts to their living relatives in attendance at the seance.

PSYCHIC *photography is nearly as old as photography itself.*

Spirit photography is one phenomenon of the seance room which seems to function as effectively in a spontaneous situation—such as snapping a photograph in a graveyard or a haunted house—as in the trappings of the sitting room. Psychic photography is nearly as old as photography itself. Since the earliest daguerrotypes, people have been taking pictures that have shown unexplainable objects and figures in the background. The idea that such figures and objects could have originated because of some paranormal influence has been rejected by the great majority of scientists. Hazy, spectral figures have been credited to the faulty processing of film. Clearly discernible and even recognizable features on the ghostly faces have been attributed to deliberate fakery.

In the early days of photography, such skepticism was understandable because of the many steps of processing that a photograph had to undergo before it could be examined. With loading and unloading of the film and darkroom operations that sometimes took hours, the opportunities for switching the plates were so great that even the most open-minded person could not help becoming suspicious if shown the photograph of spirit forms appearing over his or her shoulder after the portrait had been taken.

Technological advances in photography have managed to eliminate many such objections and, at the same time, created many more. With modern 10-second processing of film and the use of an observer's own camera, the opportunity for trickery in the seance room has been greatly lowered. But computer technology has been able to create seamless photographs of an endless array of ghosts, phantoms, and spirit forms. Ghost sites and spirit photographs are popular on the Internet and available for scrutiny by skeptic and believer alike.

Perhaps the ultimate in seance phenomena is the materialization of a spirit form that is in some way recognizable to one or more of the sitters. This is often accomplished through the utilization of a cabinet from which the materialized spirit emerges and communicates with those gathered around the medium. Spirit cabinets may be elaborate wooden structures or they may simply be blankets strung across wires in order to give the medium some privacy while in trance.

"The miracle of materialization," Maurice Barbanell (1902–1981) writes in *This Is Spiritualism* (1959), "is that in a few minutes there is reproduced in the seance room the birth which normally takes nine months in the mother's womb." Numerous researchers, as well as Spiritualists, have claimed to have seen a nearly invisible cord which links the materialized spirit figure to the medium and have all made the obvious comparison to an umbilical cord.

If, indeed, disembodied spirits are capable of fashioning temporary physical bodies for their ethereal personalities, just what kind of substance could be used for such a remarkable materialization? The name that Spiritualists

give to such a substance is "ectoplasm," and they contend that it is drawn from the medium's body.

Maurice Barbanell claims that ectoplasm is ideoplastic by nature, which is to suggest that it may be molded by the psychic "womb" of the medium into a representation of the human body. Barbanell gives "spirit chemists" the credit for compounding ectoplasm until it assumes a human form that "breathes, walks, and talks, and is apparently complete even to fingernails."

French researcher Dr. Charles Richet (1850–1935) christened ectoplasm in the 1920s, but Baron Albert von Schrenck Notzing (1862–1929), a German investigator of the paranormal, gained a medium's permission to "amputate" some of the material and to analyze it. He found it to be a colorless, odorless, slightly alkaline fluid with traces of skin discs, minute particles of flesh, sputum, and granulates of the mucous membrane.

Few contemporary mediums attempt to produce ectoplasmic materializations in the seance room. Today, the vast majority of seances conducted by professional mediums fit into the categories of "direct-voice" communication, during which the spirit guide speaks directly to the sitters through a medium who appears in a deep state of trance; "twilight" communication, during which the medium in a very light altered state of consciousness relays messages from the guide in a conversational exchange with the sitters; or a "reading," in which the medium in a fully conscious state presents a series of images and messages that are "shown" or "told" by spirits who have some personal connection to the sitters.

Some **parapsychologists** who have witnessed a wide range of the phenomena of the seance room under test conditions state that all such manifestations may be the result of conscious or unconscious fraud on the part of the medium. These researchers also point out that the intelligence exhibited by the "spirits" appears to be always on a level with that of the medium through whom they manifest.

Such critics go on to state that the spirits can be controlled by the power of suggestion and can be made to respond to questions which have no basis in reality. Many investigators have discovered that they can as readily establish communication with an imaginary person as with a real one.

Other parapsychologists accept a great deal of the phenomena of the seance room, but they deny that the source of the manifestations comes from spirits. These investigators have found that in many seances conducted under controlled conditions, the information relayed often rises far above the medium's known objective intelligence, but they argue that there are a number of ways by which the subjective mind can be elevated above the threshold of ordinary consciousness to the point where various phenomena may be produced. When mediums induce the trance state which summons the spirit control, they may sincerely believe that their physical body is possessed by an outside intelligence. When the subjective mind is operating under the suggestion that it is being controlled by the spirit of a deceased person, it can become marvelously adept at filling in the details of that person's life on Earth.

For many individuals who hold certain religious views, it is abhorrent for anyone to claim the ability to talk to the dead. At best, in this view, such claimants are frauds and charlatans. At worst, they are committing a grave sin. And if the phenomena of the seance room is really due to as-yet unknown faculties of the human mind, then the sins of mediums are doubled if they claim that manifestations originating in their subconscious come from discarnate entities.

Spiritualists will answer such charges by stating that the more conservative religions promise their congregations a life eternal, but spirit mediums offer tangible proof that the human soul does survive the act of physical death. They will assert that millions of stricken hearts have been healed by the consolation afforded by the conviction that they have truly communicated with the spirits of loved ones who have gone on before. They will argue that the sincere medium is no more a fraud than the sincere pastor, priest, or rabbi. And when parapsychologists claim that the phenomena of the seance room are controlled

by the subconscious of the medium, Spiritualists insist that these researchers are basing their conclusions on a hypothesis influenced by mechanistic psychology and a materialistic society.

Parapsychologists counter by stating that the subjective mind of the medium operates under the suggestion that it is being controlled by the spirit of a deceased person. The medium has conditioned his or her subjective mind to that pervading premise by a selective education, environment, and religious beliefs; therefore, any display of paranormal abilities, such as **clairvoyance, telepathy,** or **precognition,** will be attributed to the interaction of spirit entities.

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SPIRIT CONTROL

Spirit mediums believe that while they are in an entranced state of consciousness, they fall under the control of a particular spirit that has become their special guide and who speaks through them and works all manner of mysterious phenomena on their behalf. Although this spirit was once a living person, it has, since its time in the spirit world, become greatly elevated in spiritual awareness.

The concept of a spirit guide goes back to antiquity. The philosopher Socrates (c. 470 B.C.E.–399 B.C.E.) furnishes the most notable example in ancient times of an individual whose subjective mind was able to communicate with his objective mind by direct speech stimulus. Socrates referred to this voice as his daemon (not to be confused with **"demon,"** a fallen angel or a negative, possessing entity). Daemon is better translated as **guardian angel** or muse, and the philosopher believed that his guardian spirit kept vigil and warned him of approaching danger.

Parapsychologists have suggested that the spirit guide may be another little-known power of the mind which enables the medium's subjective level of consciousness to dramatize another personality, complete with a full range of personal characteristics and its very own voice. The subjective mind of the medium may clairaudiently contact its own objective level, as in the instances of those people, such as Socrates, who claim to hear the voice of a personal guide.

Mediums perceive the spirit guide in a very different manner. While they may admit that the action of the subjective mind is not entirely eliminated during trance and the arrival of the guide, they will insist that their subconscious mind is taken over and controlled by a spirit entity of great compassion and wisdom.

Psychical researchers will counter such a claim of communication with a spirit by stating that the intelligence exhibited by the spirit control appears to be always on a level with that of the medium through whom it manifests itself. Some investigators of mediumistic phenomena will admit that the information relayed during a seance often rises above the medium's known objective intelligence, but they are quick to point out that the limits of the human subjective mind are not yet known.

Critics of spiritualistic phenomena also point out that the "spirits" can often be controlled by the power of suggestion and can be made to respond to questions which have no basis in reality. Many investigators have discovered that one can as readily establish communication with an imaginary person as with

a real one. Careless or mediocre mediums have found themselves the object of ridicule when they have relayed a message from a living person or even from a sitter who has given the medium a fictitious name.

The experienced and knowledgeable psychical researcher **Hereward Carrington** (1880–1958) devoted an entire book, *The Case for Psychic Survival* (1957), to his examination of **Eileen Garrett** (1892–1970), an English medium who is generally regarded as one of the greatest of the twentieth century, and her spirit control, Uvani. Carrington administered an extensive battery of personality tests to both Uvani and Garrett so that researchers might compare the two sets of responses. The spirit guide and the medium sat through sessions of the Bernreuter Personality Inventory, the Thurstone Attitude Scale, the Woodworth Neurotic Inventory, the Rorschach Test, and a seemingly endless number of word association tests. Carrington concluded that even though there existed only slight evidence for the genuinely supernatural character of spirit guides, "...they nevertheless succeed in bringing through a vast mass of supernormal information which could not be obtained in their absence." Spirit guides, he theorized, seem to act as some sort of psychic catalyst.

Carrington speculated that the function of a medium's spirit guide appears to be that of an intermediary—and whether the entity is truly a spirit or a personification of the medium's subconscious, it is only through the cooperation of the guide that authentic, verifiable messages are obtained.

The psychical researcher stressed in his report that an essential and significant difference between the secondary personality in pathological cases—such as multiple personality and schizophrenia—and the personality of the spirit guide in mediumship lay in the fact that in the pathological cases, the secondary personalities do not acquire supernormal information, while in mediumship, the guide does: "In the pathological cases, we seem to have a mere splitting of the mind, while in the mediumship cases we have to deal with a (perhaps fictitious) personality which is nevertheless in touch or contact, in some mysterious way, with another (spiritual) world, from which it derives information, and through which genuine messages often come."

Entranced medium and spirit phenomenon. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

THE concept of spirit control goes as far back as to Socrates's lifetime.

In an interesting appendix to Carrington's book, he records a conversation with the spirit guide Uvani in which he questions him concerning the mechanics involved in the controlling of Eileen Garrett's "underconsciousness," his term for the unconscious. Uvani emphasizes that although he controls the medium's "underconsciousness," he has absolutely no control over her conscious mind—nor would he ever consider such control to be ethical or right. In answer to a direct question of whether or not he had any knowledge of the medium's thoughts, Uvani stressed that he had no interest in her thinking processes or in the activity of her conscious mind. It was that time when she was in the trance state that he could make the medium's unconscious become a means of expression not only for his ideas but for the concepts and thoughts of many other entities. Garrett's "underconsciousness" became an instrument that he could work "like notes on a piano."

Carrington touches on two questions that skeptics and believers alike have asked of many mediums and their alleged guides:

1. How do you know when the medium is ready for you to assume control of her unconscious?;
2. If in life you were a man from another culture speaking a different language, how is it that you now speak perfect English through the medium?

To the first question, Uvani responded that he received a "telegraphed impression" when the mediumistic instrument was ready. Then the medium's conscious mind becomes very low in energy, but her "soulbody" becomes more vibrant before he assumes command.

As to the question of speaking perfect English through their medium's mouths, Uvani answered bluntly that he does not speak English: "It is my Instrument who speaks. I impress my thought upon her, on that 'figment' which I must work up, but no word of mine actually comes to you. The Instrument is impressed by my personal contact."

Chicago psychic-sensitive **Irene F. Hughes** explained how she can tell when her spirit guide wishes to bring forth an impression or message from a discarnate entity on the other side. "I am quiet, completely relaxed, deep in meditation," she explained. "I may be alone at home or among friends in a prayer circle. A tingling sensation, similar to a chill, begins on my right ankle, then on my left. Slowly the tingling spreads to cover my entire body. It is as though a soft silken skin has been pulled over me, glove-tight—even over my face, changing its features—yet comfortable and protective. At this point I am on the way to that golden flow of consciousness that we earthlings term the Spirit Plane. I am in semi-trance. Were I in full trance, I could not recall a single detail."

As her involvement with the spirit plane progresses, Hughes says that her body becomes as "icy cold as death itself," yet a delightful warmth engulfs her inner self. Soon, Kaygee, her spirit teacher, appears, smiles, bows to her as a trusted friend, indicating approval of her incursion into the spirit world. By a slight waving of his hand, he ushers in those of the spirit plane who wish to speak through her. "I am bound to my spirit teacher by ties that are ethereal, yet mighty as a coaxial cable," she said. "Every thought that flashes through his consciousness becomes crystal clear also in my consciousness."

Critics of the spiritistic hypothesis remain unimpressed by the agile mental phenomena of the spirit guide and the medium's attempts to explain the levels of his or her interaction with this mysterious personality. Many parapsychologists agree that mediums may arrive at certain information through paranormal means, but they maintain that the knowledge was gained through extrasensory abilities rather than through the cooperation of spirits. And in those cases when the alleged spirit guide displays a prima donna's temperament at being questioned for further proof of identity, it would seem that all-too-human behavior finds its seat in the unconscious of the medium.

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TRANCE

Numerous researchers have noted the obvious parallels between hypnotic sleep and the trance state of the medium. In **hypnosis** the subject is controlled by the suggestions of the hypnotist. In the trance state, many investigators believe, the medium is controlled by autosuggestion—a kind of self-induced hypnotic state.

Good subjects for hypnosis can be made to assume any number of characterizations, from elderly people to babies, and will firmly appear to believe themselves to be the individuals they represent, complete with a set of habits and idiosyncrasies for the characters they are impersonating. Likewise mediums, through

autosuggestion in the trance state, assume the guise of the spirit communicators who have come to speak to the sitters in the seance circle. Professional hypnotists have often claimed that all the phenomena of mediumship can be duplicated through their subjects by suggesting to them that they are under the control of discarnate entities.

A medium or a **Spiritualist** might counter such an assertion by saying that certain spirits may actually take possession of a hypnotic subject when they receive permission to do so, and that the subject may then truly be said to be in the control of the souls of the deceased.

Parapsychologists who have tested both the hypnosis hypothesis and the possibility of spirit **possession** have found that, in some instances, it is just as easy to obtain communication from a living person through a hypnotic subject or a medium as from a dead one, and from a fictitious person as from a real one, simply by making the proper suggestion to either entranced agent.

When mediums enter the trance state, they enter into a subjective condition that leaves them as open and amenable to the law of suggestion as is the subject of hypnosis. The potent suggestion that the spirit of a deceased person is about to enter their body and control them is ever present in the subjective mind of mediums. Such a suggestion has been a part of their educational development, and their religious beliefs are based on the "fact" of spirit survival and communication. All paranormal phenomena are considered by mediums to be a direct interaction of the spirit world with the material world. The trance state allows them to cooperate with spirit personalities and to become a vital link in communication between the two worlds. Since mediums believe so strongly in survival and their ability to establish contact with the departed, it is their mission to aid others in communicating with their beloved deceased.

Many parapsychologists theorize that with such a powerful autosuggestion constantly being directed to the transcendent or subjective level of the mind of a medium, all subjective knowledge gained by establishing telepathic rapport with the unconscious level of other minds will be immediately interpreted as information gained by the intercession of spirits. And so far as the transcendent mind of the medium is able to receive impressions of the "spirits," that mental image will be impersonated with all the creative abilities that reside in the almost limitless range of subjective intelligence.

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Mediums and Channelers

The idea that humans survive physical death, that some part of the human being is immortal, profoundly affects the lives of those who harbor such a belief. While Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and many other religions promise their followers some form of a life after death, many thousands of men and women feel that they have proof of a life beyond the grave based on the evidence of survival that manifests through spirit mediums.

THE idea that humans survive physical death, profoundly affects the lives of those who harbor such a belief.

Some psychical researchers maintain that the principal difference between a psychic-sensitive and a trance medium is that the psychic attributes his or her talents to some manifestations of extrasensory ability, such as **clairvoyance, precognition,** or **telepathy,** whereas the medium credits his or her abilities to the interaction with spirits.

BERKELEY PSYCHIC INSTITUTE

Berkeley Psychic Institute (BPI), throughout California—with locations in Berkeley, Mountain View, Sacramento, and Santa Rosa—refers to itself as "a Psychic Kindergarten." The meaning of kindergarten, in this case, is the virtual playground in the psychic field, a place for exploring what it means to be psychic.

Since 1973, the BPI has taught students how to recognize and develop their own psychic abilities through classes in clairvoyance, meditation, healing, and male and female energy. Since that time, more than 100,000 students have taken classes, and an additional 4,000-plus have graduated from a one-year intensive clairvoyant training program.

SOURCES:

Berkeley Psychic Institute. http://www.berkeleypsychic.com/BPI/bpi.html. 15 October 2001.

Mediums most often relay messages from the other side through the agency of a **spirit control** or **spirit guide,** an entity who claims to have lived on Earth and acquired certain skills, knowledge, and wisdom before its own physical death. The concept of a spirit guide dates back to antiquity, and serious scholars and researchers have been asking the same question for hundreds of years: Is this alleged entity, who claims to speak through the medium, really a spirit, or is it the voice of the medium's subconscious?

Some mediums would probably concede that the action of the subjective mind is not entirely eliminated during trance and the arrival of the spirit control, but from their viewpoint their subconscious is taken over by the guide. An aspect of mediumistic phenomena on which both psychical researchers and mediums will be likely to agree is that there is an intelligence that directs and controls them. Another area of agreement would probably be that this intelligence is a human intelligence. Once again, the area of dispute would be whether that human intelligence issues from the living or from the dead. Interestingly, spirit communication still requires both a soul and a body—the soul of an alleged deceased human personality and the physical body of the medium.

In the 1970s, after the publication of **Jane Roberts**'s (1929–1984) books *The Seth Material* and *Seth Speaks*, "channeling" became a more popular name for mediumship, and it remains so to the present day. Jane Roberts received contact with an entity named Seth after undergoing a **trance state** while Robert Butts, her husband, recorded the thought, ideas, and concepts communicated by the spirit in notebooks. The material dictated by Seth was literate and provocative, and especially well-suited to a generation of maturing sixties' flower children and baby boomers. It wasn't long before Seth discussion groups around the United States were celebrating such concepts as the following: 1) We all create our own reality; 2) Our point of power lies in the present; and 3) We are all gods couched in "creaturehood." Nor was it long before "channelers" were emerging in large numbers throughout the country, and individuals such as **Jach Pursel,** Kevin Ryerson (1953–), and **J. Z. Knight** (1946–) had attained national and international celebrity status.

Perhaps in the mind of the channelers, the designation of "mediums" conjured up images of the traditional darkened seance parlors and ectoplasmic spirit guides, imagery that had become unacceptable to the modern spirit communicator, who more often relays messages from guides and master teachers in the full light of a platform setting or a television studio and seldom claims to materialize anything other than an engaging performance for the assembled audience. Then, too, just as in the 1930s when mediums were often compared to radio receiving sets for transmissions from the spirit world, it likely occurred to someone that the contemporary medium might be thought of as being similar to a

Boundary Institute—Got psi?

Boundary Institute, in Los Altos, California, is a nonprofit scientific research center, focusing on the development and exploration of physics, quantum theories of physics, mathematics and their linked relationships.

Asserting they are beginning to understand and explain psi phenomena—without contradicting existing well-established physical laws—they use the standard tools of science, such as grounded theoretical development, carefully controlled experiments, statistical analyses and replication, and collaboration with other researchers.

One of the most popular features is the institute's *On-Line Experimental Program,* focusing in the areas of psi and the psychic. Also of interest is background information on psychic phenomena, profiles of the staff and research associates, and various papers and articles about the theories they are developing and the experimental evidence that has been accumulated.

Sources:

Boundary Institute. http://www.boundaryinstitute.org. 15 October 2001.

human television channel, receiving thoughts and images from beyond. Whichever title is preferred by those who claim to relay messages from the spirits, the process of communication remains the same: Spirit entities occupy the physical body of the channelers or the mediums and speak through them.

Although the very idea of establishing contact with great spirit teachers from the beyond or from other dimensions of reality seemed new and exciting to the great masses of men and women in the 1970s, from the viewpoint of those individuals who research such matters it seemed only as though another cycle had once again reached its season and general public interest in spirit contact had returned. It was time again to recognize those sensitive men and women—modern-day shamans, so to speak—who were carrying on the tradition of spirit communication first set in motion in the nineteenth century by such great mediums as **Daniel Dunglas Home** (1833–1886), **Mina "Margery" Crandon** (1889–1941), **Leonora E. Piper** (1857–1950), and **Eileen Garrett** (1892–1970)—all of whom were quite likely to be completely unknown to the general public and even, perhaps, to the contemporary crop of channelers themselves. In addition to the pioneer work accomplished by such long-forgotten spirit mediums as those named above, the entire New Age Movement of the late twentieth century owes a great debt to the controversial **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** (1831–1891), who was the first to popularize "channeling" wisdom from ancient teachers and masters, as well as the mystique of past lives and lost worlds.

In 1987, the ABC television network presented a miniseries based on actress Shirley

RHINE RESEARCH CENTER

The Rhine Research Center is the successor to the Duke University Parapsychology Laboratory. It carries forward Duke's research mission to explore unusual experiences. Located adjacent to Duke University's East Campus in Durham, North Carolina, the center offers a variety of lectures, workshops, guest speakers, and conferences, in addition to courses.

SOURCES:

Rhine Research Center. http://www.rhine.org. 15 October 2001.

MacLaine's (1934–) book *Out on a Limb* (1987), which dealt with many subjects exciting to New Age enthusiasts, such as reincarnation, extraterrestrial visitation, ancient mysteries, and spirit communication. Perhaps the most captivating segments of the miniseries depicted MacLaine receiving spirit communication through channeler Kevin Ryerson. The actress and the channeler played themselves in the five-hour dramatization on prime-time television, and an international audience of millions were able to see for themselves how Tom McPherson, the 400-year-old spirit of an Irishman, spoke through Ryerson to advise MacLaine. Due to the popularity of *Out on a Limb* as a book and as a miniseries, channeling became a kind of craze throughout North America. The actress herself conducted a series of seminars in which she openly discussed her beliefs in past lives, UFOs, and spirit communication. Channeling and the claimed accessibility of the world beyond death achieved a peak of popularity which led to an outpouring of television programs, motion pictures, books, New Age expos, psychic fairs, and the "birth" of new channelers in a virtual cosmic population explosion. The interest in channelers and after-death communication continues to find its expression in such individuals as **Sylvia Browne** (1936–), **James Van Praagh** (ca. 1960–), and **John Edward.**

Even in this day of mass communication, Skylabs, the Internet, and increasingly sophisticated technology people are still fascinated by mediumship, channeling, and contacting the spirit world. According to J. Z. Knight (1946–), another of Shirley MacLaine's favorite channelers, through her guide, Ramtha, believes the reason for their continued popularity is that there really aren't any mysteries left in humankind's material journey. Millions of people have reached a kind of peak in their evolution. Knight explained: "This has nothing to do with class distinction. Rich and poor, superstars and mediocrity alike feel that there must be more to life than this. The rich ask if there isn't more to life than material things. They also ask, 'Who am I?' 'Why am I doing this?' The poor ask if there isn't more to life than strife and suffering."

Knight says that Ramtha, the 35,000-year-old warrior from **Lemuria** who speaks through her, calls this point in people's lives the "time of fantastic realism." Ramtha also said that the human journey has reached a point when the self seeks to turn inward to self-examination. "In this age of communication and travel and the media, we have all been brought so close together," Knight said. "There really isn't much left to discover about our binary-thinking world. The next step will have to be that the analogical mind takes things into a different perspective, and we find ourselves in an 'unknown mind,' discovering what the ultimate journey is all about."

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Kevin Ryerson, channeler. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

SYLVIA BROWNE (1936–)

Spiritual advisor, trance medium, and psychic detective Sylvia Brown has proclaimed that her goals are to prove that the soul survives death, that God is a real and loving presence, and that there is a divine plan to everyone's life.

Browne is an example of the modern channel/medium who has become a media personality, thanks to her 27 years of making television and radio talk show appearances, 47 years of giving psychic readings, and 25 years of conducting paranormal research. Slowly building a reputation as a psychic-sensitive and trance channeler in California throughout the sixties, seventies, and eighties, Browne arrived upon the national scene in December of 1998 when she appeared on the *Montel Williams Show* to promote her biography, *Adventures of a Psychic*. The best-selling book was quickly followed in 1999 by *The Other Side and Back: A Psychic's Guide to Our World and Beyond*. These books, coupled with her appearances on *Larry King Live*, the *Montel Williams Show*, and *Unsolved Mysteries*, soon increased her popularity quotient to celebrity status.

Born Sylvia Shoemaker in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1936, she first gave evidence of her psychic ability at the age of five when she experienced frightening premonitions of the deaths of her two great-grandmothers just weeks before their passing. Fortunately for the sensitive child, she had her grandmother, Ada Coil, an established and respected psychic counselor and healer, to guide her and to help her to understand her paranormal talents, including the ability to communicate with those in the spirit world. Developing as a deep trance medium, Browne learned to allow her guide "Francine" to enter her body and communicate directly with people.

For many years Sylvia Browne quietly shared her insights with family and friends and became well known in the Kansas City area for her talent in helping people foresee their future. Even after moving to California in 1964, she continued assisting people on a private basis.

About 10 years after making the move to the West Coast, Browne decided that after having spent 18 years as a Catholic schoolteacher, she now wished to research the paranormal and her own psychic abilities through a professionally established and legally sanctioned organization. In 1974, she incorporated the Nirvana Foundation for Psychic Research, a nonprofit organization known today as the Sylvia Browne Corporation. Soon the readings in her home with a dozen or so friends in attendance had grown to gatherings of two or three hundred people in churches and town halls. Although she was raised predominantly a Roman Catholic, she was familiar with the Jewish, Episcopalian, and Lutheran backgrounds of her extended family. In 1986, she established a church called the Society of Novus Spiritus (New Spirit), which, though based essentially upon Christian Gnostic the-

Channel Sylvia Browne (1936–) has been on numerous talk shows, including the Montel Williams Show. (SYLVIA BROWNE CORPORATION)

ology, rejects the concepts of sin, guilt, and retribution and is devoted to the building of a spiritual community that loves both the Father and Mother God.

While many spirit mediums reject reincarnation as contradictory to their concept of the divine program of spiritual evolution for the spirits of the deceased on the other side, Sylvia Browne accepts past lives as a central theme in her philosophy. She states that she has conducted thousands of **hypnotic regressions** and hundreds of trance sessions, which have convinced her that to understand the laws of karma/reincarnation is to possess one of the keys to understanding the true meaning of life. Browne is not dogmatic regarding any of her personal views, however, and she makes a point not to force her beliefs on anyone else.

There are hazards in establishing a high profile as a medium or a psychic-sensitive. Orthodox religionists condemn them as satanic; skeptics accuse them of exaggerating their claims of success; and nearly everyone charges them with being in the "spooky" business only to take money from the gullible and the grieving. In addition, various research groups often demand to conduct their own tests to decide whether or not the medium or the psychic has what they deem true paranormal abilities.

Brill's Content (2001) claimed to have examined 10 of the Montel Williams programs that featured Browne's work with the police as a "psychic detective," dealing with 35 cases. According to their analyses, in 21 the details were too vague to be verified. Of the 14 cases remaining, interviews with the law-enforcement officers involved in the investigations or family members of the victims produced comments that Browne had contributed nothing of value to the solving of the cases.

Regardless of the skeptics and the critics who seek to undermine her reputation, Sylvia Browne has counseled hundreds of men and women who will attest to the value and accuracy of her psychic readings. According to her supporters, Browne has been able to help thousands of men and women gain control of their lives, understand the deeper meaning of life, and find God in their own individual way.

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FLORENCE COOK (1856–1904)

In his book *Researches into the Phenomena of Spiritualism* (1874), **Sir William Crookes** (1832–1919), the famous and respected British scientist, states that he walked with a materialized spirit form, talked with it, and took more than 40 flashlight photographs of the entity. The lively and charming spirit form was named Katie King, and she materialized through the mediumship of a teenager named Florence Cook.

When she was 15, Cook began sitting in seances with her mother in their home in Manchester, England, and she soon found that she was capable of producing writing she claimed was dictated by spirits from the other side. Her mediumship progressed rapidly, and within a short period of time, she was conduct-

ing dramatic demonstrations of spirit phenomena at meetings of the Dalston Society, a Spiritualist group. At some of these meetings the phenomena became so powerful that Cook was levitated above the heads of the sitters.

It was at this time that the teenaged medium met the spirit personality of "Katie King," who claimed to be the daughter of John King, alias Henry Owen Morgan, the infamous buccaneer. King promised to be Cook's spirit control and to produce many types of remarkable phenomena for a period of three years.

Cook was conducting her seances only at her parental home, and her father, mother, two sisters, and their household maid served as her steady circle of sitters. The teenager's reputation as a medium of remarkable talents had spread, and wealthy citizens of Manchester were offering retainers that would guarantee their attendance at her spirit circles whenever they required them.

In April of 1872, Katie King made an attempt to materialize, and she appeared only as a deathlike face between the gauze curtains of a seance cabinet. As spirit and medium strengthened their spiritual bond, King's ability to materialize became more and more advanced. Then, after a year's time, the spirit being could step out of the cabinet and show herself in full body to those who had gathered for Cook's seances. Sitters were allowed to touch her and even to photograph her.

As the spirit responded to questions concerning her life before death, she told a story of having been in the crowd that watched King Charles I of England lose his head at the chopping block in 1649. She had been but 12 then, and within a few more years, she was married. King confessed, however, to having been a violent, rather than a domestic, type; and she related with a macabre kind of eagerness how she had herself "done in" many people with her own hands before her death at the age of 23.

In a letter written February 3, 1874, Sir William Crookes described a seance in which Cook entered the spirit cabinet and slipped into trance. Moments later, Katie King emerged to say that the medium was not well enough that night to permit her to materialize to the level where she might wander very far from the cabinet. The spirit form did come a short distance amidst the sitters, but all the while they could hear the moanings and sobbings of Florence Cook.

Crookes stated that he sat in a position where he could clearly see the entranced form of Florence Cook and the materialized form of Katie King at the same time. Although he was impressed by the lifelike quality of the spirit control and by the fact that he could both see and hear Florence Cook while Katie King moved elsewhere in the seance room, the scientist was not firmly convinced by the demonstration.

At a later sitting, when Cook was feeling better, Katie King materialized for nearly two hours. Crookes reported that the charming spirit took his arm as she walked, and he found it hard to believe that his lovely companion could indeed be a visitor from beyond the grave. He asked permission to clasp King in his arms and was astonished when his request was granted.

During that same seance when he was allowed to touch the materialized spirit form, Crookes was also able to compare the features of the young medium and the spirit when King stood behind the form of the entranced Florence Cook. The medium lay in her customary black velvet dress, and the spirit form stood behind the couch in her flowing white drapery. Then, holding one of the medium's hands in one of his, Crookes knelt before the spirit and passed a lamp slowly up and down the whole figure of Katie King. Such a meticulous and brightly illumined examination thoroughly satisfied the eminent scientist that he had beheld a materialized spirit being and not "the phantasm of a disordered brain."

Crookes repeated the process three times, in each instance pausing to examine yet another aspect of either the spirit or the medium, whose psychic energy had manifested the spirit form. Later, in addition to a number of decided differences between the medium and the spirit, he listed various points of physical dissimilarities that he had observed between Florence Cook and Katie King: King was a good four and one-half inches taller than the medium. The

skin of the spirit form's neck was very smooth both to touch and to sight, while Florence had a large blister on her neck that was distinctly visible and rough to the touch. Katie's ears were unpierced, while Florence habitually wore earrings. King's complexion was very fair, while Cook's was very dark. The spirit entity's fingers were much longer than the medium's, and King's face was also much larger.

For a period of over six months, Crookes studied the phenomena of Florence Cook at close hand. For as long as a week at a time, the young medium would be a guest at the Crookes's residence, constantly in the presence of some member of his family. Crookes became so familiar to the spirit that Katie King would allow him to enter the seance cabinet whenever he wished or to touch her at any time. The scientist wrote that it was a common thing for the seven or eight workers in his laboratory to view the materialized King in full glare of the electric lights.

After he had seen the spirit many times in the full light of his laboratory environment, Crookes added to the points of difference between the medium and the spirit form. In an article for a newspaper, he stated that he had the most absolute certainty that Florence Cook and the materialized entity were two separate individuals, so far as their physical bodies were concerned. There were several small blemishes on Cook's face which were absent on King's. The medium's hair was a very dark brown, whereas the spirit's hair was a rich golden auburn.

On the evening of Katie King's final appearance in the seance cabinet, she gave each of the members of the circle a farewell message and relayed a few general directions for the future well-being of Florence Cook. Crookes stated that after the spirit being had closed the curtains of the cabinet, she conversed with him for some time, then walked across the room to where the medium was lying on the floor in a state of deep trance. Stooping over her, King touched Cook and said, "Wake up, Florrie. Wake up! I must leave you now."

Crookes testified that the medium and the materialized spirit conversed with one another for several minutes, as Cook begged King to stay with her a little longer. "My work is done," King told her. "God bless you."

Sir William Crookes was outspoken in his defense of the validity of the phenomena produced by the young medium Florence Cook and her spirit control, Katie King. "Every test that I proposed [Florence Cook] agreed to," he told his scientific colleagues in the Royal Society. "She is open and straightforward in speech....Indeed, I do not believe she could carry on a deception if she wished to try....And to imagine that an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen should be able to conceive and then successfully carry out for three years so gigantic an imposture as this, and in that time should submit to any test which might be imposed upon her, should bear the strictest scrutiny, should be willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and should meet with even better success in my own house...does more violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe [Katie King] to be what she herself affirms."

The controversy over the scientist and his "pet ghost" has not been quieted to this day. One of the most common theories proposed by the detractors of the phenomena produced by Florence Cook is that Sir William Crookes fell in love with the 15-year-old medium and thereby became blinded to her trickery. Although the issue has been muddied by such charges, the experiments and reports of an illustrious scientist with the courage to bring his knowledge and training to psychic research stand as a matter of public record.

Florence Cook married Elgie Corner in 1874 and about the same time acquired a new spirit control named Marie, who followed in Katie King's ghostly footsteps by stepping out of the spirit cabinet, even singing and dancing to the delight of those clients assembled for a seance. At a sitting on January 9, 1880, during a materialization seance, Sir George Sitwell reached into the spirit cabinet and grabbed Marie. When the lights came up, the lively spirit Marie was found to be the medium Cook clad only in her corsets and petticoat and wrapped in white drapery.

Apologists for the medium argue that all of the incredible phenomena produced by Flo-

rence Cook Corner and witnessed by numerous psychical researchers, including the eminent scientist Sir William Crookes, should not be dismissed because of one incident of cheating. Skeptics counter that all of Cook's mediumistic materializations of Katie King and Marie were really dramatic impersonations for true believers in **Spiritualism** and that Crookes had become too infatuated with the young medium to be effectively objective.

Cook withdrew from public mediumship until 1899, when she accepted an invitation from the Sphinx Society in Berlin to sit under test conditions and demonstrate her abilities. According to many observers, the remarkable phenomena that Cook produced during those tests went a long way toward clearing her somewhat tarnished reputation.

Sir William Crookes stoutly maintained that Florence Cook had produced genuine spirit phenomena under the strictest of controls imposed upon her. When he learned of her death, he expressed his deepest sympathy for her family in a letter dated April 24, 1904, and declared that for many people their belief in an afterlife was strengthened because of the mediumship of Florence Cook.

Mrs. Mina "Margery" Crandon (1888–1941). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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Mina "Margery" Stinson Crandon (1888–1941)

Mina "Margery" Stinson Crandon ranks as one of the most thoroughly investigated and controversial mediums of the twentieth century. Psychical researchers put the ever-cooperative woman in uncomfortable situations, encased her in awkward contraptions, and sometimes wound her in enough adhesive tape to make her look like a mummy. In spite of such laborious efforts to disprove the validity of her phenomena, Margery Crandon again and again materialized spirits and performed astounding feats of **psychokinesis,** or mind over matter.

Mina Stinson was born in Canada in 1888 and moved to Boston when she was quite young. In 1918, after an unsuccessful marriage, she became the wife of a senior Boston surgeon, Dr. Le Roi Goddard Crandon, whose family dated back to the Mayflower. They bought the house at Number 11 Lime Street on Beacon Hill, and became popular in Boston society. Crandon was a highly respected instructor at Harvard Medical School, and Mina was known as a lady with a sharp and lively wit.

In 1923, Crandon became extremely interested in psychical research, and he convinced Mina and a number of their friends to begin to explore the possibilities of contacting the dead. The group began with the customary attempts at table-tipping and spirit raps, and Crandon was astonished when it became evident that Mina was a powerful medium. After a few sessions Mina's deceased brother Walter, who had died in a train crash in 1911, announced his presence as her spirit control

and within a brief period of time he began speaking through Mina and demonstrating a wide variety of spirit phenomena. Walter, speaking in down-to-earth language, often colored with profanity, stated that it was his mission to perform the process of mind over matter, rather than delivering flowery inspirational messages from the other side.

Although Mina was regularly producing dramatic phenomena, attendance to the seances were by invitation only in order to protect Crandon's standing at Harvard. Within a few months after they had begun the private seances, the Crandons submitted to the first formal investigation of Mina's mediumship under the auspices of Professor William McDougall, head of Harvard's Department of Psychology, and a committee from the university. After five months of observation, the committee declared its opinion that the spiritistic mind over matter phenomena were produced through fraudulent means.

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In November of 1923, J. Malcolm Bird (1886–1964) of *Scientific American* magazine attended one of the Crandons' seances and was impressed with the spiritistic manifestations he witnessed. At that time, *Scientific American* was offering a prize of $2,500 to anyone who could provide conclusive proof that psychic phenomena truly existed, and Bird asked Mina to submit to a series of their tests. The investigating committee for the magazine included **Harry Houdini** (1874–1926), **Hereward Carrington** (1880–1958), Dr. Walter Franklin Prince (1863–1934), Dr. D. F. Comstock, Dr. William McDougall (1871–1938), and J. Malcolm Bird, secretary of the committee. To protect Mina Crandon's social standing as the wife of a prominent Boston surgeon and Harvard professor, Bird gave her the pseudonym of "Margery," which is how she shall always be remembered in the annals of psychical research.

The tests began in January 1924 under the general supervision of Crandon. The strictest of control conditions were enforced to ensure that fraud of any kind, conscious or unconscious, on the part of the medium could not go undetected. The most controversial aspect of the tests has to do with the role of the famous magician Harry Houdini in the experiments. Houdini was outspoken in his declarations that he had exposed Margery as a fraud. The medium's defenders proclaim that the greatest myth in the history of psychical research is that Houdini caught Margery cheating and exposed her. On one point there is agreement: Houdini seemed determined to expose Margery as a fake by whatever means necessary.

During one night of tests, Houdini brought an electric doorbell into the seance room and said that he would challenge the spirit to ring it for the circle. Once Margery was in a trance state, a low voice, that of Walter, the medium's deceased brother and her spirit control, bemoaned the presence of Houdini. "Still trying to get some publicity by haunting seance rooms, eh?" the spirit voice taunted the magician.

Walter then directed Malcolm Bird, secretary of the committee, to take Houdini's doorbell out of the room so that he might examine it and see what kind of trickery the magician had planned. Bird hesitated for a moment, then picked up the apparatus and left the room. When he returned a few moments later, Bird frowned in displeasure at the magician, accusing him of having placed pieces of rubber on the contact points of the bell so that it could not possibly ring. Houdini offered no defense of his actions, and he was admonished that dishonesty would do the committee no service.

The words of admonishment were scarcely out of Bird's mouth when the electric bell began to ring in vigorous spurts of clanging sound, and Walter's booming voice filled the seance room. "How does that suit you, Mr. Houdini?" the spirit control mocked.

Houdini's tricks to confuse Margery were methodically uncovered by the all-seeing spirit guide Walter, and the magician's attendance at the sessions in the medium's seance room

became more and more infrequent. When the committee demanded that the magician make good his boast that he could duplicate all the effects that the medium had manifested during her seances, Houdini found that he had suddenly been called away on business.

The investigating committee from the *Scientific American* never seemed to exhaust their list of inventive tests by which they might challenge the abilities of the patient Margery. For one experiment, the medium allowed herself to be encased in a wooden compartment which would permit only her arms and legs to protrude. With her limbs grasped firmly by the researchers, Margery was still able to ring bells, snuff out candles, and set in motion rocking chairs on the opposite side of the room.

In order to better investigate the spirit voices that seemed to be under Margery's control, the committee carefully measured an amount of colored water that would easily fill her mouth. With her mouth full of the colored water, the voices of Walter and other entities were still able to speak freely and to answer all questions put to them. After the experiment's completion, the water was removed from the medium's mouth and remeasured. The color remained the same and the amount of water withdrawn varied not more than a teaspoonful.

The water test had not adequately impressed all the investigators, however, so they devised a balloon which could be placed in the medium's mouth and inflated while the seance was in progress. Once again, the voices were able to engage in free discourse, even though Margery's larynx was completely blocked off. A number of the spirit voices expressed their scorn with the feeble attempts that the investigators were making in an attempt to mute them.

Although Margery was always remarkably patient and good-humored regarding the tests that the committee devised, there were some overeager members among the researchers who did not return her good will. Before the research seances had begun, each of the investigators had signed an affidavit stating that none of them would touch the ectoplasm that streamed forth from the medium's body, but on one occasion, a committee member seized the substance as it moved over his wrist. Margery emitted a terrible shriek of pain, and later she became ill and hemorraged for several days. Another time when she was in deep trance, a researcher drove a thick needle into her flesh. Although the medium did not flinch while entranced, she suffered greatly from the wound when she awakened. On still another occasion, Margery was badly burned by corrosive chemicals which a zealous investigator had designed for an experiment.

After six weeks of tests, the committee remained undecided as to the validity of the phenomena produced by Margery, but an enthusiastic J. Malcolm Bird began writing positive articles concerning the authenticity of the medium's abilities. When it seemed apparent that there was no general consensus accepting or rejecting Margery's mediumship as providing proof of survival, Houdini became furious, fearing that they were about to hand over the prize money of $2,500 to the Crandons. Because of his open and much publicized skepticism of spirit mediums and Spiritualists, Houdini felt that his very reputation as a master magician was being challenged and insulted, so he wrote his own report, *Houdini Exposes the Tricks Used by the Boston Medium Margery*, and had it published as a booklet in 1924. As should be obvious from the title, Houdini presented his own explanations of how each of the phenomena manifested by Margery had been accomplished through trickery. The angry magician even went so far as to accuse two of his fellow committee members, Hereward Carrington and J. Malcolm Bird, of having assisted Margery in perpetrating her fraudulent mediumship.

In spite of crude and careless acts on the part of certain members of the committee throughout the grueling tests, Margery Crandon retained her goodwill toward the persistent investigators and produced a remarkable variety of phenomena, ranging from breezes, raps, spirit writing in several languages, independent voice manifestations, apports, and the imprint of spirit fingerprints in paraffin. Many members of the committee made public declarations that Margery Crandon had control of forces beyond the present knowledge of twentieth-century science. Hereward Carrington

went on record as stating that after attending more than 40 sittings with Margery he had arrived at the "…definite conclusion that genuine supernormal would frequently occur. Many of the observed manifestations might well have been produced fraudulently…however, there remains a number of instances when phenomena were produced and observed under practically perfect control."

Unfortunately for Margery and her many friends and supporters, it was discovered that a fingerprint that had been allegedly left in wax by Walter was found to be that of a Boston dentist, Dr. Frederick Caldwell, who admitted that he had given Margery a bit of wax in which his own print had been pressed. One such exposure of fraud could not prove that all of Margery's spirit phenomena had been produced as products of clever deception, as Houdini had declared, but the falsification of her spirit control's fingerprint caused the majority of researchers who had examined and tested her mediumship to decide that perhaps she had, after all, been too good to be true.

Mina Crandon herself remains a mystery. The most famous medium of the 1920s has become a martyr in the minds of Spiritualists, a courageous woman who submitted to test after complex test for the sake of demonstrating the truth of survival after death. For psychical researchers, she stands as a classic example of a talented medium who, though capable of occasionally producing genuine phenomena, from time to time resorted to trickery. For the skeptics, she is simply another clever fraud who deceived the gullible until she was exposed by the harsh light of scientific investigation.

Mina Stinson Crandon died in her sleep on November 1, 1941. Although she was said to have spent her final years unhappy and disillusioned, tending to her husband during a long convalescence, then succumbing herself to illness, her supporters never ceased to remind her that her fame as a medium was known throughout the world.

DELVING DEEPER

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JOHN EDWARD

John Edward is an internationally acclaimed psychic medium. At the age of 31, he has attained the ability to touch the deepest aspects of the human spirit: longing and curiosity.

The debut of his highly rated cable TV show, *Crossing Over with John Edward*, on the Sci Fi Channel, went from a large audience of 275,000 households to more than 614,000 households within a year and was moved from late-night to prime-time, five days a week. His overwhelming popularity bought him syndication and a network spot on CBS.

Born and raised John MaGee Jr. in Long Island, New York, to a father who was a policeman, Edward remembers exhibiting at a very young age an uncanny ability to "know" family history and events that took place before he was even born.

It wasn't, however, until Edward had a reading with Lydia Clar, a famed psychic from New Jersey, that he embarked on developing his abilities. At age fifteen, it was Clar who made him aware that his psychic abilities were extraordinary and should be used to help and assist others. Before his reading with her, despite being somewhat aware of his childhood abilities, Edward said he was actually quite skeptical. He did not believe Clar when she said his destiny was to be a medium.

Attributing the nourishing environment and acceptance of his family to "psychic phenomena," Edward found it easy to flourish and eventually fine tune his gifts. Graduating from college with a degree in public administration and health care administration, he was able to maintain a management position in a health care facility in the Northeast, while continuing his research in the field of parapsychology. He also made time for lecturing, teaching, writing, and doing readings for others, until the demand for his time and ability grew to

such a point that he decided to devote himself exclusively to "speaking to the dead."

In a June 18, 1998, interview with Larry King on *Larry King Live*, Edward explained:

> Basically, I act as a bridge, I go between the physical world and the non-physical world. And what I do—I'm somewhat of a waiter—I go to the other side, not literally go there, but I go to the other side and get information and I bring it out and I serve my client the information and hope that they understand it.

Elaborating on "how" the energy comes from the "other side," Edward says it comes in different ways: "clairvoyance" (clear-seeing), "clairaudience" (clear-hearing), "clairsentience" (clear-sensing), "clairalience" (clear-smelling), and "clairhambience" (clear-tasting). Then it is up to him to interpret what is being communicated through these various senses, or what the loved ones on the other side are trying to communicate.

Detractors such as James Randi, a.k.a. "Amazing Randi" (of the James Randi Educational Foundation in Fort Lauderdale, Florida), say that Edward does nothing more than do "cold readings"—using the same technique that has been long used by magicians to entertain and mediums. The technique involves posing a series of questions and suggestions, each shaped by the subject's previous response. For example, a generic statement might be uttered, such as, "I sense a father-figure here," and when that gets a response, adding something like, "I'm getting that his death resulted from a problem in his chest" (which Randi says can be anything from a heart attack to emphysema to lung cancer). If the subjects answers "no," then the response is normally, "Well, I'll get back to that...."

Others say Edward's show benefits from the use of "creative editing." They argue that many of the "misses" are left out of the final airing and the successes "enhanced." Some even suggest that a lot of information comes from detailed questionnaires filled out by the audience members, who go through a stringent selection process before being accepted on the set.

The skeptics haven't deterred the vast numbers of people who feel that John Edward has helped them deal with loss, grief, and closure, and given them the ability to move on with their lives. Edward's book *One Last Time*, released in November 1999, hit number one on the *L.A. Times'* best-seller list. Edward has also been featured in the HBO documentary *Life Afterlife* and appeared not only on *Larry King Live*, but on *Leeza*, *Roseanne*, *Maury*, *Sally*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *The Crier Report*, and *Charles Grodin*—among others.

Delving Deeper

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Arthur Augustus Ford (1896–1971)

In his autobiography written in collaboration with Marguerite Harmon Bro, the highly respected medium Arthur Ford, an ordained minister of the Disciples of Christ Church, explained the working relationship that he enjoyed with his **spirit guide,** Fletcher. When Ford wished to enter **trance,** he would lie down on a couch or lean back in a comfortable chair and breathe slowly and rhythmically until he felt an in-drawing of energy at the solar plexus. Then he focused his attention on Fletcher's face, as he had come to know it, until gradually he felt as if his guide's face had pressed into his own "at which instant there is a sense of shock," as if he were fainting or "passing out." At this point, Ford says, he loses consciousness—and when he awakens at the

completion of a seance, it is as if he has had a "good nap."

Born into a Southern Baptist family on January 8, 1896, in Titusville, Florida, young Arthur had no real psychic experiences as a child, other than the occasional instances when he seemed to know what people were about to say. He was drawn to the religion, but he annoyed the local clergy with his persistence in asking questions about church doctrines, especially those concerning life after death. Although he was excommunicated from the Baptist church at the age of 16, in 1917 Ford entered Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky on a scholarship, with the intention of becoming a minister. His education was interrupted when the United States entered the First World War that same year, and Ford joined the army in 1918.

Ford advanced to the rank of second lieutenant, but he was not among the doughboys who served in the trenches overseas. Although he never saw action in Europe (the war ended soon after he enlisted), Ford observed firsthand the ravages of the terrible influenza epidemic as it struck the army camps. He began to have visions concerning those who would die of influenza, and at the same time, he heard the names of the soldiers who would be killed in action in Europe. For several frightening months, Ford thought that he was going insane. It was not until he had returned to his studies at Transylvania College that Dr. Elmer Snoddy, a psychology professor, suggested that Ford might be experiencing some kind of extrasensory phenomena, rather than insanity.

In 1922, Ford married Sallie Stewart and was ordained a minister of the Disciples of Christ Church in Barbourville, Kentucky. He began to gain immediate attention as a powerful presence in the pulpit, but his developing mediumistic abilities were creating an increasing amount of friction with his conventional ministry and his personal relationships. After five years of marriage, he divorced his wife and left the church to begin lecturing about life after death. It was not long before his lecture appearances included his entering self-induced states of trance and relaying messages from the spirit world to members of his audiences. Ford's spiritistic talents were rather spontaneous and undisciplined, however, until he made the acquaintance of the great Hindu Yogi Paramhansa Yogananda (1893–1952), who taught him how to achieve a Yogic trance state and establish control of his burgeoning psychic abilities.

In 1924, Ford encountered another important influence in his life, the entity Fletcher, who would become his **spirit control.** In this particular instance, it was more a matter of reacquaintance, for Fletcher was a boyhood friend of Ford's who had been killed in action in Europe during World War I. With the advent of Fletcher as his spirit guide, Ford began a lifepath that would soon lead to world fame. In the late 1920s, Ford established the First Spiritualist Church of New York, the first of numerous churches and spiritual organizations that he would found or lead. Such luminaries as **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** (1859–1930) called him one of the most amazing mental mediums of all times.

In 1929, Ford received a message that he believed to have originated from the spirit of the late master magician **Harry Houdini** (1874–1926) and conveyed it to Mrs. Houdini's attention. Immediately a storm of fierce arguments pro and con erupted in the media. It was well known that before his death Houdini had left a coded message with his wife that he would attempt to send her from beyond the grave to prove life after death. Some feature writers championed the authenticity of Ford's relayed after-death communication from Houdini, while others quoted his widow as saying that the message was not correct.

On February 9, 1929, however, according to Ford's supporters, Beatrice (Bess) Houdini wrote the medium to state with finality: "Regardless of any statement made to the contrary: I wish to declare that the message, in its entirety, and in the agreed upon sequence, given to me by Arthur Ford, is the correct message prearranged between Mr. Houdini and myself."

Eventually it came to be widely known that the various words in the Houdini code spelled out the secret message: "Rosabelle, believe." Ford's detractors argued that there

was nothing paranormal involved in the medium's providing the secret message to Mrs. Houdini. Houdini's spirit had not whispered the words to Ford, they insisted. Rather, Ford had carefully studied an interview that Bess Houdini had given the year before in which she had inadvertently revealed the code to several reporters when she explained that the message her late husband would pass on from the world beyond was based on their old vaudeville mind-reading routine that used a secret spelling code.

Arthur Ford was at the center of another great afterlife controversy when Fletcher brought forth Bishop James A. Pike's son James A. Pike, Jr., who had committed suicide in February 1966, at the age of 22, as well as other communicating entities during a seance on September 3, 1967. This particular seance, which took place in Toronto, Ontario, was unique in that it was not limited to a drape-darkened room, but was taped and televised on CTV, the private Canadian television network. Allen Spraggett, the religion editor of the *Toronto Star* and a former pastor of the United Church of Canada, arranged the seance and later told the Associated Press that he believed that during the seance there had been strong evidence for communication with the dead or of **extrasensory perception** at the least.

At the beginning of the seance, Ford placed a dark handkerchief over his eyes, commenting that it was easier to go into trance if he did not have light, and the bright lights of the television studio would make the reception of the trance state that much more difficult. Once he had attained the trance state, Fletcher soon made an appearance. Fletcher said that he had two people eager to speak. The first communicating entity was that of a young man who had been mentally disturbed and confused before he departed. He revealed himself as James A. Pike, Jr. He said how happy he was to speak with his father. Next Fletcher brought forward George Zobrisky, a lawyer who had taught history at Virginia Theological Seminary. Zobrisky said that he had more or less shaped Bishop Pike's thinking, a point which the clergyman readily conceded. Louis Pitt then sent greetings to the bishop, who recognized Pitt as having been acting chaplain at Columbia University before Pike had become chairman of the Department of Religion.

Fletcher next described an "old gentleman," who, after some discussion, Bishop Pike recognized as Donald McKinnon, a man who had been the principal influence on his thinking at Cambridge. The last spirit to come forward told Fletcher that he had called himself an "ecclesiastical panhandler" in life. Bishop Pike appeared to know at once what man had carried such a humorous self-described title. Allen Spragget, serving as moderator, asked Fletcher for a precise name. "Oh," said the spirit control, "something like Black. Carl. Black. Block."

"Carl Block," Bishop Pike agreed, "the fourth bishop of California, my predecessor." Then addressing the spirit directly, Bishop Pike said, "I admired and respected you, and yet I hoped you weren't feeling too badly about some changes."

Speaking through Fletcher, Bishop Block told his successor that he had done a "magnificent job" and that he had "magnificent work yet to do."

Bishop Pike said later that he did not see how any research done by Arthur Ford could have developed such intimate details about his life and such facts about the roles that certain individuals had played in shaping his thinking. He felt that the details had been "quite cumulative…not just bits and pieces, an assortment of facts." Bishop Pike stated that the information provided through Fletcher had formed a pattern. "Also, the persons who purportedly communicated had one thing in common—they were in varying ways connected with the development of my thought. They knew me at particularly significant times in my life, turning-points."

In many ways, the life of Arthur Ford was quite tragic. In 1930, a truck went out of control and struck the car in which he was driving with his sister and another woman as passengers. The two women were killed outright, and he suffered serious internal injuries, a broken jaw, and crushed ribs. During his long hospitalization, he became addicted to morphine and attempted to free himself of the resultant

insomnia by drinking heavily. While at the height of his popularity, he was also an alcoholic, suffering blackouts and failing to appear for scheduled demonstrations.

In 1938, Ford married an English widow, Valerie McKeown, whom he had met while on tour, but in spite of their initial happiness together, his bouts with alcoholism doomed the marriage from the beginning. His public displays of drunkenness had become so humiliating that his faithful spirit control, Fletcher, threatened to leave Ford unless he began to exercise some degree of self-control. Ford continued to drink and Fletcher left the medium. Soon thereafter, Ford entered a deep depression and suffered a complete physical breakdown.

The Twelve-Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous managed to help Ford attain a level of control over his drinking problem, though he was never able to give up alcohol completely. In the 1950s, Fletcher returned as his spirit control, and Ford began once again to provide demonstrations of afterlife communications that many individuals found provided proof of survival of the spirit after death. Among Ford's many positive accomplishments during this period of revival was his participation in the founding of Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship in 1956. Arthur Ford spent the final years of his life in Miami, Florida, where he died of cardiac arrest on January 4, 1971.

DELVING DEEPER

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EILEEN GARRETT (1893–1970)

Eileen Garrett, who became one of the most respected mediums of the twentieth century, continued to study the phenomena of her **mediumship** throughout her long career, and she consistently questioned the source of the power that guided her for so many years.

Both of her parents committed suicide shortly after her birth in 1893 in Beauparc, County Meath, Ireland, and she was adopted by an aunt and uncle. Garrett had what many researchers recognize as a typical medium's childhood: She was ill a great deal, suffered many family tragedies at a young age, and began to experience visions and to see "people" who weren't there. Little Eileen had imaginary playmates, saw various forms of light and energy around people and animals, and became aware at an early age that life did not end with physical death when she saw a kind of grayish smoke rising up from the bodies of pets after they died.

Garrett was plagued by tuberculosis and other respiratory illnesses throughout her childhood, and when she was 15 she left Ireland for the milder climate of England. She lived there with relatives for only a short time when an older gentleman named Clive began to call on her. After a courtship of a few months, she married him, and during the course of their brief marriage, she bore him three sons, all of whom died at young ages. She eventually gave birth to a daughter, Eileen, and succumbed once again to ill health. By the time she had recovered, the marriage had ended in divorce.

During World War I, Garrett opened a hostel for convalescent soldiers. While she was caring for the wounded men, she attracted the attention of a young officer who asked her to marry him. Although she had a premonition that their life together would be very short, she agreed to a marriage just before he left for the front. Within a brief period of time apart, she had a vision of his dying, and two days later she received word that he was missing in action. Shortly thereafter, she was notified that he had been killed in Ypres. She was recuperating from yet another illness when she met a young man whom she married one month before the armistice in 1918—in spite of the fact that her intuitive abilities informed her that this union would not become any

more permanent than her previous states of matrimony.

Eileen Garrett did not learn that she was a trance medium until shortly after the armistice in November, when she accidentally fell asleep at a public meeting in London and the spirits of deceased relatives of the men and women seated around her began to speak through her. One gentleman present was familiar with the phenomenon of mediumship, and he explained to the young woman what had happened to her. He went on to say that he had communicated with an Asian spirit named Uvani that had manifested through her while she was entranced, and the entity had informed him that henceforth he would serve as Eileen Garrett's guide and **spirit control.** Uvani had declared that together they would do serious work to prove the validity of the survival of the human spirit after physical death.

At first Garrett was horrified at the prospect of a spirit sharing her subconscious and eavesdropping on her private thoughts and her private life. For weeks she slept with the light burning in her bedroom, fearful that Uvani might put in a materialized appearance. Such stress contributed to another bout of illness, and her developing mediumship contributed to the breakup of her third marriage. Until she sought advice from James Hewat McKenzie (1869–1929), founder of the British College of Psychic Science, she was troubled by fear of the unknown and doubts about her sanity. Under the guidance of McKenzie and his wife, Barbara, Garrett was assured that her spirit guide would not be at all interested in her daily life and that his whole purpose was based on a sincere wish to be of service to humanity. Garrett concentrated on developing her mediumship and studied with the college until McKenzie's death in 1929.

Although she had another of her premonitions concerning the transient nature of her role as wife in the state of marriage, Garrett had fallen in love and planned to be married for a fourth time. As strange as it might seem, both Garrett and her fiance became ill on the same day. She barely survived a mastoid operation, and he died of pneumonia. Confused about the course in life she was to follow, Eileen Garrett decided to come to the United States and devote herself to the process of understanding mediumship and survival after death by submitting to an intense barrage of tests at the hands of academic parapsychologists and psychical researchers.

Eileen Garrett (1893–1970). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Hereward Carrington (1880–1958), one of the leading researchers during that period, had devoted decades to psychical investigations, with a special emphasis on the various phenomena of mediumship. After years of scrupulous tests and experiments, he had concluded that 98 percent of all such phenomena are fraudulent. But when he began a series of tests with Eileen Garrett, he declared her to be a "medium's medium." He found that she was a generous woman who had always been "on the fence" with regard to her own highly acclaimed mediumship and who had offered herself to science in a sincere effort to learn more about the spirits who communicated through her.

During the years in which she perfected her ability to communicate with the spirits of

the deceased through her spirit guide, Eileen Garrett often expressed doubts about Uvani's spiritual independence and frequently voiced her suspicions that he might only be a segment of her own subconscious mind. Eventually, she had four trance communicators. Uvani, a fourteenth-century Arab soldier, remained always as the control, but there was also Abdul Latif, a seventeenth-century Persian physician, who dealt primarily with healing, and Tahotah and Ramah, who claimed no prior earthly incarnations and who spoke only seldom and then on philosophical and spiritual matters. Such indecisiveness about the source of her abilities dismayed the Spiritualists, who in her developmental years in London, had tutored her with the utmost seriousness.

TO Eileen Garrett, mediumship was not a "breaking-down of the personality," but a state of wholeness.

Eileen Garrett became a persistent and highly qualified researcher in her own right. In 1951, she founded the Parapsychology Foundation, Inc., in New York City, and in 1952 reestablished her magazine *Tomorrow* as a quarterly journal of psychic science. In 1959, the foundation began publishing the *International Journal of Parapsychology* and in 1970, the *Parapsychology Review*. She also authored such books as *Adventures in the Supernormal* (1949), *The Sense and Nonsense of Prophecy* (1950), and *Many Voices: The Autobiography of a Medium* (1968).

In an article entitled "The Ethics of Mediumship" for the Autumn 1960 issue of *Tomorrow*, Eileen Garrett stated that she was not one who "assumes that the gift of mediumship necessarily brings with it greater insight into the phenomena of that mediumship." She goes on to advise the serious medium to "withdraw herself from the ideas thrown out by the inquirer" and regard herself "as a mechanism, clear and simple, through which ideas flow." According to an accomplished medium such as Garrett, those who had similar gifts should put themselves into a "receptive mood" which will enable them to "accept the flow of events and ideas to be perceived and known."

Continuing with this line of thought, she wrote:

> If the medium allows herself to be thus used, things will happen of themselves—a technique old as wisdom itself, and not contradictory to Zen. One allows the feminine perceptive principle of the unconscious to emerge and thus one is not swamped by the demanding consciousness of the self or the inquirer. This instructive feminine element is, according to Jung, the common property of all mankind. It cannot be coerced. It must be respected and nurtured.

To Eileen Garrett, mediumship was not a "breaking-down of the personality," but a state of wholeness. She regarded the tendency of "enthusiastic sitters to regard the medium as priest or priestess" as the "major danger area in mediumistic activities." She wisely concluded that "…communication with the 'other world' may well become a substitute for living in this world. Understanding that this world in which we live has priority in this existence is the core of mediumship ethics."

Eileen Garrett died on September 15, 1970, in Nice, France, following a period of declining health.

DELVING DEEPER

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DANIEL DUNGLAS HOME (1833–1886)

The clientele of Daniel Dunglas Home was one of the most exclusive that ever gathered around any one medium: Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mark Twain, Napoleon III, the Empress Eugenie, Tolstoy, and many other notables on both

sides of the Atlantic. Home was poked and probed and examined by dozens of scientists, and he graciously submitted to hundreds of tests by psychical researchers. No skeptical investigator ever succeeded in exposing him, and two of the most prestigious scientists of the day, **Sir William Crookes** (1832–1919) and Dr. Robert Hare (1781–1858), stated that, in their opinion, the phenomena manifested by Home was genuine. Home conducted over 1,500 seances and produced phenomena at all times, under all manner of conditions, in broad daylight, under artificial lighting, indoors, outdoors, in private homes, in hotel rooms, and on public lecture platforms.

Born near Edinburgh, Scotland, on March 20, 1833, Home was said to have been rocked in his cradle by unseen entities. His mother was also said to have had the gift of "second sight," as **clairvoyance** was called in those days, and Mary McNeal Cook, an aunt who adopted Home when he was but a year old, began noticing clairvoyant impressions from the child almost as soon as he began to speak. At the age of four he began having visions which proved to be accurate. A frail child who contracted tuberculosis at an early age, Home's early childhood was marked by long periods of convalescence. When he was nine, his aunt and uncle moved to the United States, where they settled in Greeneville, Connecticut.

Home was 17 when the physical phenomena which was to direct the course of his life began to occur around him. In his memoirs, Home writes that he first heard "…three loud blows on the head of the bed as if it had been struck by a hammer." His first impression was that someone had hidden in his bedroom to frighten him, but the next morning at breakfast, the table at which he had seated himself was shaken nearly to pieces by a wild flurry of rappings.

His aunt, near hysteria, left the home to summon three clergymen from the village to drive the devil out of her house. Unable to make the rappings cease with their prayers, the ministers advised Cook to ignore the disturbances.

While it may have been possible to heed the ministers' advice regarding the mysterious rapping sounds, Cook found it impossible to ignore the activity of the furniture when tables and chairs began to move about the rooms. As the townspeople gathered to watch the strange, unexplainable occurrences, Home gave his first impromptu seance. According to an account in the local newspaper, scores of people from Greeneville and nearby communities came to ask questions of the "talking table" in the Cook residence. The table would raise or lower a leg and tap out answers to queries put to it by the astonished villagers, and even a strong man could not make the heavy table duplicate such movements when Home was not there to control it.

By the early 1850s, his fame had spread, and the teenager was soon beleaguered by scientists, clergymen, and medical doctors, each seeking to be the first to explain his mysterious talents. Home's powers began to grow stronger, and numerous individuals testified to instantaneous healings accomplished by the young medium. At the same time, Home displayed an amazing ability to divine the future and to clairvoyantly determine happenings at great distances.

Daniel Dunglas Home conducted over 1,500 seances and produced phenomena at all times.

In 1852, when, at the age of 19, he made his first trip to New York, Home was eagerly received by those who had been awaiting an opportunity to see firsthand the various wonders that had been attributed to the youthful medium. Dr. Robert Hare, professor emeritus of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania, attested to the absolute authenticity of Home's strange talents, but the American Association for the Advancement of Science refused to hear the report of its distinguished member. Although the association declined even to examine Home or to witness any phenomena produced by him firsthand, the elite of New York society outdid themselves in bidding for the medium's appearance at their homes.

In 1855, after three years of exhaustive tests with those scientists who were not fearful of risking their reputations by examining his mediumistic talents, Daniel Dunglas Home set out for England and France. The overseas press had been awaiting the medium's arrival, and so had the greatest hostesses of London society. Home soon captivated England as thoroughly as he had the United States. Those who attended his seances could expect to see spirit lights, to hear raps and the voices of disembodied spirits, and perhaps even to experience the thrill of being lifted into the air by unseen hands.

The English novelist Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1831–91), who was well versed in the occult, reported a series of seances held in his home in which the medium had set heavy tables rolling like hoops, and invisible musicians had played familiar melodies on accordions. Spirit hands and arms materialized, and Bulwer-Lytton claimed to have seen objects being transported about the room by ethereal fingers.

In Florence, Italy, Home is reported to have caused a grand piano, at which the Countess Orsini was seated, to rise into the air and to remain levitated until she had completed the musical number that she had been playing. Home's mediumship was witnessed by such members of the aristocracy as Prince Murat, Napoleon III, and the Empress Eugenie. During one seance, Napoleon Bonaparte appeared and signed his name, and his grandson attested to its authenticity. The young medium's demonstrations in Florence were of such a dramatic nature that frightened whispers began to circulate that Daniel Dunglas Home was one of Satan's own. Public fervor became so heated that Home was attacked and wounded by an unknown assailant.

As he lay in pain recovering from his wound, the spirits appeared to deal Home a psychological blow. They informed him that they would remove his powers for a period of one year, beginning on February 10, 1856. True to their word, Home found that he was unable to summon any spirit control or to produce any phenomena whatsoever after that date.

The 23-year-old medium traveled to Rome, where he sought consolation in the Roman Catholic Church. He was without funds, ill, and sorely disillusioned with his spirit guides for having deserted him. Home expressed a wish to shun everything pertaining to the material world, and for a time he considered entering a monastery. Although the church became a mainstay to Home during his period of despondency, the relationship was terminated at the stroke of midnight on February 10, 1857, when Home's bedstead resounded with hearty spirit raps, and a voice from the other side announced the return of his powers of mediumship.

Father Ravignan, who had been Home's confessor and close friend, was convinced that the young man had been sincere about his embracing the church, but the Roman Catholic clergyman could in no way sanction mediumship and the contacting of spirits. Although Home was grateful to the church that had ministered to him during his hour of greatest need, he saw clearly that there could be no more harmony between them.

The wealthy and powerful of Europe had been waiting to see if the medium's powers would truly return to him after their year of desertion. When Home reappeared on the scene, once again materializing spirit forms and producing raps on the walls, his elite clientele immediately restored him to celebrity status. He demonstrated his dramatic control of unseen forces before the courts of Napoleon III, Empress Eugenie, and Prince Murat, and won hundreds of new supporters.

Back in Rome, Home married Alexandrina, the wealthy sister-in-law of a Russian nobleman. Alexander Dumas (1802–1870), the French novelist, was Home's best man. The marriage ceremony was performed with both Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox rites—a gesture that Home intended as an expression of his good will toward the church, in spite of the interminable religious controversies in which he was embroiled.

It was in the presence of the Russian novelist Count Leo Tolstoy that Home first produced the phenomenon with which he has come to be most commonly associated in the annals of psychical research. In full view of several sitters and with Tolstoy's hands firmly

clasping his feet, Home levitated from his chair until he was seen floating above the heads of the members of the seance circle.

Home's wife died in London in 1862, and without her contributions to their upkeep from her family's wealth, he was forced to give lectures and other public demonstrations that proved to be exhausting. He decided to return to Rome and express his creativity through sculpturing, rather than mediumship, but he was ordered to leave Italy on the charge of sorcery. He promised once again to abandon the summoning of spirits, but Italian officials put little faith in such vows. Home was forced to leave the country, and he returned to Britain in 1864.

The single event in Home's remarkable psychic career that is most remembered occurred on the evening of December 13, 1868, when he was seen to float out of the window of a third-floor home in Ashley House and return through another window to rejoin the men who witnessed the extraordinary act of levitation. Among those who observed the feat were Captain Wynne, the Earl of Dunraven, and the Earl of Crawford, all men of solid character and integrity. Ever since the phenomenon was first reported, skeptics have insisted that the witnesses themselves helped to perpetuate a fraud. Others have suggested that Home merely hypnotized the illustrious men into believing that he floated in and out of the windows on the third floor or that he had discovered nasty secrets about all of them and used blackmail to pressure them into going along with his account.

In 1869, William Thackeray's publication *The Cornhill Magazine* printed an article which created a sensation in all of England. The author told of another seance in which Daniel D. Home levitated from his chair to a height of about four feet, then assumed a horizontal position and floated about the room.

By then the controversy over the "Wizard Home" had reached such proportions that the press was demanding a scientific investigation of such remarkable feats. Sir William Crookes seemed to be the scientist most likely to succeed in revealing Home's alleged wonders as hoaxes, if he was a hoaxster. Crookes, a member of the Royal Society, was a chemist and physicist, inventor of the X-Ray tube, and a scientist eager to test the medium under the strictest of laboratory conditions. Home did not shrink from the challenge. On the contrary, he appeared as eager as Crookes to enter into a full series of experiments and tests. He imposed no restrictions on Crookes's probings, and he voiced no objection to producing all spiritistic phenomena in a bright light.

Crookes found that Home's strange talents were strong enough to resist the antagonistic influence of the laboratory. In one of his reports on the medium, Crookes stated that he was prepared to attest that the phenomena he had witnessed "are so extraordinary and so directly oppose the most firmly-rooted articles of scientific belief—[such as]...the ubiquity and invariable action of gravitation—that even now, on recalling the details of what I witnessed, there is an antagonism in my mind between reason, which pronounces it to be scientifically impossible, and the consciousness that my senses both of touch and sight—and these corroborated, as they were, by the senses of all who were present—are not lying witnesses when they testify against my preconceptions."

Crookes studied firsthand the full gamut of Home's phenomena, from levitation to the movement of objects. The physicist noted that the movements were generally preceded by "...a peculiar cold air, sometimes amounting to a decided wind. I have had sheets of paper blown about by it, and a thermometer lowered several degrees." Crookes also observed luminous points of light and glowing clouds that formed and often settled on the heads of various investigators. In some instances, the scientist saw these luminous clouds form hands which carried small objects about the laboratory.

On one occasion, Crookes watched while a beautifully formed small hand rose up from an opening in a dining table and handed him a flower before it disappeared. The scientist testified that the materialization occurred in the light of his own room while he was securely holding the medium's hands and feet. During another such experiment when a hand materialized before him, Crookes reached out

to clasp it, firmly resolving not to allow it to escape. He stated that there was no struggle on the part of the spirit hand, but it gradually seemed to become vaporous and slowly faded from his grasp.

A spirit form materialized in a corner of the laboratory during the course of one experiment, took up an accordion into its hands, and glided about the room playing the instrument. Crookes's report of the incident indicated that the phantom was visible for several minutes before it disappeared at a slight cry from one of the female sitters. Intrigued by this particular demonstration, Crookes designed a special cage wherein he placed an accordion which he invited the spirit to play. During the laboratory-controlled experiment, the accordion floated about the "spook-proof" cage and unseen fingers played a variety of melodies on the keyboard of the instrument.

In addition to his famous feats of levitation—a phenomenon that Crookes personally witnessed on three different occasions—Daniel Dunglas Home was well known for his ability to handle fire without being burned or incurring any ill effects. During one demonstration, Crookes watched in astonishment as "...Home went to the fire, and after stirring the hot coals about with his hand, took out a red hot piece nearly as big as an orange, and putting it on his right hand, covered it over with his left hand so as to almost completely enclose it, and then blew into the small furnace that extemporized until the lump of charcoal was nearly white-hot...."

Sir William Crookes took extensive notes on all phases of Home's abilities, and a number of his reports were published in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. However, his colleagues in the Royal Society of Science were immensely disappointed in his affirmation that the phenomena produced by Home were genuine. Most of the members of the prestigious society of scientists had long before made up their minds that Daniel Dunglas Home was a faker, and they had set Sir William Crookes to the task of exposing him. The chemist and physicist who had only a short time before been acclaimed as one of Great Britain's most brilliant scientists was now being viciously attacked by his colleagues as a gullible simpleton who had been taken in by Home's parlor magic tricks.

Crookes stood firm, and he challenged his fellow members of the Royal Society to prove his errors by showing him where the errors lay, by showing him how the medium's tricks had been performed. "Try the experiment fully and fairly," Crookes answered his critics. "If then fraud be found, expose it; if it be truth, proclaim it. This is the only scientific procedure, and this it is that I propose steadily to pursue."

Although the Royal Society stood as one in refusing to witness a new series of tests with Home, the ridicule that was heaped upon Crookes was not enough to greatly damage his solid reputation. Twenty years later, when Sir William Crookes was president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, he publicly reaffirmed that his previous assessment of the experiments with Daniel Dunglas Home had been valid and that he found nothing to retract or to alter in his original findings.

In 1871, Home married for the second time, and once again his wife, Julie de Gloumeline, came from a wealthy Russian family. He ceased giving mediumistic demonstrations for the public or for science during the 1870s, and on June 12, 1886, Daniel Dunglas Home died from the tuberculosis that had first assailed him in his youth. Home remains one of the most remarkable figures of the nineteenth century, and if one of the most respected scientists of that era is to be believed, he was one of the most amazing spirit mediums who ever lived.

Although Home was accused many times of fraudulent mediumism, in 1907 the respected psychical researcher Hereward Carrington stressed in his book *The Physical Phenomenon of Spiritualism* (1907) that in spite of such persistent accusations, Daniel Dunglas Home was never exposed as a fraud. Such prominent magicians as **Harry Houdini** (1874–1926) and John Mulholland, well known for their efforts to expose mediums as charlatans, claimed that they could duplicate Home's phenomena, but they never actually did so. Houdini even announced that he could duplicate the famous Home feat of levitating in and out of the third-

floor windows at Lord Adare's home, but he canceled the event without explanation.

Delving Deeper

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J. Z. Knight (1946–)

J. Z. Knight channels "Ramtha," or "the Ram," for the purpose of presenting his message to humankind. The Ram says that he lived only one time on Earth, 35,000 years ago, as a young man from **Lemuria** who grew up in the port city of Onai in **Atlantis.** Through the vehicle of J. Z. Knight, who was his daughter in that existence, he claims that he did not die a physical death during that lifetime but learned to harness the power the of mind so that he could take his body with him to an unseen dimension of life. Ramtha states that he is now a part of an unseen brotherhood that loves humankind. He is, therefore, fulfilling a mission of aiding and preparing humankind for a great event that has already been set in motion.

Entertainers such as Shirley MacLaine, Linda Evans, and Richard Chamberlain have been in the audiences of Ramtha, along with throngs of people around the United States and Canada. Since 1978, thousands have studied the Ramtha videos, cassettes, and books. For a period of time, it seemed impossible to pick up a weekly tabloid without finding an article about Ramtha and his high-profile disciples in its pages. In 1988, Ramtha founded the School of Enlightenment on J. Z. Knight's ranch in Yelm, Washington, which continues to hold teaching seminars. Knight and her followers make clear that the school is neither a church nor a nonprofit organization. They pay business taxes and run the school as a business.

Born Judith Darlene Hampton on March 16, 1946, in Dexter, New Mexico, Knight grew up in poverty and married Caris Hensley, a gas station attendant, soon after attending Lubbock Business College in Lubbock, Texas. The marriage produced two sons, but ended in divorce. It was while she was working as a cable television salesperson in Roswell, New Mexico, and Tacoma, Washington, that she began using the initials "J. Z.," signifying her first name and her nickname, "Zebra," derived from her penchant for wearing black-and-white clothing.

Shirley MacLaine.
(CORBIS CORPORATION)

It all began for J. Z. Knight one day in 1977 when she and her second husband, Jeremy Wilder, a dentist, were cutting out and putting together small pyramids and experimenting with "pyramid energy." She jokingly put a pyramid on her head, and as it slipped down over her eyes, Ramtha appeared physically before them in their kitchen in Tacoma.

In the beginning, Knight said that she believed that the power of the pyramid may have induced the manifestation of the spirit entity, but she grew to understand that it was a combination of the student being ready and the teacher appearing, plus her own spiritual energy and her willingness to take a step into

J. Z. Knight with Linda Evans. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

the unknown. "I feel I may have created a state of readiness in my mind," she said. "Part of my mind said, 'Girl, here you are doing something really bizarre.' Another part of my mind said, 'This is wonderful—you are starting to reach out and explore.' I think by virtue of that process alone, the entity's consciousness was able to become visual to me at that time."

AFTER her period of study with Ramtha, J. Z. Knight gave her first public channeling in November 1978.

It took two years of Ramtha's working with J. Z. Knight before she got used to his presence. Frankly, she stated, it was her persistent love of God that maintained her. "To have gone through the two-year study with Ramtha and his teachings, then to have the courage to change my life and to allow myself to be used as an instrument and to face a critical world and go on with the teachings led to a very beneficial personal growth and depth for me," she said. "I have been nailed to the cross of the media, and yet nothing will keep me from progressing because I know the truth."

After her period of study with Ramtha, Knight gave her first public channeling in November 1978, and word of the content and the mystique spread quickly and gained a wide following for the 35,000-year-old entity and his channel. Knight's increased popularity and the demand for public appearances placed a strain on her marriage, and in 1981, she divorced Wilder to marry Jeff Knight, a trainer of Arabian horses. In the late 1980s she underwent a series of financial and legal stresses, and she filed for divorce from Knight in 1989.

Knight has said that Ramtha occurs in her life in three different ways. The first is when she leaves the body in trance. She claims to

have no conscious recollections of what transpires when Ramtha takes over. In her personal assessment, he is a consciousness that works through her brain and mind and manipulates her body in order for that to occur. "We both cannot occupy the same space," she said, "so I was afraid of letting go because that meant death, in a sense, to me. It took me two years to get over that fear."

In her opinion, Ramtha is a "channeled consciousness," rather than a spirit. "As a consciousness that has hyperlucidity, Ramtha can be considered superconsciousness that affects itself through physical mass," Knight said.

Secondly, Ramtha appears separate from her. The channeler said that she had come to understand that his visual appearance "may be a hologram of his consciousness that was actually working through my brain to create that vision."

The third manner that Ramtha can manifest is that he can answer J. Z. Knight when she has a question. "I can actually hear the answer that is translated in my head," she said. "I hear that as a vocal voice. Ramtha has never imposed by taking over my body. Regardless of what anybody says, I am not being possessed. It is of my own free will."

Ramtha told the thousands of men and women who gathered for the series of popular lectures and seminars that they were gods, possessed of a divine nature, fully capable of creating and realizing whatever goals they desired. When answering questions from individuals, he addresses them as "master," thereby indicating that he considers them on the path of self-mastery. Consistent with other New Age teachers, Ramtha teaches that all those who meditate upon the vital life-force within will be directed to the path of self-realization.

Although J. Z. Knight has been criticized by those who point out that there is no substantial evidence that Ramtha's Lemuria or Atlantis ever existed and that 35,000 years ago, humankind was still at the hunter and gatherer stage of development, she has received the harshest criticism for the high prices she charges for her seminars. The channeler admitted that at first she had difficulty with Ramtha's insistence that she must charge people for the teachings, but the entity told her that people did not appreciate knowledge that they receive for free.

"The only way we ever gain wisdom is when we interact and experience life," she explained. "We pay the price of experiencing life in order to gain wisdom, the virtue of which is the prize of evolution. So the price people pay to attend the teachings is equal to the price they pay in life to gain knowledge and wisdom. It is equal and relative to personal experience, which always comes with a price."

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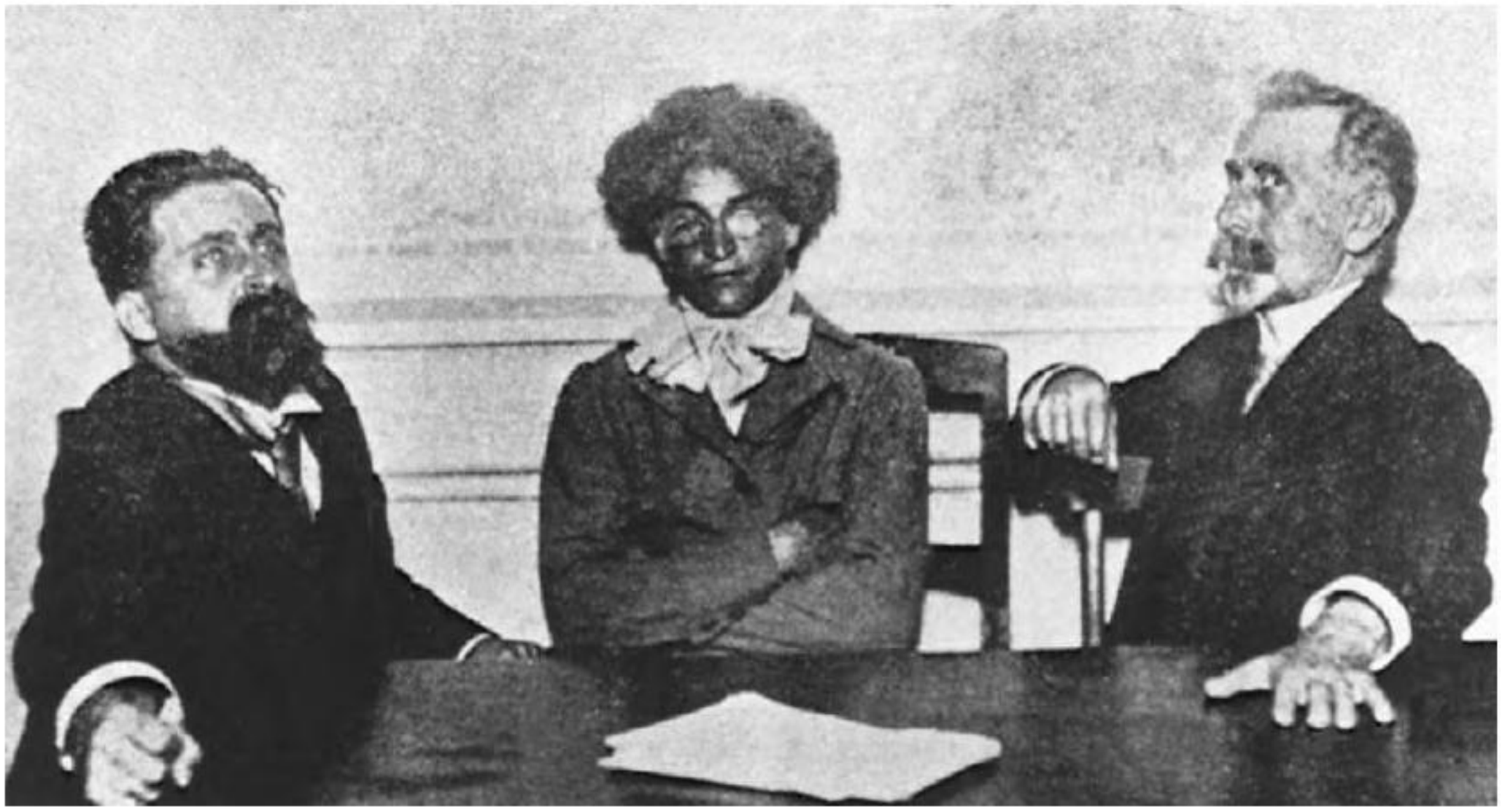
Carlos Mirabelli (1889–1951)

Cesar (Carlos) Augusto Mirabelli was born in 1889 in Botucatu in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil. From his earliest childhood, he demonstrated a strong interest in religion. He hoped to enter into the service of the Roman Catholic Church, but these aspirations were never realized, and he took employment with a commercial firm in Rio de Janeiro.

Things did not go smoothly for Mirabelli on the job, and the strange happenings that had begun to occur around the place of business were soon attributed to the peculiar young man. While some of his fellow employees were drawn to the short man with the light-blue eyes, others found him arrogant and conceited and complained that his eyes seemed to look right through them. And then there were the eerie manifestations that seemed always to take place around him.

Mirabelli was examined by medical doctors and sent to the Juqueri Asylum where the director, Dr. E. Costa, recognized the young man's peculiarities to be due to psychism



At the Cesar Lombroso Academy of Psychic Studies in San Paul, Brazil, Carlos Mirabelli (1889–1951) (left) and Dr. Carlos de Castro (right) are seated at a table with the alleged materialized dead poet, Giuseppi Parini (1729–1799). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

rather than insanity. Costa conducted a number of tests with his patient and became the first doctor to verify the reality of Mirabelli's mediumship. Costa returned Mirabelli to Rio de Janeiro, where he arranged for the young medium to demonstrate his abilities. Under the strictest of controls, Mirabelli confounded an assembly of doctors by utilizing apparent **teleportation** to send a painting over a distance of several miles from one house to another. This experiment was reported in sensational detail in the Brazilian newspapers, and the career of the medium Mirabelli had been launched.

AS an automatic-writing medium, Mirabelli produced lengthy and erudite written dissertations in 28 languages.

By 1926 Mirabelli had produced phenomena before a total of nearly 600 witnesses, most of whom had been recruited from the ranks of Brazil's leading scientists, medical doctors, administrators, and writers, with an occasional learned visitor from abroad. As a trance-speaking medium, Mirabelli particularly excelled in xenoglossy, the ability to speak in languages unknown to him in his normal state. Not only did he speak in foreign tongues, but he gave spontaneous lectures on philosophy, astronomy, sociology, politics, medicine, history, and the natural sciences. These speeches were delivered alternately in German, French, Dutch, English, Greek, Polish, Syrian, Albanian, Czech, four Italian dialects, Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese, and several African dialects, in addition to Latin, Ancient Greek, and his native tongue, Portuguese.

As an automatic-writing medium, he produced lengthy and erudite written dissertations in 28 languages, in a speed impossible to achieve under normal writing conditions. While entranced, it is said that Mirabelli wrote treatises in the style of Lombroso, Kepler, Voltaire, and Galileo. These works included an essay on evil written in Hebrew and signed by Moses, a tract on the instability of empires by Alexander the Great, and an essay on the mysterious things between heaven and Earth by Shakespeare. Although unable to verify such prestigious authorship,

Person being teleported. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

linguists were said to be amazed at the masterful control that the medium exercised over each of the languages employed in these treatises. Such accomplishments are made the more impressive by noting that Mirabelli's formal education ended with primary school.

As a physical medium, Mirabelli once materialized the spirit bodies of a marshal and a bishop, both long deceased, and both of whom were instantly recognizable to many who had assembled for the seance. Levitation seemed almost to be a specialty of the medium, and witnesses once observed him levitate an automobile to a height of six feet, where it was suspended for a period of three minutes. Once when Mirabelli visited a pharmacy, a skull rose from the back of the laboratory and came to rest on the cash register. Before a gathering of doctors, who lent their names to a deposition, Mirabelli caused a violin to be played by spirit hands. To exhibit spirit control, Mirabelli caused billiard balls to roll and stop at his command.

At a party with more than a thousand guests in attendance, the medium conducted an invisible orchestra of trumpets and drums which entertained the astonished partygoers with a lively march. During numerous seances, Mirabelli caused such inanimate objects as books, bells, chairs, and chandeliers to move at his command. The list of doctors and other witnesses who attested to Mirabelli's psychic abilities include the names of many well-known persons. Time and again, psychical researchers subjected the medium to the most rigorous examinations, but none ever caught him in an act of trickery.

While he was undergoing examination by the members of the Lombroso Academy, Mirabelli was bound to a chair in which he

raised himself to a height of more than six feet and hung suspended for over two minutes. Several members of the academy walked beneath the levitated medium and satisfied themselves that they were witnessing an authentic phenomenon and not a magician's trick.

During one seance held for the academy at the unlikely hour of 9:00 A.M., the dead daughter of Dr. de Souza materialized. The doctor recognized his daughter and the dress in which she had been buried. He was allowed to embrace the spirit form and numerous photographs were taken of the scene. The spirit being remained in material form for a period of 36 minutes. This seance was witnessed by a large assembly, including 20 medical doctors and seven professors. Investigated by scientists and psychic researchers from all over the world, the mediumship of Mirabelli offered yet another question mark to the skeptical mind and another source of reassurance to the believer.

In 1990, Dr. Gordon Stein found a picture in the collection of the London Society for Psychical Research that depicted Mirabelli in a white laboratory coat levitating to a height of several feet in the air. The photograph was inscribed to Theodore Besterman, an SPR researcher who was known to have visited the medium in August of 1934. At the time, Besterman had prepared a contradictory report about Mirabelli's paranormal abilities which, according to Mirabelli's defenders, reflected more upon Besterman's inexperience as a psychical researcher than the medium's ability to produce genuine phenomena. In 1992, Guy Lyon Playfair published an illustrated article about the incident in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research* in which he points out that the famous levitation photograph reveals signs of careful retouching which eliminated the ladder under Mirabelli's feet. Proponents of Mirabelli's mediumship argue that if the photograph was deliberately faked by Mirabelli, it would be the first evidence of trickery on his part ever discovered by any investigator.

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EUSAPIA PALLADINO (1854–1918)

At the time of her death in 1918, Eusapia Palladino had been both the most thoroughly investigated physical medium in the history of psychical research and the most controversial and startling personality ever to confront a team of investigators into the unexplained. She could be at once flirtatious and so suggestive in her conversation that some researchers were embarrassed by her frank sexuality; and at the same time, she dominated her husband so completely that the beleaguered man had to take her maiden name as his own when they were married. Palladino could hardly sign her own name and reading was beyond her knowledge, but the world's leading scientists and psychical researchers testified that this enigmatic woman was somehow able to tap into strange powers as yet unnamed by conventional science.

Born in Bari, Italy, in 1854, Palladino's mediumship was discovered by a family who employed her as a maid when she moved to Naples as a young girl. The quality of the phenomena that she produced brought her to the attention of Professor Chiaia, who, in turn, introduced her to the professor Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909). When the great psychologist's initial reports on Eusapia Palladino were published, it was not long before she was sitting with research groups in Paris, St. Petersburg, Turin, Genoa, London, and New York. As far as the audacious Eusapia was concerned, it mattered little where she conducted her seances. Her mysterious talents were not bound by geographical locations. She was able to produce incredible psychic effects whenever and wherever she sat.

In 1908, a special committee was selected by the British Society for Psychical Research (BSPR) for the sole purpose of investigating the claims that had been made by a number of celebrated scientists on behalf of the medium. The committee was especially chosen for their skepticism and was composed of Everard Feilding, Mrs. W. W. Baggally, and **Hereward Carrington** (1880–1958), each of whom had exposed many fraudulent mediums in the course of their investigations. Previous test results with the medium at Cambridge in the summer of 1895 had been contradictory, with

some of the researchers convinced of her abilities, and others equally certain that they had caught her in acts of trickery. Subsequent examinations of Palladino by psychical researchers in Paris in 1898 and various cities in Italy during the years 1901–7 had produced the same mixture of acceptance and doubt.

Between November 21 and December 19, 1908, the team of professional skeptics spent several weeks in the Hotel Victoria in the medium's native city of Naples and were able to observe an incredibly wide range of spiritistic phenomena. Each of the members published lengthy reports on the remarkable Palladino, and each of them came away from the exhaustive series of seances quite convinced that the medium had the ability to release an extremely potent paranormal force. They also noted that Palladino would cheat if she were allowed to do so, but because of their strict controls, she was forced to abandon the easier path of trickery and produce genuine phenomena.

Working under the strictest control the investigators could exert upon her, Palladino allowed the committee to examine both her person and her room as thoroughly as they might wish. She utilized a spirit cabinet that was formed by stretching two black curtains across one of the corners of the room. Inside this makeshift affair, the investigators placed musical instruments and a variety of other small, movable objects. The medium sat directly in front of the closet with at least a foot of space between her chair and the curtains.

After warming up with simple displays of table levitation, Palladino would call for a dimming of the lights. Almost instantly, the medium would summon her **spirit control,** John King, who would subsequently cause the objects behind the curtain to come floating out. Musical instruments would be played by unseen hands, and the sound would be easily heard by all sitters in the room. The highlight of every seance was the materialization of spirit hands and bodies. These materializations always came last in any seance, as if the woman's inborn sense of the dramatic knew how best to leave an audience wanting more.

Hereward Carrington, who published a great deal of material about the medium, related one incident wherein Palladino had asked him to replace a small table that had been levitated from the closet behind her. Carrington pushed aside the curtains and attempted to place the table on the floor where it had been situated. He was startled when some powerful force resisted his doing so.

Eusapia Palladino in 1907. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Outside the cabinet, the other members of the committee had observed Carrington's difficulty in replacing the small table. One of the psychical investigators crouched under the table and clamped both of his hands around the medium's feet. Two other researchers were stationed at her side. They all assured Carrington that the medium had not moved since she had asked him to replace the table and that they would prevent her from making any moves at all. Once these precautions had been taken, Carrington resolutely tried again to replace the stubborn table behind the curtain of the spirit cabinet—but each time some unknown force repelled his efforts. At last the invisible entity seemed to grow tired of the game, and with a considerable burst of energy, sent both Carrington and the table tumbling out of the cabinet and sprawling to the floor.

In 1909, at a later sitting in New York where Palladino had been brought by great demand on the part of American psychical

researchers, the medium capped her usual repertoire of paranormal feats by materializing a small hand in the air. Carrington later reported that the hand appeared white in the dim light of the laboratory and that its arm was visible up to a ghostly elbow. The wrist was encased in a lacy cuff. The hand and forearm were clearly seen by all the researchers in the room, and Palladino's own limbs were tied to two men, one on either side of her. While the investigators watched as if mesmerized, the ghostly hand moved to the medium's bonds and deftly untied the knots. When the spirit had undone the ropes, it threw one of the bonds at an observer and struck him in the chest. The other rope was thrown against the far wall of the sitting room.

The good-natured medium laughed at the antics of the ambitious spirit hand and bade the researchers to bind her once again. The men had no sooner fastened the knots a second time when the spirit hand rematerialized and quickly untied them.

The mystery of Eusapia Palladino's mediumship is a many-faceted one. Carrington wrote, for example, that she was often caught attempting the most crude kind of trickery—pranks that even the most inexperienced psychical researcher would be certain to catch. Her nature was permeated with mischief and guile, and she would try to cheat at card games or even croquet. Carrington felt that she did these things to those who would test her to see how far she might go in taunting them—or because she was basically a lazy person, to see if she could fool them with a few tricks so that she might be spared the effort of going into trance. When she found that she could not deceive the knowledgeable investigators from the various research committees—most of whom were accomplished amateur magicians—Palladino would settle down to producing some of the most remarkable psychic phenomena ever recorded and witnessed by an investigating body of skeptics.

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LEONORA E. PIPER (1857–1950)

Psychical researcher **Hereward Carrington** (1880–1958) considered Leonora E. Piper to be the greatest psychical medium of her time. Piper was a resident of Boston, as was **Margery Crandon** (1888–1941), but her **mediumship** had already won the endorsement of such luminaries as **William James** (1842–1910), Dr. Richard Hodgson (1855–1905), and **Sir Oliver Lodge** (1851–1940) before Crandon had really begun her psychic career. Piper was a direct-voice medium, who while entranced, would allow her body to be taken over by spirits who would use her voice to speak and, on occasion, to write messages to those persons assembled for her seances.

Eight-year-old Leonora (often spelled Leonore) had been playing in the family garden when she suddenly felt a stinging blow on her right ear and heard a kind of hissing sound that gradually became a voice repeating the letter "S." Once this had been resolved, Leonora clearly heard the same voice tell her that her Aunt Sara had died, but her spirit remained near. Leonora's mother made note of the day and the hour in which she had received the spirit communication, and a few days later the family learned that Sara had died at the very hour on the very day that Leonora received the message.

Although this event signaled the advent of Leonora's mediumship, her mother wisely insisted on the young girl enjoying a normal childhood and the dramatic impact of any subsequent paranormal phenomena was underplayed. When Leonora was 22, she married William Piper of Boston, and shortly thereafter developed a friendship with a blind clairvoyant named Dr. J. R. Cocke, who had been attracting a substantial following as a result of his accurate medical diagnoses and cures. At their first meeting, Leonora Piper had fallen into a **trance,** walked in such a state across the room, where she sat at a table, picked up pencil and paper, and began to write messages from spirit entities. Prominent Bostonians were often seated in the seance

circle at Cocke's home, the remarkable accuracy of Piper's trance communications soon spread throughout the city, and she was soon being pursued by men and women who wished to sit with her in her own seances.

At the beginning of her mediumship, Piper's **spirit control** claimed to be a young Native American girl, but within a short time, Cocke's guide, Phinuit, a French doctor, had switched his allegiance to Piper. Phinuit remained the medium's principal spirit control from 1884 to 1892, although other entities spoke or wrote through her, notably the spirit of George Pelham, a friend of the well-known psychical researcher Dr. Richard Hodgson. Pelham communicated through automatic writing until sometime in 1897 when both he and Phinuit essentially retreated back into the spirit world upon the arrival of a powerful control known simply as the Imperator.

Harvard University psychologist William James, author of *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, was brought to Piper's seance room by some rather astonishing reports which he had heard from his mother-in-law and his sister-in-law. The elder woman had heard the medium give the names, both first and last, of distant relatives. Later, James's sister-in-law had approached Piper with a letter written in Italian that had been sent to her by a writer who was known only to two people in the entire United States. The medium placed the letter to her forehead and gave details of its contents and described the physical appearance of the writer.

As he entered Piper's seance room, James identified himself with a false name in order not to provide the medium with even the slightest clue on which to work. In spite of his precautions, the psychologist came away from the sitting completely baffled as to how Piper had been able to give accurate information on all of the subjects about which he had queried.

James soon returned to Leonora Piper's seance room. He was uninterested in the spirit hypothesis, but he was convinced that the woman could only be obtaining her information through some paranormal means. Piper became William James's "one white raven." In a well-known passage from his works, James writes that the phenomena that he witnessed through the mediumship of Piper had weakened his orthodox beliefs. "To use the language of logic," he states, "I will say that a universal supposition may become false because of one particular example. If you are taught that all crows are black, and you wish to destroy this belief, it is sufficient to you to present to your teacher one white raven. My only white raven is Mrs. Piper."

It became the psychologist's conviction that, while in the state of trance, Piper was able to reveal knowledge that she could not have acquired through the normal sensory channels. "Science, like life, feeds itself on its own ruins," James said. "New facts break old rules."

Sir Oliver Lodge, after a series of experiments with Piper, told how the medium from Boston had completely convinced him "...not only of human survival but also of the faculty possessed by disembodied spirits to communicate with people on earth."

Hereward Carrington related that Piper's procedure during a seance was to make herself comfortable on a pile of cushions, then gradually pass into the trance state. Once entranced, the medium was impervious to pain and oblivious to everything that happened around her. After a few moments of trance, her right hand would reach out and accept the pencil that a sitter would place in her hand. At this point, automatic writing was produced and spirit communications were relayed to the members of the seance circle.

Professor James Hervey Hyslop (1854–1920) wished to observe this remarkable woman for himself and contacted Richard Hodgson, who at that time was conducting extensive tests with Piper, to make arrangements for his attendance at a seance. Hyslop was a stickler for taking extreme precautions. He drove up to the medium's house in a closed carriage, wearing a black mask which completely covered his face. After Piper had entered into the trance state, Hodgson motioned for Hyslop to take his place in a chair behind the medium.

From the time he entered the seance room until the moment the sitting was completed and he was out the door and back in his closed carriage, Hyslop did not utter a word. Even if

the medium had not been in a trance state, she would not have been able to determine the identity of the silent man who sat behind her with his face completely covered. But in spite of these extreme precautions, Piper had mentioned Professor Hyslop's name several times during the course of the seance and had given the names of so many of his family members that it took him more than six months of correspondence with his kin back in the small Ohio town where he was born to verify all the information told him during the sitting.

Piper died on July 3, 1950. The majority of researchers who sat with Leonora Piper were more than willing to agree with William James when he said of her: "I wish to certify here and now the presence of a supernatural knowledge; a knowledge the origin of which cannot be attributed to ordinary sources of information, that is, to our physical senses."

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JAMES VAN PRAAGH

Born in Bayside, New York, and the youngest of four children, James Van Praagh, remembers himself as being an average child, but having a tremendous fascination with death. Raised a devout Catholic, James served as an altar boy and entered the seminary at the age of 14. It was while he was attending the seminary that his "interest in Catholicism ended and his sense of spirituality began."

Although Van Praagh graduated from public high school and went on to graduate from San Francisco State University with a degree in broadcasting and communications, his direction would change slightly. He soon moved to Los Angeles and became deeply involved in the study of metaphysics and psychic phenomena. He was invited to a session with a medium who told Van Praagh that within two years he would be doing the same kind of work; that is, talking to the dead. At that time, Van Praagh claims he didn't even know what a medium was. His first reaction was that he had a hard enough time dealing with the living; why would he want to talk with the dead? Van Praagh would soon realize he would indeed continue in broadcasting and communications, just a bit less conventionally than what he studied at the university level.

At the young age of eight, while Van Praagh was fervently praying for God to reveal Himself to him, an open hand appeared through the ceiling of his room emitting radiant beams of light. Incredibly, he recounted, "I wasn't scared. It was actually very peaceful."

Perhaps this experience was an early sign that Van Praagh had an unusual sensitivity and gift to share between worlds. Often called a survival evidence medium, Van Praagh explained his discovered ability to bridge the gap between two planes of existence—that of the living and that of the dead—and has done so by providing evidential proof of life after death through detailed messages. "I'm clairsentient," he has said of himself, "which simply means clear feeling. I feel the emotions and personalities of the deceased. I am also clairvoyant," he added, clarifying that, "the first is feeling, the second is seeing, very much like Whoopi Goldberg in *Ghost*."

When Van Praagh began doing psychic readings for his friends, although it seemed strange to him, he couldn't deny that the detailed messages he received were on target. Personality traits of the deceased come through as well as physical traits and death conditions or circumstances to validate the connection, he said. The true essence of the messages he receives from the departed are the "feelings behind them" and the actual "love bond" between the living and the dead—not words. "No words exist in the English language, or any other for that matter, which can describe the intense sensations," Van Praagh explained.

Learning how to fine tune and refine this gift into understanding what the emotions of the spirits wished to convey and how to relay those messages to the living, earned Van Praagh the status as one of the most recognized and foremost mediums in the world. His message has been broadcast on numerous appearances on such shows as *Oprah*, *Larry*

King Live, *Maury Povich*, *20/20*, and *48 Hours*. A CBS television miniseries is being produced on Van Praagh's first book, *Talking to Heaven* (1997). Also in production is a television talk show, *Beyond With James Van Praagh*.

Humble in his success, Van Praagh said, "If I convey recognizable evidence along with even a fraction of the loving energy behind the message, I consider the reading successful." He said of his work: "When someone is alone and overwhelmed by grief, life seems over. But, when someone is able to make contact with a loved one by utilizing the information…grief and loneliness disappear and proper closure can take place." His message is that "our personalities do indeed survive death."

There are, of course, skeptics. Michael Shermer of *Skeptic* magazine called Van Praagh "the master of cold-reading in the psychic world." Marcello Truzzi of Eastern Michigan University said he has studied "characters" like Van Praagh for more than 35 years and described his demonstrations as "extremely unimpressive."

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Jach Pursel

Jach Pursel grew up in Lansing, Michigan. And after marrying his high school sweetheart, Peny, he graduated from University of Michigan with degrees in international business and political science.

In 1974, that was to change forever. Pursel, then a young corporate business executive with State Farm Insurance, was on the fast track in an accelerated program to move up the corporate ladder. But, while out of town and halfway through a five-day conference and training session, Jach would encounter "a teacher from another realm" who was about to take him on a long journey unlike any other, and one that would change the direction of his entire life forever.

Late one evening, after the day's events, Pursel sat on his bed, alone in the hotel room, closed his eyes, and began to relax. Using the routine he learned for meditation, he "breathed the tension out of his body" and thought he felt himself drifting off to sleep. Several years before, Peny had urged him to take a meditation course. Many times he had tried meditating, and although he observed great benefits from meditation in the lives of others, he saw little or no benefits in his own life. "Glorified napping" is what Jach called meditation, until, for whatever reason, he decided to give it another try.

Suddenly he realized he had not fallen asleep after all, as something strange and real began happening. He started "seeing things" in visualizations so vivid in detail that the colors, smells, sights, and sounds came to life. He felt the images bursting with a reality that caused his mind to race with excitement and anticipation.

Following a path through ferns, lush trees, and sweet smells, he was beckoned to a cabin with a thatched roof that was nestled among tall pines and sequoia trees. Feeling almost like he could hear the cabin breathe he started to reach for the latch on the door, when the door opened on its own. Stepping into the room, he saw a man standing in front of him. A warm light seemed to pour through the windows and doors, as the kind man spoke to Jach, identifying himself as Lazaris. Just then, Jach's meditation ended abruptly, but he furiously recorded every detail, writing as fast as he could, lest he forget. Excited, he called his wife to tell her about his successful meditation and that he hadn't fallen asleep.

Jach said he all but forgot about the experience for a time, but many months later, he decided to try meditating again, this time with Peny present. She asked him questions while he was in the meditative state, but the answers

he gave to the questions "bored him," so he fell asleep—or so he thought. Two hours later, Jach started to apologize to Peny for sleeping, but barely got the words out. Peny was exhilarated as her words tumbled out to tell him that she had thought he was asleep too, until an "entity" had spoken through him, in a deep, resonant voice, saying he was "Lazaris"—the same one from months before.

Actually, Lazaris took over answering the questions, and lengthy dialogues took place between Peny and Lazaris. Peny recorded every word, and although Jach had a difficult time believing what he was hearing, and wished to avoid even talking about it, he did agree to sit and close his eyes and take what he called his "after-dinner nap" while Lazaris channeled through him. Over time, the words "just keep moving" continued to go through Jach's mind, as Peny and Michaell, a friend knowledgeable in Eastern philosophy and metaphysics, helped interpret what was being said. They experienced an overwhelming spirit of love as they witnessed the channeled messages. It would be two years, however, before Jach himself felt the compassion, concern, and wisdom of Lazaris, and when it came, he broke down sobbing, as he was filled with a perfect peace.

From that point on, Jach devoted his life to allowing Lazaris "to borrow his vocal chords" while he went into a deep trance, in order to teach and heal others. Lazaris explained that by Jach going into a "full-trance state," the information coming through him would not be colored or tainted with Jach's personality or personal interpretation, but it would come through as a pure message from Lazaris. Clarifying that Jach's energy field acts merely as an antenna—his body an amplifier for the "vibratory frequencies" that end up as sound—Lazaris was emphatic that there is no taking over or possessing of Jach's body any more than a news anchor on TV is *really* in the television set. Stating that Lazaris has never been in a physical body, nor do "they" desire to ever be, one of the main messages "they" wish to make known is that a consciousness exists far beyond what one could imagine or believe.

Since 1974, tens of thousands, including celebrities, have found friendships with what they describe as the loving, humorous, and witty Lazaris, who offers them emotional and spiritual guidance on a wide range of topics.

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JANE ROBERTS (1929–1984)

On September 9, 1963, 34-year-old Jane Roberts had finished her dinner and was sitting down to her usual evening session of poetry writing. Her husband, Robert F. Butts, was in his art studio, three rooms away, working on his painting. Roberts picked up her pen and stared at the blank piece of paper, waiting for the creative juices to begin flowing. She had no reason to suspect that this night would be any different from others in her life.

All at once she found herself in the throes of an experience she could only liken to a drugless trip. "Between one normal minute and the next, a fantastic avalanche of radical, new ideas burst into my head, with tremendous force, as if my skull were some sort of receiving station, tuned up to unbearable volume," she wrote later, describing the experience. "Not only ideas came through this channel, but sensations, intensified and pulsating. I was…connected to some incredible source of energy."

The startled young woman had no time to call out to her husband, but her pen began feverishly to cover the page before her with a multitude of thoughts and feelings. Consciousness and reality were all turned around, and the thoughts that she was receiving seemed to be invading her mind, taking up permanent

residence. Feeling and knowing became one and the same thing, and the importance of intellectual knowledge paled before the sensation of wisdom gained beyond the power of reasoning. At the same time all this was happening, a small part of Roberts seemed to remember that this same scenario had been enacted the night before in a dream, but she had forgotten it. Somehow, though, she knew the two experiences were connected.

When she returned to full consciousness, Roberts found herself giving a title to the barrage of words that had streamed across the paper in front of her: *The Physical Universe of Idea Construction*. The title seemed to fit the hastily scribbled notes, but none of the material fit anywhere into Roberts's previous convictions regarding life and the human psyche. The sudden paranormal experience had turned her world upside-down and would eventually lead to a series of dramatic events that forever changed her life.

Jane Roberts and Rob Butts bought a book on **extrasensory perception,** and they decided to try some experiments with an old **Ouija board** that their landlady had found in the attic. The first two times they tried to move the planchette, nothing happened. Neither of them were surprised, for they had little faith in the board's capabilities. On the third try, they were both amazed when the planchette began to move across the board and spell out answers to their questions. The couple found out that they had contacted an entity calling itself Frank Withers, who claimed to have lived in their New York town of Elmira and died there in the 1940s. The spirit provided other details of his life on Earth, and Jane Roberts and Rob Butts were surprised when the information actually checked out in the town records.

On December 8, 1963, the spirit of Frank Withers said while he had lived a "rather colorless" existence by that name, he preferred to be addressed as Seth, because it better suited the whole self that he was trying to be. He went on to say that from his perspective, Rob would better be named Joseph, and Jane, Rupert.

After that session, which lasted until after midnight, Roberts was convinced that Seth was an aspect of either her or Butts's subconscious. She could not accept the idea that Seth might represent a separate entity that had survived death. In subsequent sessions, she was determined to resist the development of mediumship that was apparently growing stronger within her each time they sat down at the Ouija board. Then, on the evening of December 15, Roberts felt a great rush of words welling up within her. She felt nearly choked up with "piles of nouns and verbs" in her head. And then, "without really knowing how or why, I opened my mouth and let them out." Seth was no longer restricted to the Ouija board. He was now able to speak through Jane and to deal with complex subjects that changed their response to the universe and their own role within it.

There seemed little in either Roberts's or Butts's early lives to which a psychical researcher might point and reach a clear conclusion that a spirit medium or channel was in the making. Growing up in Saratoga Springs, New York, as far as Roberts could remember, she had never demonstrated any extrasensory abilities before Seth's arrival. She had begun writing poetry as a child, and she had always been creative, but there was nothing to indicate that the girl would grow into a psychic of substantial ability. Her parents divorced, and Roberts had lived with her mother as they struggled to make ends meet. It had been a poetry scholarship that got Roberts into Skidmore College and out of her relentlessly poor life.

Butts was a product of what Jane called middle-class American "social Protestantism." A talented painter, Butts's role in accumulating what would later come to be called "The Seth Material" was from the first that of scribe and questioner. They seldom used a tape recorder during their twice-a-week sessions, but Butts maintained meticulous notes. He observed the subtle changes in Roberts or Seth as he carefully transcribed Seth's words verbatim, and he had the pleasure of conversing with Seth, something that Roberts at times wished that she were able to do.

At first Roberts had been reluctant to give in too much to Seth, and she insisted on being able to keep her eyes open while she paced around the room. Later, she liked to sit in a

rocker while in trance, and though she went through a period of closing her eyes for a couple of years, she returned to open, though half-lidded, eyes. Seth usually announced his presence by taking off Roberts's glasses and casting them to the floor or a nearby piece of furniture. The volume of his voice went through various stages of development. It was resonant and conversational, but on occasion, boomed out at an extraordinary volume.

Both Butts and Roberts were greatly affected personally by the lessons learned from their sessions with Seth. Butts benefitted from what Seth termed "inner visual data," and he even received a few useful art instructions from his unusual friend. Roberts saw her latent psychic abilities flower under Seth's tutelage. She received specific instructions from Seth on how to develop **telepathy, clairvoyance,** and **precognition.** Of particular interest to her were her **out-of-body experiences,** which sometimes occurred under curious circumstances while she was in trance with Seth.

Through such books as *The Seth Material,* Jane Roberts essentially created a renewed interest in contemporary spirit mediumship, which was now updated as "channeling," likening the psychic-sensitive to a television set receiving channels telecast to it. Central to an understanding of the Seth Material is an awareness of the entity's basic teaching that all reality is created by thought and emotions. Specifically, what a person thinks and feels forms his or her surrounding reality. This process of reality-building is not static, however. It is dynamic. Therefore, reality is constantly changing, and it follows that a conscious awareness of this process can change any reality for the better. No one is at the mercy of past events. An individual cannot blame his or her parents, church, schooling, or any other person or event for making him or her the way he or she is. In ignorance, one may have made oneself unhappy, but with conscious awareness that person can make himself or herself a happy, productive individual. Because individuals create their own reality, they can therefore change it.

Seth's belief in mind as the builder expands the concept of human personality in a unique way. Since thoughts and emotions are believed to create reality, then dreams, too, have a separate reality. When individuals dream of themselves, they are seeing a fragment of their own personality, such as the probable self identified by Seth. According to the spirit entity, each individual has a counterpart in other systems of reality. These are not identical selves or twins, but other selves who are part of the whole person, developing ideas in a different way. Each of these probable selves represents a portion of the whole self existing in a different dimension, yet all are a part of the whole self. According to Seth, these various realities "merge in the overall perceptions of the whole self" and "ultimately the inner ego must bring about comprehension on the parts of the simultaneous selves. Each portion of the whole self must become aware of the other parts." Seth also maintained that all layers of the whole self continually exchange information on a subconscious level.

In such terms, Jane Roberts may then have been a physical manifestation of the personality Seth; she may even have been one of his probable selves. She could have been part of a completely other whole self, separate from the whole self of which Seth was a part. Roberts continually attempted to better understand the relationship she had with Seth and to explain the true nature of their connection.

On February 26, 1982, Roberts was hospitalized for an underactive thyroid gland, severe arthritis, and other complications. Through the years of their spiritual interaction, Seth had provided suggestions to ease certain of her physical conditions, but nevertheless, she died on September 5, 1984. Butts has continued disseminating the Seth Material and completed two books on which they had been working before his wife's death.

It is difficult to place Jane Roberts in a category, for she herself refused any attempts to analyze either her trance abilities or the phenomenon of Seth in the old traditional medium/spirit guide relationship. The material that Seth imparted to her was not often seen in traditional examples of mediumship and spirit guides. It may take years before the Seth Material can be appropriately evaluated.

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Rudi Schneider (1908–1957)

Rudi (Rudolf) Schneider was one of four brothers who produced mediumistic phenomena in the family's hometown of Branau, Austria. Although his older brothers—Willy, Hans, and Karl—demonstrated somewhat impressive abilities when they were children, it was Rudi who gained the greatest attention from scientific investigators.

Willy was the first of the Schneider brothers to receive more than a local reputation when a skeptic, a man named Kogelnik, witnessed one of Willy's seances and was convinced that he was observing genuine phenomena. Kogelnik brought Willy to the attention of the active psychical researcher Baron Albert von Schrenck-Notzing (1862–1929), who immediately tested and monitored the young medium. However, shortly after the tests had begun in earnest, "Olga," Willy's **spirit control,** asked that eleven-year-old Rudi be present. Although at that time Rudi's **mediumship** was only in the early process of development, von Schrenck-Notzing was intrigued by the fact that while Willy insisted upon complete darkness in which to produce phenomena, the younger Schneider felt contented to work under at least partially lighted conditions.

In January of 1926, a seance was held in the headquarters of the British Society for Psychical Research (BSPR) with Willy Schneider. The meeting had been organized by researcher Dr. E. J. Dingwall (1890–1986) and was attended by Douglas Dexter, a professional magician, and Dr. C. G. Lamb of the Engineering Laboratory at Cambridge. Schneider was carefully inspected by Dingwall the moment he set foot on the society's premises. The clothing that Schneider changed into before the seance—a set of pajamas and a dressing jacket—was the property of the society. Every precaution was taken to assure the investigators that whatever they might witness that night would be the result of psychic ability and not trickery.

The medium was led to a seat, and luminous strips were taped around both his ankles and his wrists so that his slightest movement could easily be seen by the members of the society. During the seance, as an added precaution, the medium's hands would be held by two researchers.

Enclosed in a gauze cage were a luminous cardboard ring and a tambourine. The cage itself was set on a table several feet in front of Schneider. As the seance progressed, the investigators were astonished to see the two enclosed objects float about in the gauze enclosure and dance like snowflakes through the air. The researchers found the phenomenon inexplicable, and Dingwall concluded his report with the statement that "...the only reasonable hypothesis is that some supernormal agency produced the result."

AFTER Rudi Schneider had entered a trance, Olga, his spirit contact, manifested and the medium levitated several times. The investigators were astounded to record an increase in his respiration rate to 250 to 300 times a minute.

But even more impressive was the showing that Willy's brother Rudi made for the society six years later, on December 8, 1932. Days before he was to conduct the seance, representatives from a firm of building contractors inspected the seance room to assure the society that no hidden apparatus of any kind existed that might in some way simulate psychic effects. With the assistance of society member Lord Rayleigh and the Imperial College of Science, infrared equipment was installed in the seance room so that the slightest movement of Rudi's limbs could be detect-

Rudi Schneider (1908–1957) (head bowed) experimenting on Baron von Schrenck-Notzig (1862–1929). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

ed. Before the sitting began, Rudi was trussed up in much the same manner as his brother had been.

After Schneider had entered a **trance,** Olga, his spirit contact, manifested and the medium levitated several times. The investigators were astounded to record an increase in his normal respiration rate of 14–26 times a minute to 250 to 300 times a minute. The medium maintained this rate for two hours, a feat that the researchers considered almost as remarkable as his ability to rise into the air and to flutter the curtains across the room.

The installation of the infrared equipment enabled the researchers to be assured that Rudi Schneider had not moved his limbs. However, C. V. C. Herbert, the man behind the controls, did report that the medium seemed to generate a mysterious force that had made the infrared beam oscillate at exactly twice the rate of his respiratory pattern.

In an intensive series of sittings conducted under the auspices of the Institute Metaphysique of Paris in 1930, Rudi Schneider had submitted to the experiments of Dr. Eugen Osty (1874–1938) and his son, Marcel. Osty enthusiastically confirmed the paranormal abilities of the medium and presented the results of his findings in a pamphlet entitled *Unknown Power of the Spirit Over Matter* in which he concluded that Rudi Schneider possessed the ability to move objects by sheer power of will. In Osty's assessment, the medium could not have produced such phenomena by fraudulent means because his hands and feet had been controlled by electrical apparatus and his body had been held down by researchers, who had prevented any movement on his part.

Between February and May of 1932, Rudi Schneider began another series of experiments in London with Harry Price (1881–1948), a psychical researcher who was

attempting to have his National Laboratory for Psychical Research integrated into the Society for Psychical Research. Earlier, Price had been a champion of Willy's psychic abilities, and he appeared equally enthusiastic about Rudi's mediumistic talents. Price arranged for a complicated array of photographic equipment to photograph the resultant phenomena from every possible angle. While some of the sessions produced such manifestations as ghostly winds, the movement of objects, and the materialization of various forms, other tests were unsuccessful and left the observing scientists sharply divided in their opinions over the genuineness of Schneider's mediumship.

Price continued to proclaim the authenticity of Schneider's paranormal abilities, writing various articles insisting that he had passed every major test set before him and emerged unscathed from the ordeals of intense scientific investigation. Then on March 5, 1933, Price puzzled both his many admirers and detractors when he published an article in the *Sunday Dispatch* claiming that Rudi Schneider was a fraud. One of the photographs taken in April of the previous year, during the period of exhaustive experiments, revealed Schneider freeing a hand at the time that spiritistic phenomena had occurred. Why Price reversed himself so dramatically after having so publicly championed Schneider remains a mystery, though some psychical researchers felt that Price had become jealous of other investigators who appeared to have taken Schneider away from him to conduct their own tests. When other researchers who had examined Schneider began to waffle and backpeddle on their prior positive endorsements of his mediumship, proponents of Spiritualism denounced the psychic investigators as deceitful individuals who could not handle the truth of confronting genuine spirit phenomena. The renowned Swiss psychologist Carl G. Jung (1875–1961), who had attended one of Schneider's seances in 1925, said, "I shall not commit the fashionable stupidity of regarding everything I cannot explain as a fraud."

In *The Strange Case of Rudi Schneider* (1985), Anita Gregory concludes that any objective person who studied Schneider's life and his mediumship would form the impression that he was possessed of remarkable psychic abilities. Since he was a boy of 11, he had permitted himself to be thoroughly investigated by psychical researchers and had willingly accepted whatever strenuous conditions they chose to impose. In Gregory's assessment, "there is not one iota of evidence to suggest that he was ever in his life anything other than transparently honest." Today, psychical researcher John Beloff has decreed Rudi Schneider's mediumship to be rightly considered among the most authenticated in the annals of psychical research.

Until his death on April 28, 1957, at the age of 49, Rudolf Schneider continued to indulge various researchers who wished to test his mediumship, and he generously shared his talents with his friends and neighbors in Meyer, Austria, where he had supported his family by starting his own driving school.

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Witch of Endor (c. 1025 B.C.E.)

The Witch of Endor receives her indelible moments in the spiritual history of the Judeo-Christian traditions in Chapter 28: 4–28 of I Samuel. Saul, King of Israel, had begun his reign with a great military victory over the Ammonites, but he, who had once been a humble man, allowed his early successes to go to his head. When it becomes apparent to King Saul that David, once a mere shepherd boy whose musical talents eased his troubled mind, has found favor in God's eyes and will soon claim the throne of Israel, Saul tries to kill him. But David has evolved from the boy who slew the giant warrior Goliath with a sling-shot and the giant's own sword to a capable leader with his own army. Thoroughly frightened and confused, King Saul wishes that he would once again be able to seek the advice of the great and wise Samuel, who,

before his death, had served Israel as the last of the judges, the first of the prophets, and the founder of the monarchy, the sole ruler between Eli and Saul.

Receiving no answer to his prayers to God, Saul tells one of his servants to find him a woman who has a **familiar spirit** (i.e., a **spirit medium**) who can speak to the dead. The servant reminds Saul that he had passed laws that forced all such mediums and wizards out of the land under penalty of death, but, he admits, he does know of such a woman who lives at Endor.

Saul disguises himself and, accompanied by two loyal men, comes to see the Witch of Endor after it is dark. Getting directly to the point, Saul asks the woman to ask her spirit control to summon someone from the dead so that he might speak with him. No fool, the medium plays it very carefully, and reminds the stranger that Saul has driven all such men and women who claim to have familiar spirits out of the land of Israel. If she even acknowledges that she has such abilities, she could be put to death.

THE Witch of Endor has become the prototype for the spirit medium as a necromancer, a magician who raises the spirits of the dead.

Saul, desperate for counsel from the spirit of Samuel, swears to her by the Lord that no punishment will come to her if she will perform this favor for him. He promises that he will tell no one. Satisfied with her client's oath of secrecy, the witch asks whom she shall ask her spirit control to summon from the land of the dead. Saul answers, "Bring me Samuel."

When the woman sees the spirit of Samuel materialize before her, it is also given to her to know that her client is King Saul, none other than the very ruler who had banished all mediums and conjurors from Israel. Saul once again reassures her that no harm will come to her, but he can see nothing and asks her what it is that has startled her. She describes the elderly man covered with a mantle who has appeared, and Saul, knowing that it is the spirit of Samuel, bows before him.

Although it seems Saul cannot see the form of his mentor, he can clearly hear the prophet's words of distress at being disturbed and brought back to the land of the living. "Why are you bothering me by bringing me up like this?" a querulous Samuel demands. When Saul explains how worried he is—the Philistines are preparing to attack his forces and God appears to have turned his back on him—Samuel goes on to say that there is nothing he can do or say to help him, because the Lord has departed from him and will turn the kingdom of Israel over to David. Moreover, Saul and his sons will soon be with Samuel among the spirits of the dead, slain in battle by the Philistines.

Saul trembles and falls to the ground in a faint. He is weak because of fear and because he has not eaten a single bit of food all that day or night. The Witch of Endor prevails upon him to eat something, and Saul's two bodyguards agree with her insistence that he needs nourishment. The woman kills a calf that she has been fattening for a special occasion, prepares its meat along with some unleavened bread that she bakes, and Saul dines with her and his men before he takes his leave to meet his destiny on the battlefield.

The *Dictionary of Jewish Lore and Legend* states that the Witch of Endor was able to raise Samuel from the spirit world because he had been dead less than 12 months, "and the soul stays close to the body for this period." Certain traditional accounts of the incident state that other spirits, including Moses, came with Samuel because when they saw his spirit arise, they thought that the Resurrection of the Dead had begun. Other scholars are divided in their opinions whether the apparition of Samuel was real or fraudulent, some stating that the Witch of Endor only placed Saul into a **trance** and deceived him into believing that he had seen Samuel. The Witch of Endor has become the prototype for the spirit medium as a necromancer, a magician who raises the spirits of the dead.

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Spiritualism

Modern Spiritualism began in the late winter months of 1847 with the mysterious knocking and window rattling at the John Fox residence in Hydesville, New York. Fox spent an entire day securing everything that looked as if it might shake or vibrate, only to have the night resound with even louder knockings and rappings. After a time, the Fox family began to observe that the center of the disturbances seemed to be the bedroom shared by 12-year-old Catherine (Katie) and 15-year-old Margaretta (Maggie).

One night in March 1848, when John Fox was once again attempting to discover a cause for the rappings, the family was startled to hear mysterious sounds imitating those that their father was making as he went hammering about the room. Katie excitedly challenged the unseen presence, which she laughingly personified as "Old Splitfoot," to follow the snappings of her fingers. When the sounds responded in a precise manner, other members of the family began to test the mysterious invisible agency.

As word spread that the John Fox family had a knocking ghost that could respond to any question answerable with a "yes" or "no" (one rap for yes; two for no), people from all over Hydesville came to test the spirit's knowledge. Although the invisible agency responsible for the initial knockings claimed to be the spirit of a peddler who had been murdered and buried in the basement of the Fox home (some accounts have it that investigation produced a skeleton interred in the basement), other spirit entities soon manifested themselves. Young Katie and her older sister Maggie seemed especially suited for the role of medium, for they seemed pleased and excited by the phenomena and did not appear to fear the invisible communicators as did the other Fox children. Serious investigators who were attracted to the phenomena soon worked out codes whereby in-depth communication with the spirits might be possible. Committees of researchers tracked through the Fox home and did considerable knocking and rapping of their own.

In order to give their parents a respite from the knocking spirits and the crowds of the curious, Katie and Maggie were sent to their older sister Leah's home in Rochester, New York. It was soon apparent that the spirits had followed them, and Leah encouraged her sisters to hold seances to contact other entities. When these initial attempts at spirit contact proved successful, Leah arranged for Maggie and Katie to give a public demonstration of the spiritistic phenomena, which brought an audience of 400. According to witnesses, the spirit knockings did not seem confined to the stage, but rapped from numerous areas in the hall.

After they had played to that enraptured audience in Rochester, it seemed clear to Leah that the spirits were telling her that she should act as a manager for Maggie and Katie and arrange demonstrations in other cities. Following her other-worldly guidance, Leah set up a tour that made her sisters a sensation wherever they appeared. Soon the two young girls were being routinely hailed as modern prophets or as frauds and deceivers, depending upon the biases of the witnesses. Maggie and Katie were examined by scientific investigators on both sides of the Atlantic and were "exposed" when they purportedly confessed that they produced the knocks and raps by cracking their toe joints. In the skeptic's casebook, this has become the accepted disclaimer for the phenomena produced by the Fox sisters.

Official cynicism had little effect on the budding Spiritualist movement, however. Some authorities fix the membership of the Spiritualist church as nearly two million by the height of the American Civil War in 1864. This seems high when one notes that the total population of the United States at this time was about 30 million. (The Spiritualist church today—International General Assembly of Spiritualists, National Spiritual Alliance of the U.S.A., and Nationalist Spiri-

tualist Association of Churches—numbers about 200,000 members.) In the second half of the nineteenth century, though, several important Americans were either members of a Spiritualist church or were in sympathy with its philosophy of spirit contact. Shortly after Abraham Lincoln's (1809–1865) election to the presidency, Cleveland's *Plain Dealer* dealt the president-elect some harsh criticism for having "consulted spooks." Lincoln's honest reply was that the only falsehood in the story was that "the half of it has not been told. The article does not begin to tell of the wonderful things I have witnessed."

SHORTLY *after Abraham Lincoln's (1809–1865) election to the presidency, Cleveland's* Plain Dealer *dealt the president-elect some harsh criticism for having "consulted spooks."*

Lincoln made no secret of having consulted backwoods "granny women" in his youth, and once he moved to Washington, D.C., he invited some of the most noted mediums of the day to conduct seances in the White House. Lincoln had received a strong spiritual heritage from his mother, and he had been reared in an atmosphere in which one did not reject advice from "the other side." Although Lincoln never became dependent upon mediums to guide his administration, he was by no means a skeptic, and he stated that spirit messages had enabled him to survive crisis after crisis during his presidency. The president became so outspoken in praise of the guidance he received from the spirit world that it is said that it was Lincoln's influence that prompted Union general Ulysses S. Grant (1822–1885) to turn to Spiritualism.

In December of 1862, when the Union cause was on the brink of defeat, Lincoln was under great pressure from all sides to drop the rigid enforcement of the forthcoming Emancipation Proclamation. Mary Lincoln, aware of the terrible strain on her husband, called several trusted individuals together in the Red Parlor and called for one of the president's favorite mediums, Nettie Colburn (b. ca. 1841), to conduct a seance.

The medium went into **trance** and her **spirit control** spoke of matters which only the president seemed to understand. Then the entranced Nettie Colburn's spirit control charged President Lincoln not to compromise the terms of the Emancipation Proclamation, but resolutely to carry out all the implications of the announcement he had made.

When the medium came out of the trance, she found the president looking soberly at her. One of the gentlemen present asked Lincoln if he had recognized anything about the voice and the message of the delivery. Nettie Colburn recalled later that the president "raised himself as if shaking off a spell," then glanced at the full-length portrait of Daniel Webster that hung over the piano. "Yes," the president admitted, "and it is very singular, very."

In his *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism* (1975), Alfred Russell Wallace writes that the hypothesis of Spiritualism is the only one that can at all commend itself to the modern philosophical mind. "The main doctrines of this religion are: That after death man's spirit survives in an ethereal body, gifted with new powers, but mentally and morally the same individual as when clothed in flesh. That he commences from that moment a course of apparently endless progression, which is rapid just in proportion as his mental and moral faculties are cultivated when on earth. That his comparative happiness or misery will depend entirely upon himself....Neither punishments nor rewards are meted out by an external power, but each one's condition is the natural and inevitable sequence of his condition here...."

Spiritualists contend that they have proof of survival after death and the existence of an afterlife that other churches only promise on faith. Many orthodox clergypersons do not deny the occurrence of genuine spiritual phenomena, but they are in sharp disagreement with Spiritualists as to the source of the manifestations. Some of the disagreement stems from the accusation that Spiritualism may be treading dangerously close to demonology. Religious orthodoxy, which believes survival

after death to be assured, holds that contact with departed mortals cannot be established and warns that those who attempt to establish communication with the dead may find themselves involved with deceptive evil spirits. The oft-quoted allegation that Spiritualists consort with demons goes a long way toward preventing any sort of ecumenical movement between Spiritualists and the conventional religious groups from developing.

In an effort to clarify their theological position, the National Spiritualist Association adopted these following definitions of its belief in October 1914:

> 1. Spiritualism is the science, philosophy, and religion of a continuous life, based on the demonstrated fact of communication, by means of mediumship, with those who live in the spirit world.
>
> 2. A spiritualist is one who believes, as the basis of his or her religion, in the communication between this and the spirit world by means of mediumship, and who endeavors to mold his or her character and conduct in accordance with the highest teaching derived from such communication.
>
> 3. A medium is one whose organism is sensitive to vibrations from the spirit world and through whose instrumentality intelligences in that world are able to convey messages and produce the phenomena of spiritualism.
>
> 4. A spiritualist healer is one who, either through his own inherent powers or through his mediumship, is able to impart vital, curative force to pathologic conditions.

"Spiritualism is a science" because it investigates, analyzes, and classifies facts and manifestations demonstrated from the spirit side of life.

"Spiritualism is a philosophy" because it studies the laws of nature both on the seen and unseen sides of life and bases its conclusions upon present observed facts. It accepts statements of observed facts of past ages and conclusions drawn therefrom, when sustained by reason and by results of observed facts of the present day.

Many orthodox clergypersons do not deny the occurrence of genuine spiritual phenomena, but they are in sharp disagreement with Spiritualists as to the source of the manifestations.

"Spiritualism is a religion" because it strives to understand and to comply with the physical, mental, and spiritual laws of nature, which are the laws of God.

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Andrew Jackson Davis (1826–1910)

Andrew Jackson Davis is often referred to as the "John the Baptist" of modern Spiritualism, for he preached the advent of spirit communication in the United States with an evangelical fervor. Davis grew up in extreme poverty in Blooming Grove, New York, a small hamlet along the Hudson River, the only son in a family of six. His mother was illiterate, but highly religious, and quite likely encouraged her frail, nervous son to receive visions and to hear voices early in life. Davis's father was afflicted with alcoholism and barely managed to provide any sustenance for his family in his trade as a weaver and shoemaker. Only one of the family's five daughters survived to adulthood.

When he was 12, Davis's clairvoyant impressions and spirit voices manifested convincingly enough to persuade his father to move the family to Poughkeepsie. Five years later, in 1843, Davis attended a demonstration on mesmerism conducted by Dr. J. Stanley Grimes. Mesmerism, usually defined as an old-fashioned term for hypnotism, developed out of the theories of certain physicians in the sixteenth century that humans could project and control their animal magnetism, sometimes inducing **trance** states in themselves or in others. In the 1760s, Dr. Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) began healing patients with what he believed was the result of animal magnetism's effect on a kind of "universal fluid" that flowed between the stars, the human body, and everything on the planet, but which today would likely to be attributed to light trance states and the power of suggestion.

With Davis's childhood experiences of hearing spirit voices, it is not surprising that he was found to be a good subject by a local tailor named William Levingston, who had decided to experiment with mesmerism on his own. Once Davis had entered an altered state of consciousness, he seemed to have the ability to see through the human body and to diagnose the cause of illnesses and medical disorders. Within a short period of time, Andrew Jackson Davis was being proclaimed as the "Poughkeepsie Seer." Men and women were coming from miles around to draw from his magnetic powers, and Levingston abandoned his tailor shop to devote all of his time to overseeing Davis's healing ministry.

On the evening of March 6, 1844, Davis experienced a life-altering event that would direct the course of his personal destiny. All he claimed to remember was being overcome by some power that made him feel as though he were literally flying through the air. When he regained consciousness the next morning, he found himself in the Catskill Mountains, 40 miles away from Poughkeepsie. Had the spirits transported him through the air and deposited him there in the mountains? Or had he walked 40 miles in one evening while in a trance? And why did he suddenly awaken to find himself in this particular spot?

While Davis claimed never to learn the answer as to how he got to that particular setting in the Catskills, he soon learned the reason why. He said that first the spirit of the Greek philosopher Galen (129 C.E.–C. 199c.e.) materialized before him, then the spirit of the Swedish seer **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772), both of whom provided him with mental illumination and spiritual revelation. From that day onward, Andrew Jackson Davis set forth on an extensive lecture schedule, proclaiming the advent of spirit communication for humans everywhere. He claimed a great cosmic doorway was being opened, and ministers from the spirit world would soon be making themselves available for contact with those individuals who wished to gain from their wisdom and inspiration.

While on tour, Davis met Dr. S. Silas Lyons, an experienced mesmerist, who was able to induce a deep trance state in the Poughkeepsie seer. In November of 1845, with Lyons as the mesmerist, Davis as the prophetic voice, and Reverend William Fishbough as the stenographer, dictation was begun on *The Principles of Nature: Her Divine Revelations and a Voice to Mankind*. The process lasted for 15 months, and often small crowds of enthusiastic men and women, including such luminaries as American writer Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849), bore witness to the words as they poured forth from the entranced Davis.

In 1847, the book was published and was received eagerly by a public seeking new revelations from a modern prophet. Although some critics pointed out many similarities to the writings of Swedenborg concerning creation, philosophy, and religion, Davis' champions replied that the seer was a man of modest education who had never read the works of the great Swedish mystic. Davis had, in fact, only five months of formal schooling. However, there should be little mystery if the *Principles of Nature* contained echoes of Swedenborg, for it was his spirit who had manifested with Galen to inspire Davis. Due to the success of his book, Davis began issuing *Univercoelum*, a periodical which was published from 1847 to 1849 and was devoted to **clairvoyance,** trance phenomena, and his Harmonial Philosophy.

On March 31, 1848, it is said that Davis predicted the coming of modern **Spiritualism** when he reported that he had awakened that morning hearing a voice telling him that the good work had begun: "About daylight this morning a warm breathing passed over my face, and I heard a voice, tender and strong, saying, 'Brother, the good work has begun. Behold, a living demonstration is born.' I was left wondering what could be meant by such a message." Although Davis and his followers would not ally themselves with the Spiritualist cause until 1850, it would often be pointed out that the **Fox sisters** first challenged "old Splitfoot" on March 31, 1848, and that the "voice, tender and strong," had obviously been referring to their "living demonstration" of spirit communication.

In July 1848, after creating a bit of scandal for the conservative times, Andrew Jackson Davis married Catherine Dodge, a wealthy heiress, who was 20 years his senior. Their union was unhappy and brief, and she died in 1853, leaving her estate to Davis. Davis continued to lecture and teach his Harmonial Philosophy for many years. At the age of 60, he acquired a medical degree, but soon thereafter he retired to Boston, where he ran a bookshop and prescribed herbal remedies to his patients. Andrew Jackson Davis died amidst his books and herbs in 1910, a quiet ending to the full life of the "John the Baptist" of the Spiritualist movement.

Delving Deeper

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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)

When many first learn that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes mystery series, was fascinated with psychical research and an investigation of life after death, they make the immediate assumption that he may well have been allied with the likes of the great magician **Harry Houdini** (1874–1926) (especially when it is learned that the two men were friends), devoting his intellect and his experience to exposing fraudulent **spirit mediums.** They may visualize the author much like Holmes, his famous fictional detective, unveiling the trickery by which a charismatic, but phony, medium has deceived the unwary, then climaxing his explanation of the deception with the casual utterance of, "elementary, my dear Watson." In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Doyle was an ardent believer in the reality of spirit communication, and he became such a missionary for **Spiritualism** that he came to be known as the "St. Paul" of the movement. While Holmes, the quintessential proponent of deduction, and his creator did not share the tendencies to be unfailingly skeptical, extremely rational, and shrewd, there were other aspects of the fictional detective which did manifest in Doyle. Arthur Conan Doyle was tall, upper-class, thoroughly English, self-confident, and successful at his chosen profession, which, like that of Holmes's loyal associate, Dr. Watson, was the practice of medicine.

Doyle was first invited to witness mediumistic phenomena while he was a physician at Southsea in 1885. For the next three years, he participated in a number of sittings in the home of one of his patients, who was a teacher at the Greenwich Naval College. The medium at the center of these experiments was a railway signalman who seemed capable of producing a wide range of astonishing phenomena. So astonishing, that Doyle, the young man of science and medicine, eventually concluded that the man was occasionally faking the manifestations, and that the other sitters either chose to ignore the trickery in the hope that more genuine phenomena would manifest—or else were too gullible or too eager to accept the miraculous to protest.

While his early encounters with mediumship were not greatly impressive, Doyle's interest in exploring the unknown was stirred, and he joined the **Society for Psychical Research** (SPR) shortly thereafter. In 1902 he met **Sir Oliver Lodge** (1851–1940), and the experiences and research of this highly respected scientist had a great impact upon him.

Doyle became convinced that **telepathy** was a genuine phenomenon that could also account for a great deal of apparent mediumistic knowledge of the deceased. Perhaps, he theorized, the medium was picking up thoughts about the dead from the various sitters in the seance circle who had lost loved ones. During the same period of time, Doyle read **Fredric W. H. Myers**'s (1843–1901) *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (1903), which had a great effect on his acceptance of mediumship and spirit communication.

In 1916, after 30 years of intense study, Doyle accepted the phenomena of Spiritualism as genuine. He was 58, at the height of his literary career, and filled with self-confidence, so he openly associated himself with the cause of modern Spiritualism in two books, *The New Revelation* (1918) and *The Vital Message* (1919). In that same year, with World War I creating turmoil in both the physical and spiritual worlds, his second wife, Jean, lost her brother at the Battle of Mons. In the midst of her grief, she began experimenting with automatic writing, a mediumistic technique whereby one allows the pen to flow across the page under the guidance of spirit writers. When her early attempts at spirit communication proved successful, Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle became convinced that their earthly mission was in large part to be devoted to relaying messages from those who had fallen in battle to their bereaved families.

In 1918, Doyle's oldest son, Kingsley, died of pneumonia during the Battle of the Somme. A year after his son's death, Doyle attended a seance held by a Welsh medium who spoke in Kingsley's voice and referred to matters that would have been completely unknown to the medium. Shortly after the remarkable direct voice communication, the medium materialized Doyle's mother and nephew. Contemptuously brushing aside the efforts of those who attempted to explain the phenomena, Doyle declared that he saw his loved ones as plainly and as clearly as he had ever seen them in life.

After the war ended in 1918, Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle began the first of their extensive lecture tours. For the next 12 years, they were seldom at home for very long periods of time as they traveled throughout Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, northern Europe, South Africa, and the United States. Among the members of the large crowds that gathered were those who were eager to meet the author of their favorite detective fiction and those who wished to hear words of comfort from the Doyles concerning the kind of existence that their deceased loved ones were living on the other side.

The December 1920 issue of *Strand* magazine contained several allegedly authentic photographs of fairies that had been taken with an inexpensive camera by two young girls, Elsie Wright and her cousin Frances Griffiths, in a little valley through which ran a narrow stream near the village of Cottingley. One snapshot taken by Elsie in the summer of 1917, when she was 16, captured her 10-year-old cousin seated on the grass surrounded by four dancing fairies. Another, taken a few months later, showed Elsie with a tiny gnome.

Doyle managed to obtain the negatives and brought them to one of England's most eminent photographic analysts. At first the expert dismissed the very notion of fairy photographs, but he ended up staking his professional reputation by saying that not only were the pictures all single exposures, but he said that he could detect that the tiny beings had actually been moving while having their images snapped by the girls' camera. Furthermore, he stated firmly, he could not detect the slightest evidence of any fakery in the photographs. Doyle wisely sought another opinion, so he took the negatives to the Kodak Company's offices in Kingsway. While these experts declined to acknowledge that the photographs actually depicted fairies, they did issue a statement that they could find no evidence of trick photography or any tampering with the film. Yet a third analyst expressed his opinion that the most significant factor in the Cottingley photographs was that the fairy figures seemed clearly to have been caught in motion as they hovered over the flowers and the girls.

As the British press spread the charming story of the Cottingley fairy photographs, numerous individuals came forward to testify

that they, too, as children had played with the little people. Fortified by the photographic analyses of several experts that the photographs were genuine, Doyle obtained the services of one of Great Britain's most gifted clairvoyants to see if he might be able psychically to verify the girls' accounts of fairies near Cottingley. The psychic sat down with Elsie and Frances in the little valley and found that he was able to see even more of the fairy realm because of his mediumistic abilities. According to his great sensitivity, the entire glen was alive with many types of elemental spirits—wood elves, gnomes, fairies, and graceful water sprites around the valley and stream. Try as he might, though, the clairvoyant was unable to project to the fairies the amount of psychic energy necessary to allow them to materialize. It appeared that only the young girls had the unique blend of innocence and wonder that could somehow supply the fairies with the necessary energy to permit them to attain a material form.

Doyle issued his summation of the case of Elsie and Frances and their fairy photographs, along with his interpretation of the phenomena, in which he stated that while the proof offered by the Cottingley experience was not as "overwhelming" as in the case of spiritualistic phenomena, "there is enough already convincing evidence [for the authenticity of fairies] available." Later, the photographs were exposed as fakes, and Doyle was embarrassed by his having endorsed both the girls and their pictures in his book *The Coming of the Fairies* (1922) as being authentic examples of the ability of certain sensitive individuals to take genuine spirit photographs.

Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle had met Harry Houdini after one of the famous magician's performances at the Hippodrome in Brighton, England, in 1920, and while many have pondered how Doyle, a true believer in Spiritualism, and Houdini, the determined nemesis of spirit mediums, could ever have become friends, a bond of friendship was formed between the two families. Some writers and researchers contend that Houdini didn't disbelieve in survival after death, but, rather, was seeking proof that he could find completely acceptable by his standards. His attack against certain spirit mediums may have been inspired by his feeling that their evidence for the afterlife had been faked. Indeed, the friendship between Doyle and Houdini may have been inspired by the entertainer's sincere desire that the Doyles might somehow be instrumental in providing him with the proof of the afterlife that he so desired. Sadly, their friendship ended quite explosively after Lady Doyle conducted a seance in the United States.

In 1922, Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle were lecturing in the United States, and Houdini asked them to join him and his wife Beatrice (Bess) for a brief vacation in Atlantic City on June 17. That particular date was sacred to Houdini because it was his beloved mother's birthday. Expressing the belief that she could establish contact with his mother on that special day, Lady Doyle entered a light **trance** and began producing lovely and sentimental messages from the magician's mother in the spirit world. Although Houdini was grateful for the kind sentiments, he later publicly expressed his strong doubts that the spirit of his mother had written such words, especially since she had never learned to write English. Also, since the Weiss family (Houdini's birthname) was Jewish, Houdini doubted that his mother would have begun the message by drawing a cross at the top of the page of automatic writing. Houdini's public denials of Lady Doyle's mediumship created a breach between the friends which never healed.

Doyle was nominated honorary president of the International Spiritualist Congress that was held in Paris in 1925. In 1927, he published *Pheneas Speaks*, revelations relayed through automatic writing to Lady Doyle from her **spirit control** Pheneas. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle died on July 7, 1930.

Delving Deeper

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The Fox Sisters

On one of the last days of her life, in February of 1893, Margaretta Kane managed to prop

herself into a sitting position and demanded a pencil and paper from Dr. Mellin, the doctor who had been commissioned to care for her. Kane began writing at an incredible pace, and before she had finished she had filled 20 sheets with clear handwriting. After handing the written sheets back to the doctor, she fell into a coma and died.

When Mellin had the opportunity to examine what Kane had written, she was astonished to discover that her patient had filled the sheets with an accurate and detailed biography of the doctor's own life. It included many events that Mellin had not divulged to anyone. Some time later, Mellin described the incident to the Medico-Legal Society of New York. She concluded her remarks about the manuscript by saying: "To my surprise, I found she had written down a detailed story of my life. The most startling thing did not appear until near the end where Mrs. Kane mentioned the missing will of my mother and the names of several people back home in Manchester, Indiana. I wrote at once to my brother. He sent a friend to Manchester and mother's missing will was recovered."

The story of the dying woman who somehow knew intimate details about her doctor that could not have been known through ordinary means takes on tragic significance when Kane's history is revealed. Kane was born Margaretta Fox, and it was she and her sister Catherine who were credited with the founding of modern Spiritualism. They were later discredited by certain investigators as being clever deceivers with no paranormal or mediumistic abilities whatsoever.

Mysterious knocking and window rattling began in the John Fox home in Hydesville, New York, shortly after they had moved into the house on December 11, 1847. After the first night, Fox spent the next day securing everything that looked as though it might make knocking or rattling sounds, but the following night the knockings and rappings were even louder. One of the family members ventured a guess that it was a prankster playing a trick on them or some neighbor trying to frighten them away, but as much as they tried to catch the supposed joker in the act, they never saw him.

Then Fox, the local blacksmith, began to hear talk about the complaints of some of the previous tenants in the house, who, as early as 1843, had also complained of mysterious rappings, footsteps, and dragging sounds. Michael Weekman, who had rented the house just prior to their occupancy, moved out when he could no longer stand the eerie night sounds.

By March 31, 1848, John and Margaret Fox gave up chasing after the rappings and resolved to live with the disturbances. After all, no real damage had ever occurred. The sounds were just annoying. They would go to bed early that evening and try to get a good night's sleep.

But that night when the disturbances began, the five children—John, David, Maria, Margaretta (Maggie), and Catherine (Katie)—seemed to be more frightened than ever before by the continual knocks and thuds echoing throughout the house. Observing that the strange noises were centering around 12-year-old Katie and 15-year-old Maggie, Fox closed the window in the girls' bedroom with a loud thump. His thump was immediately followed by two others, and Katie cried out that "they" were answering him.

For a few moments, no one moved. Then Fox cautiously knocked on the window sill. There came an answering knock from somewhere in the room. Katie was more excited than frightened. As if it were all some thrilling game, she commanded the sounds to follow the snaps of her fingers and called out: "Here, Mr. Splitfoot, do as I do." The unseen prankster did so perfectly, even when she only held up a certain number of fingers to prompt an appropriate number of raps. "It can see as well as hear!" she laughed in child-like triumph.

Soon other members of the family had entered the game with the mysterious unseen visitor and were asking it to pound out number sequences or to sound one rap for yes, two raps for no. Mrs. Fox was no stranger to psychic phenomena, for although they were respected members of the Methodist Church, three prior generations of women in her family (Rutan) had the ability to predict deaths, births, and other local occurrences.

As his daughters' communication with the spirit progressed, Fox wanted to determine whether or not his entire family was deluded. He went next door and brought a neighbor, Mrs. Redfield, into the children's bedroom. Although the woman laughed at the thought of a knocking spirit, she went away greatly disturbed by the fact that she had not only heard the knocks, but whatever invisible source was making them knew a great deal about her past, also.

As word spread about the curious phenomena that was occurring in the Fox home, people from all over Hydesville came to hear the mysterious rappings. A committee composed of 20 friends and neighbors and directed by William Duesler set about a program of investigation. Shortly after the committee had reached its conclusions regarding the authenticity of the phenomena, E. E. Lewis published a 40-page pamphlet of their findings entitled, "A Report on the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of John D. Fox at Hydesville, Arcadia, Wayne County. Authenticated by the certificates and confirmed by the statements of the citizens of that place and vicinity."

After Katie and Maggie had experimented with the phenomena for several weeks, a code of rappings had been developed and intelligent communication with the entity had been established. The spirit revealed itself as Charles B. Rosna (Rosa in some accounts), a 31-year-old itinerant peddler who had been murdered in the house and buried in the basement. Charles became the **spirit control** for Katie and Maggie, and he revealed a great deal of personal information about his life on Earth through their mediumship.

On April 3, 1848, David Fox and some neighbors began digging in the cellar and discovered charcoal, quicklime, strands of human hair, and portions of a human skull. Based on the evidence provided by the spirit of the murdered man, a former tenant was accused of having perpetrated the deed, but the authorities refused to arrest or prosecute on such testimony.

The Fox family was growing weary of all the attention that they were receiving both from the spirit world and from the populace of Hydesville and the surrounding area. John and Margaret thought they might be able to get rid of the ghostly noises if they sent Maggie and Katie away from the house for a while. The girls were sent to their older sister Leah, 34, who was living in poverty in Rochester after her husband had deserted her. Loud, resounding raps broke out in Leah's home when the girls arrived, indicating that the spirits had followed them to Rochester, and they received the following message from the spirits: "You must proclaim this truth to the world. This is the dawning of a new era. You must not try to conceal it any longer. When you do your duty, God will protect you and good spirits will watch over you."

SPIRITUALISTS *believe that death is only a change of worlds, and communication with those who have passed to the other side is possible.*

With this message from the spirit world, modern Spiritualism was born. Spiritualists believe that death is only a change of worlds, and communication with those who have passed to the other side is possible. For the Fox sisters, their declaration of this message from the spirits placed them in the center of a tumultuous storm that raged throughout their lifetimes. Leah, who according to some sources is also said to have demonstrated some mediumistic abilities, became the manager for Maggie and Katie and arranged during numerous stage presentations for them to demonstrate their interaction with spirits, first in Rochester, then in many other cities throughout New England. The sisters were tested and exposed, tested and authenticated, tested and humiliated, over and over again—damned or praised, depending upon the biases of the investigators. They succumbed to such continual stresses by resorting to heavy drinking. They fought among themselves.

In 1857, Leah married a wealthy insurance man named Underhill and retired from her position as her sisters' manager. Maggie had

been wooed by the famous Arctic explorer Dr. Elisha Kane (1820–1857), who died tragically before they could be married. Undeterred by such a sorrowful change of plans, Maggie considered herself a widow and called herself Margaretta Kane. In 1861, Katie went to England to be tested by such active psychic researchers as **Sir William Crookes** (1832–1919) and became the wife of H. D. Jencken, an attorney. She bore Jencken two sons before he died in 1885, leaving her despondent and once again dependent upon alcohol. In 1888, Katie's lifestyle had become so destructive that Leah managed to have the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children assume custody of her two children.

Outraged by what she considered a traitorous act, Maggie allied herself with her younger sister and vowed to ruin Leah. This she sought to accomplish by writing a letter to the *New York Herald* denouncing Spiritualism and promising revelations of the frauds that the sisters had employed to deceive their audiences. Maggie made good her threat to Leah and her promise to the *New York Herald* by giving a lecture at the New York Academy of Music, where she confessed to being a fraud and offered explanations as to how she and Katie had produced various aspects of the phenomena. An angry Katie joined her sister and endorsed her exposure of spirit communication. They had been able to crack their toes and certain joints to make the sound of the spirit raps, the two sisters said. It had begun as a joke on their parents, but Leah had seen a way to make money from their unique talents. Plus, Maggie and Katie said, Leah had wanted to establish a new religion.

A year later, after passions had cooled among the sisters, Maggie completely retracted her confession of trickery and fraud. She explained that she had been under great mental stress and suffering severe financial difficulties. For five dollars, she declared, she would have sworn to anything. The demonstration at the New York Academy of Music only revealed how such phenomena could be faked, she swore, not how she and her sisters had actually engaged in fraudulent activity. Maggie swore now that they had served as mediums for genuine spirit manifestations.

The phenomena produced by the Fox sisters were important to psychical research. Professor Charles Richet (1850–1935), world-famous physiologist at the Sorbonne, stated that spirit rappings were of "primary importance" as demonstrations that "there are in the universe human or nonhuman intelligences that can act directly on matter." Sir William Crookes (1832–1919), the renowned British chemist and physicist, concluded after a full investigation of Katie Fox that she only had to place her hand on any substance to produce "raps loud enough to be heard several rooms off. In this manner, I have heard them in a living tree, on a sheet of glass, on a stretched iron wire, on a stretched membrane, a tambourine, on the roof of a cab, and on the floor of a theatre. Moreover, actual contact is not always necessary. I have heard these sounds proceeding from the floors, walls, etc., when the medium's hands were held, when she was standing on a chair, when she was suspended from the ceiling, when she was enclosed in a wire cage...."

Psychical researcher Robert Dale Owen observed Leah Fox Underhill in a seance during which she manifested a "light about as large as a small fist, that rose and fell as a hammer would, striking the floor. At each stroke, a loud rap was heard." In over 400 seances sponsored by investigators in New York, Katie Fox, whose hands were held by the researchers, materialized phantom human forms that produced flowers, glowing lights, and written messages in the handwriting of deceased individuals.

Katie worked as a medium and conducted seances until, at the age of 56, she drank herself to death on July 2, 1892. Leah had passed away the year before, November 1, 1891. Maggie died ill and destitute on March 8, 1893, at the age of 59.

Whether the majority of Americans accepted the exposure of the Fox sisters as deceivers and frauds or believed the more positive appraisals by certain psychical researchers that Maggie and Katie were capable of producing genuine spirit phenomena, the Spiritualist movement had been born, and with the help of sensationalistic articles in the press, word of the controversial mediums spread around the

world. **Andrew Jackson Davis** (1826–1910) and Emma Vera Brittain began to deliver trance lectures in the major cities of the eastern seaboard of the United States. In 1859, Dr. Phelps, a Presbyterian minister in Stratford, Connecticut, produced spirit manifestations and developed a following. Soon, trance mediums from the United States were visiting Scotland, England, and being embraced in the Scandinavian countries, where the teachings of **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772) had prepared them to expect such messages from the spirit world. Within months, the movement had taken root in Germany, France, Russia, and many other countries on the continent—all the result of the rappings and knockings of Maggie and Katie Fox, two little girls who, in the eyes of their supporters, had broken down the dividing wall between the worlds of life and death.

Grave of Allen Kardec. (DR. ELMAR R. GRUBER/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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Allen Kardec (1804–1869)

Allen Kardec, known as the father of Spiritism, distinct from **Spiritualism,** was born in Lyons, France, in 1804, with the birth name Hypolyte Leon Denizard Rivail. The names "Allen" and "Kardec" were names from prior lifetimes that he chose to use in his present life experience. The son of an attorney, Kardec decided to become a medical doctor, but he soon became intrigued by the enthusiasm for experiments in mesmerism and spirit communication that were spreading throughout Europe.

In 1850, he began sitting with Celina Bequet, a professional somnambulist (hypnotist) who, for family reasons, assumed the name of Celina Japhet. Japhet not only placed others in **trance** states, but was assisted in achieving a somnambulistic state by M. Roustan. While in trance, Japhet was under the **spirit control** of her grandfather, M. Hahnemann, and the spirit of Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) spoke from the spirit world to give medical advice through her mediumship. Many other spirit entities manifested themselves and explained to the assembled sitters that the process of **reincarnation** was not only possible, but that it was compulsory for all souls to be reborn and receive new life experiences. Because Kardec was recognized as a proficient writer as well as a medical doctor, the spirits urged him to author what would be considered his classic work, *Le Livre des Esprits* (known today as *The Spirits' Book*), first published in 1856.

TRADITIONAL *Spiritualists reject the concept of reincarnation.*

The 1857 revised edition of Kardec's book, based on the trance communications of Celina Japhet, became the guidebook for those wishing information regarding mediumship, life in spirit, and the evolution of the soul. *The Spirits' Book* went into more than 25 editions and became popular throughout Europe and South America. However, because traditional Spiritualists reject the concept of reincarnation, conflict developed between the established dogma and the writings of Kardec. Kardec remained firm in his belief in what the

spirits had told him: Reincarnation was necessary for the soul to progress and to better understand and heal current physical or mental illnesses, which had been caused by the deeds and misdeeds of prior life experiences. Because of his resolve in these matters, "Spiritism" or "Kardecism" became distinguished from Spiritualism.

Other books written by Allen Kardec include *The Gospel as Explained by Spirits* (1864); *Heaven and Hell* (1865); and *Experimental Spiritism and Spiritualist Philosophy* (1867). Although Spiritism was gradually reabsorbed back into Spiritualism in Europe, it remains popular as a separate philosophy throughout South America, especially in Brazil, where its members see no conflict in being nominal Roman Catholics and practicing *espiritas*.

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MYSTICS

Mysticism is the attempt of humans to attain ultimate knowledge of the true reality of things and to achieve communion with a hierarchy of spiritual beings and with God, not through the ordinary religious paths, but by means of personal revelation and interaction with the divine. Whereas the major religions teach submission of the individual will and adherence to various creeds and dogmas, the mystic desires to realize a union with the Supreme Being free of all ecclesiasticisms and physical limitations. While the faithful member of the orthodox religious bodies seeks to walk the doctrinal spiritual path and obey the will of God according to accepted dogma, the mystic wishes to become one with the Divine Essence itself.

In other words, for the conventional, unquestioning member of a religious faith, revealed truths come from an external source, such as God and his selected prophets and teachers. For the mystic, however, truth comes from the god-self within and with the union of the human mind and the Divine.

Many mystics speak of having received "cosmic consciousness," or illumination, a sense of oneness with all-that-is. In his classic study of the experience, Dr. Raymond Bucke (1837–92) studied a number of individuals whom he considered recipients of cosmic consciousness, such as Gautama the Buddha (c. 563 B.C.E.–c. 483 B.C.E.), Jesus the Christ (6 B.C.E.–C. 30 C.E.), Paul (?–C. 62 C.E.), Plotinus (205 C.E.–270 C.E.), Muhammed (570–632), Dante (1265–1321), Moses (c. 1400 B.C.E.), Isaiah, **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), and Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Bucke concluded that the recipient of such illumination must be a person of high intellectual, moral, and physical attainment and express a "warm heart, courage, and strong and religious feeling." He considered the approximate age of 36 as the most propitious time in one's life to achieve this elevated state of consciousness.

In *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) **William James** (1842–1910) cites four features that he feels may distinguish a mystical state of consciousness from other states of consciousness:

1. *Ineffability*. When one receives an illumination experience, James comments, it defies expression; "no adequate report of its contents can be given in words." The mystical experience, he suggests, must be directly experienced; "it cannot be imparted or transferred to others." Mystical states are, therefore, more like states of feeling. "Lacking the heart or ear, we cannot interpret the musician or the lover justly," James writes, "and are even likely to consider him weak-minded or absurd. The mystic finds that most of us accord to his experiences an equally incompetent treatment."
2. *Noetic quality*. Although the mystical states are similar to states of feeling, to those who experience them they seem also to be states of knowledge. "They are states of insight into depths of truth" that evade the intellect; they are revelations "full of significance and importance" that carry with them a "curious sense of authority."

3. *Transiency*. James observes that mystical states cannot be sustained for lengthy periods of time. "Often, when faded, their quality can but imperfectly be reproduced in memory; but when they recur it is recognized."
4. *Passivity*. Although the onset of a mystical state may be facilitated by entering a self-induced state of meditation or trance, James comments that once the "characteristic sort of consciousness" has set in, "the mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance, and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power. This latter peculiarity connects mystical states with certain definite phenomena of secondary or alternative personality, such as prophetic speech, automatic writing, or the mediumistic trance....Mystical states...are never merely interruptive. Some memory of their content always remains, and a profound sense of their importance."

In a chapter on "Basic Mystical Experience" in his *Watcher on the Hills* (1959), Dr. Raynor C. Johnson, Master of Queens College, University of Melbourne, lists seven characteristics of illumination:

1. *The appearance of light*. "This observation is uniformly made, and may be regarded as a criterion of the contact of soul and Spirit."
2. *Ecstasy, love, bliss*. "Directly or by implication, almost all the accounts refer to the supreme emotional tones of the experience."
3. *The approach to one-ness*. "In the union of soul with Spirit, the former acquires a sense of unity with all things."
4. *Insights given*.
5. *Effect on health and vitality*.
6. *Sense of time obscured*.
7. *Effects on living*. Johnson quotes a recipient of the illumination experience who said: "Its significance for me has been incalculable and has helped me through sorrows and stresses which, I feel, would have caused shipwreck in my life without the clearly remembered refreshment and undying certainty of this one experience."

The British marine biologist Sir Alister Hardy (1896–1985), D.Sc., Emeritus Professor at Oxford, came to believe that the nonmaterial side of life was of extreme importance in providing science with a complete account of the evolutionary process. Contending that spiritual experiences could be subject to scientific scrutiny, Hardy established the Religious Experience Research Unit at Manchester College in England. "A biology based upon an acceptance of the mechanistic hypothesis is a marvelous extension of chemistry and physics," Hardy remarked. "But to call it an entire science of life is a pretense. I cannot help feeling that much of man's unrest today is due to the widespread intellectual acceptance of this mechanistic superstition when the common sense of his intuition cries out that it is false."

In April 2001, research funded by the Alister Hardy Trust being conducted at the

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Sources:

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http://www.parapsych.org. 15 October 2001.

University of Wales revealed that Christians, Muslims, and Jews have similar mystical experiences in which they describe intense light and a sense of encompassing love. Since 1969, the trust has collected accounts of 6,000 religious experiences from people of all ages and backgrounds. Christians most often described the light as an encounter with Jesus or an angel, and Muslims also often interpreted the light to be an angel. Jews perceived it as a sign of inspiration or an experience of God.

Writing in *Fields Within Fields* (1971), Reza Arasteh, a transcultural developmental psychologist and author of *Final Integration in the Adult Personality*, speaks of the role that mysticism has played in all major cultures by permitting individuals to transcend cultural reality. Whether one examines Judaic, Christian, or Muslim mysticism in the Near East; humanism and modern psychoanalysis in the West; or Zen Buddhism and Taoism in Far Eastern cultures, "the interesting point is that all these mechanisms have come to us as a 'path' rather than as logic, as experience rather than rationality." Regardless of language or cultural or temporal differences, Arasteh says, "all these styles of life have adopted the same goal of experiencing man in his totality, and the reality of all is cosmic reality." The common denominator of mystical experience "comes with encounter and inner motivation, and the result is inner freedom for a cosmic trip and outer security for the release of unbound energy for future creativity. "The Cosmic Self," he states, "is the manifestation of transcending the earthly and cultural self."

Although there are many schools of mysticism associated with the major world religions, the kind of mystic who focuses upon establishing a meaningful relationship with spirits and the afterlife is also a person who is likely to incorporate the secret teachings of ancient brotherhoods, mysterious mahatmas and masters from secret monasteries in hidden cities, and even tutelary entities from Atlantis and other lost civilizations. While such mystics as **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** (1831–1891), Alice Bailey (1880–1949), Annie Besant (1847–1933), **Rudolf Steiner** (1861–1925), and **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772) may have seemed out of touch with reality to those members of their societies who judged them as mad, they believed themselves to be exercising the power of their intellects to establish a truer connection with the actual powers of the universe than their contemporary scholars and clergy could ever hope to achieve. For those professors and scientists who assessed the claimed ability of Swedenborg to communicate with angels and spirits as heresy at worst and insanity at best, he barely noticed such criticism and continued to write book after book and do God's work as it was specially revealed to him. While critics of Steiner were astonished by the depths of his scholarship, they were appalled by his belief in Atlantis and his suggestions that the seeds of the giants of old are ripening in certain modern humans, and that he went on to establish a model of scholastic education that thrives to this day. When Blavatsky, Bailey, and Besant insisted that their wisdom was being astrally communicated to them by great mahatmas and masters in India, they ignored the psychical researchers who cried fraud, and continued to build the Theosophical Society, which still flourishes today.

In his *Mystics as a Force for Change* (1981), Dr. Sisirkumar Ghose writes that the mystic's real service to humankind is not so much to help people solve material problems as it is to show them how to "transcend secular and humanistic values, to transfigure them in the light of the spiritual ideal or the will of God. The mystic brings not peace, but the sword of discrimination and a sense of the holy.... The mystics have played an important part in the making of...civilization. Most early civilizations owe a good deal to this creative minority....The early mystics would also be among the priests and medicine men of the tribe."

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Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891)

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Movement, was born in Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk), in the Ukraine, on July 30, 1831, the daughter of Colonel Peter Hahn. As a child, she loved mystery and fantasy and claimed supernatural companions that kept her safe from harm. She appeared to demonstrate this paranormal protection when she fell from the saddle while horseback riding and caught her foot in the stirrup. According to young Helena, she would surely have been dragged to death before the horse was stopped if it weren't for the unseen entities that kept her from falling to the ground.

At the age of 17 she married Nicephore Blavatsky, a Russian official in Caucasia, who was 40 years older than she. She separated from her husband after three months and spent over a year traveling in Texas, Mexico, Canada, and India. All the time she was wandering, she was developing her mediumistic abilities, secure in the confidence that her phantom protector watched over her. Twice she attempted to enter Tibet, and on one occasion she managed to cross its frontier in disguise, but she lost her way and after various adventures was found by horsemen and escorted out of the country.

Blavatsky described the 10-year period between 1848 and 1858 as the "veiled" time in her life, refusing to divulge anything specific that happened to her during that period, but making mysterious allusions to spiritual retreats in Tibet or in the Himalayas. In 1847, shortly after she had "escaped" from her husband, she fled to Egypt, where she said that she became adept in the art of snake-charming and was initiated in the secrets of Oriental magic by a Coptic magician. In 1851, according to her account, she was in New Orleans, studying the rites and mysteries of voodoo. She traveled to Paris in 1858 and was introduced to the internationally famous medium **Daniel Dunglas Home** (1833–1886) and was so impressed by his paranormal abilities that she became a **Spiritualist.** When Blavatsky, in turn, sought to impress him with her own mediumistic talents, Home ignored her and informed her that she was a cheat.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891) was the founder of the Theosophical Society. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

In 1858 she returned to Russia, where she soon gained fame as a **spirit medium.** Always a mesmerizing storyteller, Blavatsky claimed to have disguised herself as a man and fought under Garibaldi during the battle of Mentana when she was wounded and left for dead. After about five years spent perfecting her **mediumship** in Russia, Blavatsky entered another

"veiled" period in her life when, from 1863 to1870, she was allegedly in retreat in Tibet, studying with the mahatmas Koot Hoomi and Morya, and a secret brotherhood of adepts.

In 1870, back in Europe, Blavatsky was en route to Greece when the vessel on which she was traveling exploded, and she lost all her earthly possessions, including whatever money she had managed to save. Rescued at sea and brought to Cairo, she supported herself through her mediumship, and in 1871, she founded the Spirit Society, which was quickly disbanded after accusations of fraud.

In 1873, after two months in Paris, she traveled to the United States and settled in New York, where she remained for six years and, according to some accounts, became a naturalized citizen. She resumed the practice of her mediumship in association with the brothers William (1832–1932) and Horatio Eddy (1842–1922), two well-known materialization mediums. As she became more prominent in Spiritualist circles in America, Blavatsky came to the attention of Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), a journalist, who established a study group around her unique style of mediumship, a blend of Spiritualism and Buddhistic legends about Tibetan sages. She professed to have direct spiritual contact with two Tibetan mahatmas, Koot Humi and Morya, who communicated with her on the astral plane and who provided her with wonderful teachings of wisdom and knowledge.

On November 17, 1875, with the aid of Henry Olcott and William Q. Judge (1851–1896), an attorney, Blavatsky founded the Theosophical Society in New York. The threefold purpose of the society was: 1) to form a universal brotherhood of man; 2) to study and make known the ancient religions, philosophies, and sciences; 3) to investigate the laws of nature and develop the divine powers latent in humankind. **Theosophy** (divine wisdom) is a vigorous blend of many earlier philosophies, all of which claim to have been handed down to modern students of the occult by disciples of ancient wisdom. Theosophy combines teachings from Zoroastrianism, **Hinduism, Gnosticism, Manichaeism,** the Kabbalah, and numerous other philosophies.

Sometime during that same year, (1875), Blavatsky entered into a brief marriage of two or three months with a merchant in Philadelphia named M. C. Betanelly. At about the same time, she was partially responsible for breaking up the marriage of Olcott, who left his wife and children for her.

Disappointed by Blavatsky's lack of enthusiasm for the day-to-day administration of a growing movement, Olcott became responsible for the management of the Theosophical Society. In 1877, he began to speak of moving the headquarters of the society to India, where they might be closer to the mahatmas, the occult brotherhood, and sincere practicing Hindu adepts. A year later, Olcott, Blavatsky, and a handful of the faithful left New York for India because the masters wished them to do so. By 1879, the central headquarters of the society had been established in Adyar, India, and an amalgamation with the Arya Samaj sect founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati had also been accomplished. By April 1882, however, the swami realized that he had been exploited by the leaders of the Theosophists and he denounced the group.

By that time, the influence of the swami in India was no longer required, for in 1880, Blavatsky had visited northern India and observed phenomena manifested especially for her by the mahatmas. It was also at this time that she met A. P. Sinnett, journalist and editor of *The Pioneer,* and Allen O. Hume, of the Indian Civil Service, her two most important converts in India. Shortly after reports had spread of the wondrous phenomena the masters had created for her benefit in northern India, Theosophy began to attract students and followers from around the world who came to observe for themselves the miracles centered around the spiritual teachings of Morya and Koot Hoomi as channeled through Blavatsky's mediumship.

In order to gain converts to Theosophy, Blavatsky felt obliged to perform such miraculous manifestations as the written letters from Koot Hoomi and Morya that would materialize in midair. Eventually such reports reached the attention of England's **Society for Psychical Research** (SPR), which dispatched Dr.

Richard Hodgson (1855–1905), one of its most formidable researchers, to investigate. It didn't take long for Hodgson to assess the followers of Theosophy to be extremely gullible men and women who had arrived in India with expectations of finding in Blavatsky a modern miracle worker. The psychical researcher quite easily detected the sliding panels, the dummy head and shoulders of Koot Hoomi, and the cracks in the ceiling from which the letters from Mahatmas Koot Hoomi and Morya dropped down from "midair" to the astonishment of the true believers assembled around the medium. The script in which these documents was written were shown to be an amateurish attempt on the part of Blavatsky to disguise her handwriting.

Regardless of the expose published by the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), Theosophy continued to grow to become a worldwide movement. In 1877, Blavatsky published *Isis Unveiled*, and in 1887, her monumental *The Secret Doctrine*, which was alleged to have been written in an altered state of consciousness while attuned to higher powers. In spite of a barrage of attacks and exposures, Blavatsky's commanding personality secured a large following, and when she died in 1891 she was at the head of a large body of believers, numbering about 100,000 persons. Annie Besant (1847–1933) became her successor and actively preached the wisdom and insights provided in *The Secret Doctrine* and shepherded the movement into steadily larger growth.

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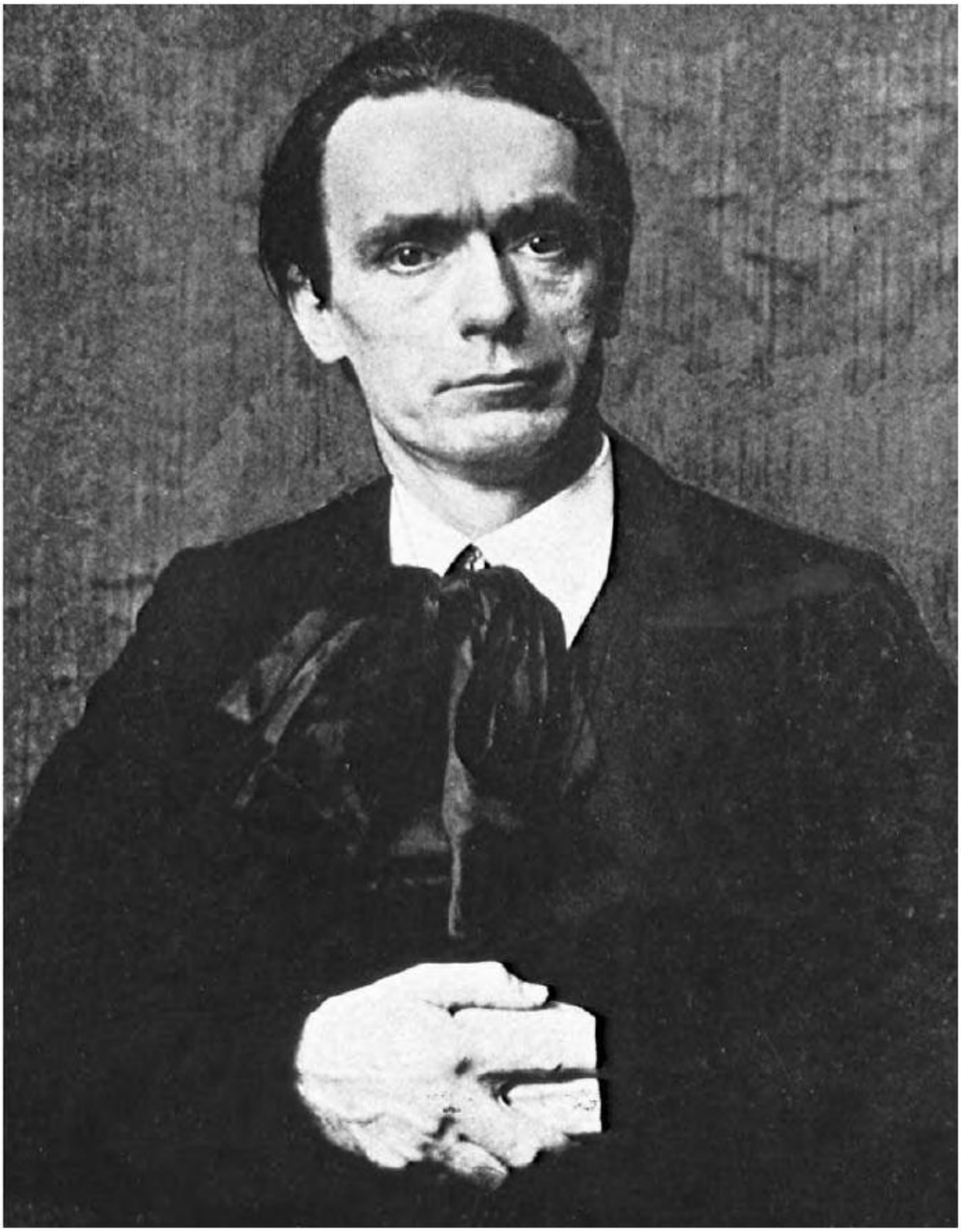
Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925)

Rudolf Steiner was born in Krajevec Austria-Hungary (now Yugoslavia), on February 27, 1861, the son of a minor railway official. By the age of eight, Steiner had experienced the unseen worlds, the invisible reality within the everyday world. Once he even perceived the apparition of a deceased relative. Because of his tendencies toward the spiritual aspects of life, it was thought for a time that Steiner might become a clergyman; but his freethinking father argued that he was a bright boy, and he envisioned him following a more practical and materially rewarding occupation as a railway engineer.

When he was 15, Steiner met Felix Kotgutski, an herbalist and metaphysician, who, when Steiner was 19, introduced him to an adept in the occult to whom Steiner referred only as "the Master." Steiner never revealed the man's identity, in keeping with occult tradition. The Master informed him of his spiritual mission in life and foretold that Steiner would develop a system of knowledge that would blend science and religion.

Wishing to please his father, Steiner took a degree in mathematics, physics, and chemistry, from the Technische Hochschule in Vienna, but he wrote his doctoral thesis, "Truth and Science," at the University of Rostock in 1891. In 1894, he published the book *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, which he described as "a biographical account of how one human soul made the difficult ascent to freedom." In the work, Steiner sought to help others discover the reality of spiritual experience and demonstrate how it could function side by side with the world of ordinary thought and experience. In his worldview, it was possible to have a spiritual science that would be an outgrowth of the true spirit of natural science.

In his thirties, Steiner awakened to an inner recognition of what he believed was the turning point in time in human spiritual history—the incarnation of the Divine Being known as the Christ. In his "Tenth Lecture on the Gospel of St. Luke," he reflects that just as a plant cannot unfold its blossom immediately after the seed has been sown, so has humankind had to progress from stage to stage until the right knowledge could be brought to maturity at the right time. Steiner is among those mystics who state that in the twentieth century humankind began to enter the "fullness" time



Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

when the Christ principle, cosmic consciousness, might once again become manifest. "Christ consciousness" is defined as a transformative energy that transcends orthodox Christianity. According to Steiner, the Master Jesus became "christed" and thereby presented humankind with an example of what it means to achieve a complete activation of the spiritual seed within all souls.

Following the example of the Master Jesus, Steiner told his students that the rest of humanity must now in imitation of Christ gradually develop "what was present for thirty-three years on the Earth in one single personality." Jesus, the Christed One, was able to implant into humanity a seed which must now unfold and grow. To Steiner, the Christ energy is the catalyst that germinates the seed that

great spirit beings implanted within their human offspring. The physical seeds of male and female intermingled to produce the whole human being, but Steiner believed there was also something within each human that did not arise from the blending of the two physical seeds: a "virgin birth," something ineffable, which somehow flowed into the process of germination from a different source.

Steiner also claimed to be able to read the **Akashic Records,** from which he had been able to ascertain the true history of human evolution. He set forth the hypothesis that the people of prehistory, the Atlanteans, had been largely guided and directed by a higher order of beings who interacted and communicated with certain humans—the smartest, the strongest, the most intellectually flexible. Eventually, these select humans produced what might be called demigods, semidivine human beings, who, in turn, could relay instructions from higher intelligences. In effect, Steiner may have presented another definition of the children of humans and the "sons of God" referred to in the book of Genesis, the hybrids that the ancient Hebrews named "Nephilim," which does, in fact, mean demigods, men of "great renown."

Steiner went on to speculate that within the larger evolving human race were the descendents of those divine-human hybrid beings, men and women who are animated by higher ideals, who regard themselves as children of a divine, universal power. He also believed that within what he termed the emerging "Sixth Post-Atlantean Race" would be children of the divine universal power who could be able to initiate those men and women who have developed their facility of thought so that they might better unite themselves with the divine. The children of the divine universal power, those who have the "seed" within them, would be able to initiate the more advanced members of humankind. People so initiated would be able to receive revelations and perform what others would consider miracles. The initiates would go on to become the mediators between humankind and the higher intelligences. The whole point of the efforts of these higher intelligences was to enable humankind to become more independent, more able to stand on its own feet without having to rely on the higher order of beings that directed humans in ancient times.

In 1902, Steiner became the general secretary of the German Section of the **Theosophical Society.** His lectures had found great reception among Theosophical audiences, so Steiner felt confident that he would be comfortable joining the movement. It wasn't long, however, before he became disappointed with the society's emphasis on Eastern mysticism, for he had become convinced that the passive Eastern doctrines were incapable of satisfying the spiritual needs of the Western consciousness. Steiner also believed that its founders had distorted a number of basic metaphysical and occult truths and did not place enough emphasis on the role of the Christ and the Christian Church in humankind's spiritual evolution. In 1913, Steiner left the Theosophists and formed his own group, the Anthroposophical Society, dedicated to constructing a path for spiritual growth established on four levels of human nature—the senses, imagination, inspiration, and intuition.

In 1914, Steiner married Marie von Sievers, an actress, who had been secretary of the German Section of the Theosophical Society. His first marriage, to Anna Eunicke, had ended in divorce some years previously. Between 1910 and 1914, he had written four mystery plays and he intended to stage these, together with the dramas of Goethe, in the Goetheanum, a school for esoteric research that he founded in Dornach, near Basel, Switzerland. Together with the talents of his wife, Steiner began to develop new approaches to speech and drama, which led to the beginnings of "eurythmy," an art of movement that makes visible those inner forms of language and music formerly revealed only in the unseen levels of artistic expression. After the First World War, an international group of volunteers, together with local craftsmen, constructed the unique building designed by Steiner. The Goetheanum was opened in 1920, to serve the "awareness of one's humanity" and to support the developing work of anthroposophy. On December 31, 1922, an arsonist burned the wooden building to the ground. A new building was designed and constructed in 1923, which still serves as the

international headquarters of the Anthroposophical Society.

Among Steiner's greatest legacies is his work in education and the establishment of the Waldorf School Movement, which originated from a request made by Emil Molt, director of the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, for a school to which his employees could send their children. Steiner died on March 30, 1925, in Dornach.

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EMANUEL SWEDENBORG (1688–1772)

Emanuel Swedenborg was perhaps the last of the Renaissance men—he was fluent in nine languages, wrote 150 works in 17 sciences, was expert in numerous crafts, and was a musician, a politician, and an inventor with dozens of major contributions attributed to his name. When his name is recalled today, it is usually as a Swedish mystic and medium who courted angels and cursed demons. Swedenborg claimed daily communications with the inhabitants of the unseen world, and his manifestations of remarkable psychic phenomena are well documented.

Emanuel Swedberg was born in Stockholm, Sweden, on January 29, 1688. His father was a professor of theology at the University of Upsala, who later became the Lutheran Bishop of Scara in spite of certain opinions which appeared to challenge orthodox religious views. Emanuel completed his university education at Upsala in 1710, then traveled abroad in England, Holland, France, and Germany. In 1715, he returned to Upsala and gained a solid reputation as an engineer, leading to his appointment by Charles XII to the Swedish Board of Mines in 1716. In addition to his engineering duties, Emanuel published numerous works on mathematics, as well as mechanical engineering. Shortly thereafter, he was elevated to the rank of nobility by Queen Ulrica, and changed his name to Swedenborg.

As he sat in the House of Nobles, Swedenborg was much admired for his political views. Some of his opinions were a bit unsettling to his royal benefactors, however, for Swedenborg was openly in favor of a democratic form of government. Hardly content to pontificate in the House of Nobles, he published works on the nature of the universe, as well as papers on geology, physics, anatomy, zoology, and astronomy which were decidedly ahead of their time. In 1734, he published *Prodomus Philosophia Ratiocinatrio de Infinite*, which explores the relationship of the finite to the infinite and of the soul to the body. In spite of his mastery of the material sciences and mechanical engineering, it was becoming obvious to all his readers that Swedenborg's concept of the supreme effort of humankind was an intense study of the spiritual and the divine.

In 1743, when he was 56, Swedenborg had a vision in which he believed that "Our Lord" initiated him into the deeper spiritual meaning of the scriptures. The Bible was the word of God, he was told, but its true meaning differed greatly from its more apparent teachings. Only Swedenborg, with the help of ministering angels, could translate the actual message of scripture. After a series of dreams and visions, Swedenborg abandoned his life of politics and science to spend all of his considerable energy delving into the mysteries of the spiritual world. He immediately resigned all of his appointments and retired at half his pension. Not only had God revealed himself and the true spiritual essence of the scriptures to him, but Swedenborg felt that God wanted him to develop a new church. Swedenborg said that he could hear the conversations of angelic beings and could even participate in such otherworldly discussions. In time, he was given visions of both heaven and hell, and he developed the habit of lying in trance for several days and nights. His arguments with the evil spirits, the fallen angels, terrified his servants, but the gentle conversations with the benign angelic beings soothed their fears.

In 1759, Swedenborg had the vision of the great fire at Stockholm, which has been recorded as one of the first completely documented cases of **clairvoyance** in history and which has become well known throughout the

Western world. In September, at about four o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, Swedenborg arrived in Gotenburg, Sweden, from England, and was invited by a friend to spend some time at his house before returning to his home in Stockholm. While there, Swedenborg became restless and went outside for about two hours. When he came back inside, he informed his host and other guests that a terrible fire had just broken out in Stockholm (which was about 300 miles from Gotenburg) and that it was spreading rapidly. His friends did not know how to respond to such news, for they had no idea how Swedenborg could possibly know that such a dreadful conflagration was occurring at such a distance away.

Swedenborg remained agitated and restless and went outside often that day, only to return with additional dire news, as if he were somehow viewing the disaster as it occurred. Alarmed, he told the company that the house of a friend was already in ashes and that the fire was fast approaching his own home. At eight o'clock in the evening, he came back inside to announce joyfully that the awful fire had been extinguished—and that it had been stopped just three doors away from his house.

By Sunday morning, word had spread of Swedenborg's remarkable vision, and he was summoned to the governor, who questioned him about the disaster. The seer described the fire precisely, telling exactly how it had begun and precisely how it had at last been squelched. On Monday evening, a messenger dispatched by the Board of Trade during the time of the fire arrived in Gotenburg. In letters the courier had brought with him, the fire was described exactly as stated by Swedenborg, and the next morning the news was further confirmed by messages brought to the governor by royal courier. As the seer had proclaimed, the fire had been extinguished at exactly eight o'clock in the evening.

Swedenborg's conversations with the angels and spirits of the dead had informed him that humans possess two receptacles for the containment of God—the will for divine love and the understanding for divine wisdom. Before the Fall, the flow of these virtues from God into the human spirit was perfect, but the intervention of evil and the sins of humankind itself had interrupted this once-perfect communion. The purpose of religion is to accomplish good and to establish a connection between God and the human spirit. Swedenborg came to recognize that even though he had become an apostle of God for whom no mysteries were hidden, it was not necessary for him to form a new church. All sincere members of all existing religious systems were connected as one in a spiritual sense. In spite of this apparent change of focus, Swedenborgianism did become a religion, with churches established in England in 1778 and in the United States in 1792.

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772).

Swedenborg believed strongly in what he termed the Doctrine of Correspondence: that everything in the visible, material world has a counterpart in the unseen, nonmaterial world. To those who questioned the validity of his journeys and conversations in the spiritual world, Swedenborg responded firmly that his

observations of these other dimensions had been recorded as strictly as any man of science among his detractors. It had been given to him, as a scientist and as a man of spirit, to be able to reach into two worlds—one of spirit, the other of matter.

From the time he was 55 until his death, Swedenborg spoke to spirits of the deceased and to angelic beings. According to his constant dialogues with such entities, he said that the spirit world was comprised of a number of concentric spheres, each with its own density and inhabitants. The existence of the spirits was quite similar to that of Earth, with houses, trees, parks, schools, and so forth. Those who died of disease or old age regained their youth and health in the spirit world. Everyone who arrived on those ethereal planes after death rested for a few days before regaining full consciousness. Because on Earth it takes a man and a woman to form a complete human unit, marriage continues to exist as a spiritual union on the other side. There is no such thing as hell or eternal punishment. Those spirits who find themselves in a hellish place after death can evolve toward a higher spiritual plane.

In spite of it being granted to him "to be constantly and uninterruptedly in company with spirits and angels," Swedenborg did issue a caution in regard to receiving counsel from just any spirit that might manifest with an alleged personal message. "When spirits begin to speak," he wrote in *Miscellaneous Theological Works* (1996), "care should be taken not to believe them, for nearly everything they say is made up by them....They love to feign. Whatever be the topic spoken of, they think they know it, and if man listens and believes, they insist, and in various ways deceive and seduce."

From 1747 onward, Swedenborg lived at various times in Stockholm, Holland, and London, where he died on March 29, 1772. He was first buried in the Swedish Church in Prince's Square, then, later, at the request of the Swedish government, his body was sent to Stockholm for reinterment.

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RESEARCHERS INTO THE MYSTERY OF SPIRIT CONTACT

To the uninformed layperson, psychical researchers who investigate individuals who claim to be able to make contact with the spirits of the departed are sometimes thought of as gullible men or women who go to **seances** in order to converse with the ghost of their late Uncle Henry. To be certain, mediums and their paranormal abilities are studied and tested, but not in an attitude of open acceptance. Such investigations are conducted in all earnestness and seriousness and under the strictest laboratory conditions possible. And rather than being gullible, the researchers are more likely to be skeptical and cautious observers, ever on the watch for trickery and evidence of charlatanism.

Many of those who research spirit contact believe that the difference between the genuine medium or channel and the great majority of humankind lies in the fact that the medium's threshold of consciousness may be set lower than that of others. In other words, the medium has access to levels of awareness that lie beyond the normal "reach" of the subconscious. The spirit medium usually works in **trance,** and while in this state of consciousness, he or she claims to be under the direction of a **spirit guide** or **spirit control.** Spiritualists believe in the reality of the guide as a spiritual entity apart from the medium. Psychical researchers theorize that the control personality is but a secondary personality of the medium that is able to dip into the psychic abilities residing in the subconscious.

The physical phenomena of **mediumship** are among the strangest and most dramatic of all occurrences studied by psychical researchers. Under laboratory conditions, serious reports have been made of the materialization of

Can the Living Talk to the Dead?

Americans are trying to communicate with spirits in record numbers; half of all Americans believe in extrasensory perception. A new 2000 Gallup poll reports that fully 28 percent of Americans believe people can hear from or communicate mentally with the dead.

Regardless of whether spirits are attempting to communicate with us, people are trying to communicate with them—spouses with deceased spouses; parents with deceased children; children with deceased parents—says Greg Barrett of the Gannett News Service. Skeptics and believers alike say it is this love—and love lost—that drives our undying desire to talk to the dead.

Longtime skeptic and magician James Randi, a.k.a. "Amazing Randi," says, "People not only want it to be true, they need it to be true. It's the feel-good syndrome," says the 72-year-old, who has standing offer of $1 million to psychics who can independently verify their "magic."

Between 1972 and 1995 U.S. taxpayer,s unbeknownst to them, supported the paranormal profession. Before the ties were severed to psychics in 1996, the CIA and various U.S. Defense Department intelligence agencies spent $20 million in an effort to turn psychics into spy satellites. Some of the details of the government program may soon be released, as they are in the process of being reviewed for declassification, according to CIA spokeswoman Anya Guilsher. Guilsher adds that the government's conclusion of the use of psychics was "unpromising."

Psychic Noreen Renier doesn't agree. She was lecturing on extrasensory perception at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, when she warned that President Reagan would soon receive an injury to the upper chest. Two months later, John Hinckley shot Reagan.

Skeptic Paul Kurtz says all of this medium stuff is "nincompoopery." "But for whatever reason, it's all the rage." Kurtz is chairman of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal and he tackles claims of psychics and the like in his *Skeptic Inquirer* magazine.

Gary Schwartz thinks he has evidence that the living can talk to the dead. Schwartz, Harvard-educated and head of the University of Arizona Human Energy Systems Laboratory, claims the lab, which is a psychic testing ground, is revealing some interesting data. Several years ago, five mediums that Schwartz refers to as the "Dream Team" were flown to Tucson and put through a battery of tests. Most psychics scored 83 percent in revealing personal details about others, when asking yes or no questions.

When asked if any of his "Dream Team" will take Amazing Randi's challenge for the $1 million prize, he answers that Randi is an eternal skeptic who will never convert, no matter what evidence confronts him, so it is unlikely.

Sources:

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THE ASPR

Based in New York, New York, the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., (ASPR) , the oldest psychical research organization in the United States, seeks to advance the understanding of psychic phenomena, with emphasis on scientific research. With its laboratories, offices, library and archive, it offers extensive topics in Parapsychology, such as extrasensory perception, (ESP), telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition (PK), psychokinesis, out of body experiences (OBEs), near death experiences (NDE's), survival after death, reincarnation, and apparitions and poltergeists.

There is also an "On-line Research" section where one can fill out a questionnaire to participate in current research linked with the Department of Psychology at the State University of West Georgia.

SOURCES:

American Society for Psychical Research, Inc. http://www.aspr.com. 15 October 2001.

human heads, hands, and even complete bodies from a cloudy substance, known as ectoplasm, which somehow appears to issue from the medium's physical body. Mediums have been seen to levitate into the air, manifest **stigmata** on their bodies, and cause mysterious apports (arrivals) of flowers, medallions, and items of jewelry.

SPIRITUALISTS *believe in the reality of the guide as a spiritual entity apart from the medium.*

Some of the world's best minds have been vitally concerned with the mystery of survival, life after death, and whether or not it is possible to speak with the dead. The British statesman William E. Gladstone (1809–1898), who most of his life was an avowed skeptic of spirit contact and all paranormal occurrences, finally concluded that psychical research "is the most important work in the world today—by far the most important."

The famous statesman was not alone in his declaration of the importance of psychical research. Pierre Curie (1859–1906), who with his wife, Marie, discovered radium, stated shortly before his death that in his opinion psychical research had more importance for humankind than any other. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), generally accepted as the "father of psychoanalysis," belonged to both the British and the American Societies for Psychical Research and once commented that he wished he had devoted more time to such study when he was younger. His colleague and sometimes rival, Carl G. Jung (1875–1961), remained actively interested in psychical experiments until his death.

Sir William Crookes (1832–1919), a British physicist, conducted many exhaustive studies of spirit contact and mediums. The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) insisted that psychical research explored the most important aspects of human experience and that it was the obligation of every scientist to learn more about them. Julian Huxley (1887–1975), the biologist; Sir James Jeans (1877–1946), the astronomer; Arnold Toynbee (1889–1975), the historian; Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947), the philosopher—all of these great thinkers urged that their fellow scientists seriously approach psychical research.

In spite of the attention of such commanding intellects and the painstaking research of such individuals as Sir William Crookes, **Sir Oliver Lodge** (1851–1940), Dr. Gardner Murphy (1895–1979), **Hereward Carrington** (1880–1958). **J. B. Rhine** (1895–1980), G. N. M. Tyrell (1879–1973), Dr. Karlis Osis (1917–1997), Dr. Stanley Krippner (1932–), and Dr. Harold Puthoff (1930–), psychical researchers are still regarded by a large section of the scientific community as being "spook chasers" and as outright rebels and heretics to the bodies of established knowledge. The basic

reason for such disdain on the part of orthodox scientists is the understandable reluctance of the scientific establishment to grant a hearing to a body of knowledge that might very well reshape or revise many of the premises on which its entire structure is based.

Arthur Koestler (1905–1983), noted novelist and journalist, told of his visit with a leading mathematical logician and philosopher. Koestler expressed his interest in recent statistical work in psychical research. The logician loudly scoffed at such studies until Koestler, irritated by the man's closed mind, provided him with the name of the world-famous statistician who had checked the statistics. Upon hearing the statistician's name, the logician seemed completely nonplussed. After a few moments he said, "If that is true, it is terrible, terrible. It would mean that I would have to scrap everything and start from the beginning."

Orthodox scientists in the more conventional disciplines are not about to "scrap everything," and many of them feel that the best method of avoiding the research statistics compiled by psychical researchers is to insist upon the requirements demanded of all conventional sciences: (1) that they produce controlled and repeatable experiments; (2) that they develop a hypothesis comprehensive enough to include all psychic phenomena—from **telepathy** to **poltergeists,** from water **dowsing** to spirit contact.

The difficulties in fulfilling these requirements can be immediately grasped when one considers how impossible it would be to repeat, for example, 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. The great majority of psychic phenomena are almost completely spontaneous in nature, and ungovernable elements of mood and emotion obviously play enormously important roles in any type of paranormal experience. As G. N. M. Tyrell pointed out, people are never aware of a telepathic, clairvoyant, or precognitive process at work within them. They are only aware of the product of that process. In fact, it seems apparent from laboratory work that conscious effort at determining any psychic process at work within oneself will either completely destroy it or greatly diminish its effectiveness.

Society for Psychical Research (SPR)

During a lecture given to the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in 1919, Carl G. Jung said, "I shall not commit the fashionable stupidity of regarding everything I cannot explain as fraud." Still located in Kensington, London, the society offers research and data available both in classrooms and lecture halls in London, or over the Internet. Its said purpose is to advance the understanding of events and abilities commonly described as "psychic" or "paranormal" in a scientific manner. Scheduled conferences and lectures are offered on the website in addition to paranormal review, journals, books, and research initiatives.

Sources:

Society for Psychical Research. http://www.spr.ac.uk. 15 October 2001.

Psychical researchers are still regarded by a large section of the scientific community as being "spook chasers" and as outright rebels and heretics to the bodies of established knowledge.

Those men and women who devote themselves to researching the possibility of life beyond death and spirit contact insist that science must not continue to ignore that which is not directly perceivable. By the same token,

it falls upon the psychical researchers to exercise the greatest caution and the strictest controls when conducting tests with those who claim to be able to contact the dead.

In his *Psychic Science and Survival* (1947) Hereward Carrington, who devoted a lifetime to psychical research, listed the following requirements of an ideal researcher:

1. a thorough knowledge of the literature of the subject;
2. a good grounding in normal and abnormal psychology, in physics, chemistry, biology, and photography;
3. keen powers of observation and an ability to judge human nature and its motives;
4. training in magic and sleight of hand;
5. shrewdness, quickness of thought and action, patience, resourcefulness, sympathy, and a sense of humor;
6. freedom from superstition;
7. the strength to stand out against bigotry, scientific as well as theological.

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HEREWARD CARRINGTON (1880–1958)

Hereward Carrington spent his childhood years in Jersey, one of Britain's Channel Islands, and received his early schooling in London. Although he would one day write over one hundred books in the field of psychical research, as a teenager, he was far more interested in becoming a stage magician than exploring the spirit world. If it weren't for a fascination with certain well-documented cases of the paranormal, such as those recorded by **Fredric W. H. Myers** (1843–1901) and other serious psychical researchers, his only interest in mediums would have been to seek to expose them in the manner of **Harry Houdini** (1874–1926).

Carrington moved to Boston when he was 20 and remained in the United States for the rest of his life. While at first he earned his living as a journalist, he began to spend more and more time continuing to research the unexplained, and in 1905, he joined the staff of the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) as an investigator.

In addition to such famous mediums as **Margery Crandon** (1888–1941), **Eusapia Palladino** (1854–1918), and **Eileen Garrett** (1893–1970), Carrington had a number of impressive sittings with William Cartheuser. Cartheuser appeared to have been representative of some of the many paradoxes with which serious researchers may find themselves confronted in paranormal investigations. The medium had a harelip and a cleft palate which caused a severe impediment in his speaking voice, yet at no time did any of the spirit voices produced by him give any evidence of unclear or unintelligible speech—although most of the visiting entities did speak in whispers. The female voices from beyond seemed obviously to be those of a male speaking in a falsetto. Many of the communicating spirits reflected the same opinions and temperament of the medium, but now and then Carrington felt that the alleged entities did make reference to information and the names of individuals that could only have been gained in some paranormal manner.

In assessing the **mediumship** of William Cartheuser, Carrington could only theorize that the alleged **spirit controls** upon which the medium relied to summon the departed were nothing other than the medium speaking in a number of different voices. On occasion, however, Cartheuser's simulated **spirit guides** enabled him, perhaps by the power of suggestion and a state of light trance, to come up with information that he could only have acquired through an unknown power of mind or through a surviving personality—and to

relay those messages in voices free of his usual speech impediments.

Carrington devoted an entire book to his examination of the famous medium Eileen Garrett. In *The Case for Psychic Survival* (1957) he concluded that even though there existed only slight evidence for the genuinely spiritistic character of spirit guides, the alleged spirit personalities "...nevertheless succeed in bringing through a vast mass of supernormal information which could not be obtained in their absence." The mechanism of believing in a spirit control somehow seemed to act as some sort of psychic catalyst to bring about information acquired through paranormal means.

The psychical researcher went on to theorize that the function of a medium's regular spirit guide seems to be that of an intermediary; and whether the entity is truly a spirit or is a dramatic personification of the medium's subconscious, it is only through the cooperation of the guide that accurate and truthful messages are obtained. In Carrington's opinion, the essential difference between the kind of secondary personality in pathological cases and the spirit control personality in mediumistic cases is that in those instances of multiple personalities, the secondary selves acquire no supernormal information, while in the case of a medium's spirit control it does. "In the pathological cases," he said, "we seem to have a mere splitting of the mind, while in the mediumistic cases we have to deal with a (perhaps fictitious) personality which is nevertheless in touch or contact, in some mysterious way, with another (spiritual) world, from which it derives information, and through which genuine messages often come."

In his conversations with Uvani, Eileen Garrett's spirit control, Carrington learned that the entity claimed to have no control over the medium's conscious mind, nor would he feel that he would have the right to interfere with her normal thinking processes. During the trance state, however, Uvani said that he could work Garrett's subconscious like playing notes on a piano. When Carrington asked why a personality who claimed to have lived a life as an Asian could speak such excellent English through the medium, Uvani answered that he could not speak English, but as a spirit he had the ability to impress his thoughts upon his "instrument," Eileen Garrett, who thereby relayed the communication.

Hereward Carrington (1880–1958). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Carrington concluded, as a result of extensive analysis of mediumship techniques, that an intelligently influenced mechanism was somehow involved in producing the physical phenomena of spirit contact in the seance room. In an essay written in 1946, Carrington said that there appears to be a form of "unknown energy" that issues from the body of the medium, "capable of affecting and molding matter in its immediate environment. At times this is invisible; at other times it takes forms and becomes more or less solid, when we have instances of the formation of so-called ectoplasm. It is this semi-material substance which moves matter and even shapes it into different forms."

According to Carrington's observations, this ectoplasm issues from various parts of the medium's body—from the fingertips, the solar plexus, and the genitals. "It represents a psychic force," he claimed, "as yet unknown to science, but now being studied by scientific men as part and parcel of supernormal biology." Carrington

was certain that this energy had a biological basis and was dependent upon the physical body of the medium for its production, regardless of whether it was directed by the subconscious mind of the medium or by the mind of an unseen, disembodied personality.

Although few psychical researchers had as much firsthand experience investigating instances of spirit contact and hauntings as Hereward Carrington, there were times when even he found himself dealing with something that affected him in a very primal, frightening way. It was on the night of August 13, 1937, that Carrington, his wife, Marie Sweet Smith, and a party of five others obtained permission to spend a night in a haunted house located some 50 miles from New York City. As he referred to the incident in his *Essays in the Occult* (1958), the summer tenant had been forced to move back to the city in the middle of July because neither he nor his wife could sleep uninterrupted and their servants had all left their employ because of the haunting.

Carrington insisted that he be told nothing of the history of the house until he had first had an opportunity to explore the place from cellar to attic. The house was lighted from top to bottom, and the party began its safari into the unknown. On the second floor, two or three of the group commented that they had sensed "something strange" in one of the middle bedrooms, especially in the area next to an old bureau. The tenant, whom Carrington identified only as "Mr. X," told the party that he and his wife had heard noises coming from that particular bedroom.

The group proceeded down a hallway until they came to the door that led to the servants' quarters. Carrington opened the door, glanced up, and saw that the top floor was brightly illuminated and that a steep flight of stairs lay just ahead of the investigators. With Carrington in the lead, the party ascended the stairs until they found themselves confronted by a series of small rooms. Carrington made a sharp turn to the right, and the moment he did so, he felt as though a sudden blow that been delivered to his solar plexus. His forehead broke out into profuse perspiration, his head swam, and he had difficulty swallowing. "It was an extraordinary sensation," he said, "definitely physiological, and unlike anything I had ever experienced before."

The veteran investigator was gripped by terror and panic and only through a firm exercise of will was he able to stop himself from fleeing in horror. His wife, who was only a step or two behind him, had just finished commenting on the "cute little rooms," when she suddenly uttered a frightened cry, turned, and ran down the stairs. Two unemotional, hard-nosed psychical researchers, completely accustomed to psychic manifestations of all kinds, had experienced "distinctly a bodily and emotional reaction—accompanied…by a momentary mental panic and sensation of terror" such as neither of them had ever known before.

Carrington saw to his wife, whom he found outside on the porch, breathing deeply of the fresh air; then he returned to the remainder of the group. Each of them had experienced identical sensations and had retreated to the lower floor, where they sat sprawled in chairs or leaned against walls, tears streaming down their cheeks.

Carrington made special note of the fact that two highly skeptical friends of the tenant had accompanied the group to the house out of boredom. Both of these skeptics experienced the same sensations as the other members of the group—a difficulty in swallowing, tears streaming from the eyes, and cold perspiration on the forehead.

A dog, belonging to a member of the party, resisted all manner of coaxing designed to lure it upstairs. It growled, planted its feet stubbornly, and the hair raised on its back. In short, Carrington commented, the dog behaved "very much as dogs are supposed to behave in the presence of ghostly phenomena."

Much later that evening, Carrington led another expedition up the stairs to the servants' quarters. This time, the atmosphere seemed to have purged itself of the poisonous influence, and no member of the party experienced any sensations similar to their previous excursion. The dog bounded up the stairs, poked its nose into all the corners, and behaved as if prowling around such a house were the most natural thing in the world. Car-

rington later sought to return to the house with a spirit medium and special apparatus for recording and testing sounds and atmosphere. He was denied permission to continue his investigation, because one of the friends of the tenant had given the story to the papers, and the owner of the house did not wish additional publicity about his haunted house.

Carrington broke with the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) over a disagreement concerning the mediumship of **Mina "Margery" Stinson Crandon** (1888–1941), and he formed his American Psychical Institute in 1933. His wife served as the institute's secretary, and their principal research area focused upon the testing of such spirit mediums as Eileen Garrett. Sometime in 1938, the Carringtons moved the institute to Southern California, where they continued to investigate claims of hauntings and spirit contact. Among his many books are such titles as *The Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism* (1907); *Your Psychic Powers and How to Develop Them* (1920); and *Psychic Science and Survival* (1947). Hereward Carrington died on December 26, 1958, in Los Angeles.

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Sir William Crookes (1832–1919)

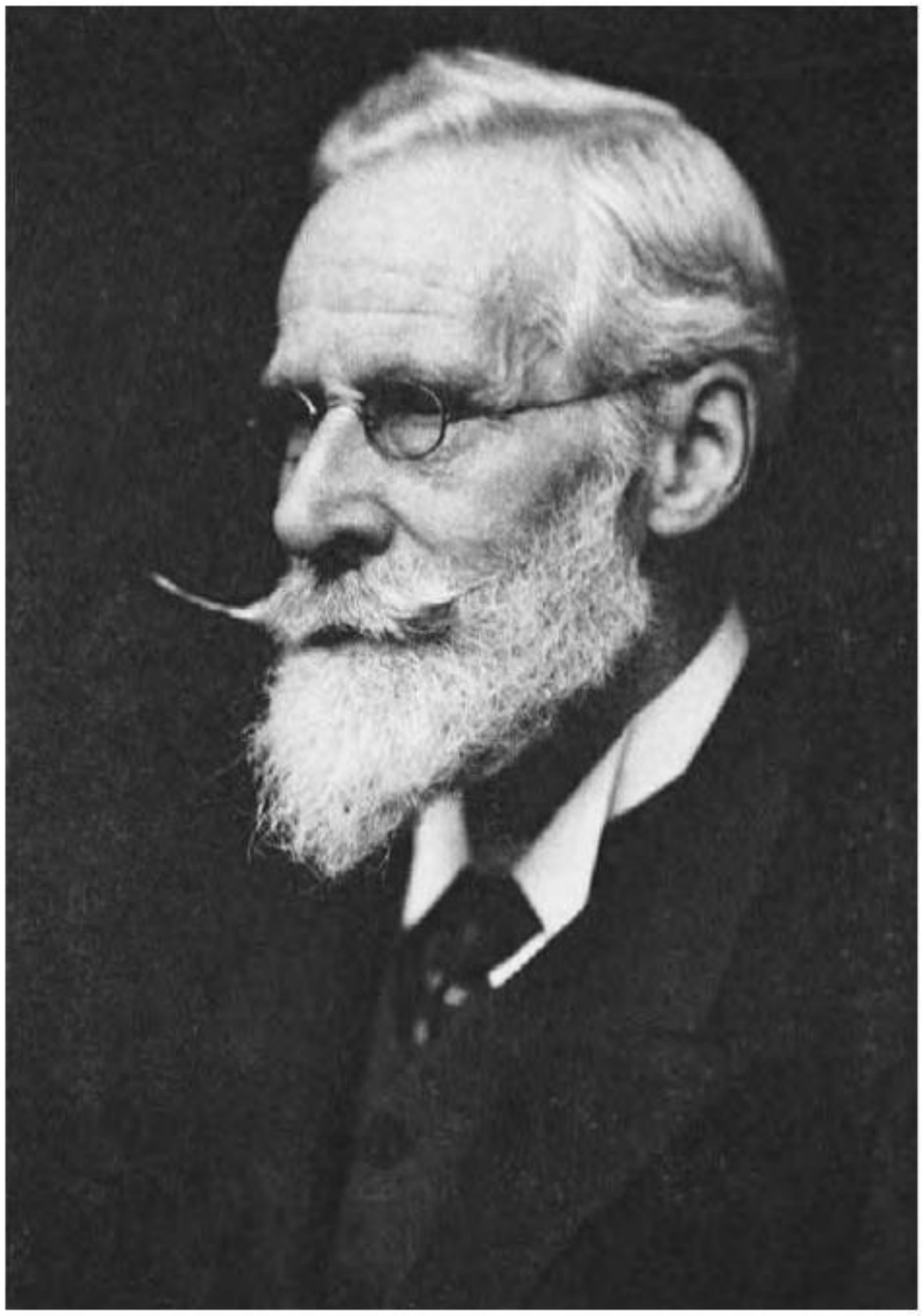
Sir William Crookes, a physicist and chemist of international reputation, was a professor at the University of London, editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, president of the British Chemical Society, discoverer of the element thallium, and inventor of the radiometer and the Crookes tube, which made the later development of X-rays possible. In addition to these accomplishments, Crookes was one of the most thorough and exacting scientific investigators of spirit contact. After many years of painstaking research and experimentation with dozens of well-known mediums, he became convinced that a great deal of spiritistic phenomena was real and indicated proof of an afterlife.

Born in London on June 17, 1832, Crookes was one of 16 children of a well-known and prosperous tailor and his second wife. William also had five stepbrothers and stepsisters from his father's first wife. Although the young man had little formal education, his keen mind and natural abilities allowed him to enroll in the Royal College of Chemistry when he was only 16. Upon graduation in 1854, Crookes became superintendent of the Meteorological Department at Radcliffe Observatory, Oxford. A year later, he gained a post at the College of Science in Chester, Cheshire.

In 1856, when he was 24, he married Ellen Humphrey, and because of the large fortune he had inherited from his father, Crookes was able to establish a private laboratory and devote himself entirely to scientific work of his own choosing. Three years later, in 1861, Crookes discovered the element thallium and the correct measurement of its atomic weight. In 1863, when he was only 31, he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

Just when it seemed Crookes faced only a life of one triumph after another, he was grief-stricken when his youngest brother, Phillip, died in 1867. Cromwell Varley, a close friend and fellow physicist who was also a practicing Spiritualist, convinced William and Ellen to attend a **seance** and attempt to communicate with Phillip. Whatever spirit messages Crookes and his wife received during a series of seances in 1867, it appears that they were convincing enough to inspire the brilliant physicist to turn his genius toward the exploration of spiritistic phenomena.

Some scholars of the psychic field have declared the series of experiments that Crookes conducted with the famous medium **Daniel Dunglas Home** (1833–1886) to be the first strictly scientific tests of mediumistic ability. Of one such test, Crookes stated that Home went to the fireplace and after stirring the hot coals around with his bare hands, took out a red-hot piece nearly as large as an orange, and "putting it on his right hand, so as to almost completely enclose it, he then blew



Sir William Crookes (1832–1919). (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

into the small furnace" he had made of his hand "until the lump of charcoal was nearly white hot," and then drew Crookes's attention to the flame that was "flickering over the coal and licking round his fingers." A number of witnesses to the experiment were also able to handle the hot coal without burning themselves after Home had transferred his "power" to them. Those who handled the coal without the transference of energy from Home "received bad blisters at the attempt."

Crookes no doubt created quite a stir among his more orthodox scientific colleagues when he told them that he had walked with a ghost, talked with a ghost, and taken more than 40 flashlight photographs of the specter. And when he went on to describe the spirit as a "perfect beauty" with a "brilliant purity of complexion that photography could not hope to capture," tongues began to wag that the great scientist had lost all form of objectivity and had grown much too attached to the spirit that he was supposed to be investigating. When such a man of stature as Crookes announced that he had judged medium **Florence Cook**'s (1856–1904) materializations of the spirit Katie King to be genuine, it was bound to spark controversy. Whether or not the "perfect beauty" with whom Sir William chatted and strolled about the seance room was a ghost or a hoax is a question that is still being debated to this day.

Florence Cook, the medium through whom Katie King materialized, first met the spirit in seances which she conducted when she was only 15. Katie promised to be Florence's **spirit control** for a period of three years and assist her in producing many types of remarkable phenomena. In April of 1872, Katie appeared only as a deathlike face between the gauze curtains of a seance cabinet, but as her control of the medium became more advanced, she could at last step out of the cabinet and show herself in full body to those sitters assembled for Cook's seances.

It has been said that the spirit of Katie King became almost as if she were a full-time boarder at the Cook household. When Florence Cook married, her husband complained that it was like being married to two women. Katie began to materialize at unexpected moments, and some nights she even went to bed with the medium and her long-suffering spouse.

Many people became thoroughly convinced of the validity of Katie King's existence because of Crookes' testimony. Others whispered scandal and made much of the many hours the physicist had spent alone with Florence Cook and her alleged spirit friend. Crookes, however, stood firm in his convictions that he had not been duped and summed up his investigations by stating that it was unimaginable to suggest that "an innocent schoolgirl of fifteen" should be able to devise and to carry out such a "gigantic imposture" so successfully for a period of three years. Crookes pointed out to his critics that in those same three years the fact that she sub-

mitted to any test that might be imposed upon her, was willing to be searched at any time, either before or after a seance, and visited his laboratory for the express object of submitting to the strictest scientific tests, certainly demonstrated her integrity. To insist further that the spirit Katie King was the result of deceit did more "violence to one's reason and common sense than to believe her to be what she herself affirms."

William Crookes's experiments in psychical research did little to prevent his receiving the Royal Medal from the Royal Society in 1875 or from being knighted in 1897. He supported the **Society for Psychical Research** (SPR) when it was founded in 1882 and even served as its president in 1886, but he conducted no tests of **mediumship** or any other paranormal phenomena after 1875. As a kind of summation of his views on the subject, Crookes once said: "The phenomena I am prepared to attest to are extraordinary and so directly oppose the most firmly rooted articles of scientific belief—amongst others, the ubiquity and invariable action of the force of gravitation—that even now, on recalling the details of what I witnessed, there is an antagonism in my mind between reason which pronounces it to be scientifically impossible, and the consciousness of my senses, both of touch and sight....It is absolutely true that connections have been set up between this world and the next!"

After Lady Crookes died in 1916, Sir William immediately began attempts to communicate with her. According to some sources, he did receive messages from her spirit that he felt constituted proof of contact with the other side. Others say that an alleged spirit photograph of Lady Crookes appeared to have been manipulated in the developing process. Crookes died on April 4, 1919, survived by four of his eight children.

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Harry Houdini (1874–1926)

Although Harry Houdini died in 1926, his name remains synonymous with incredible demonstrations of stage magic and daredevil escapes. For **Spiritualists** and mediums, however, his name is also synonymous with the devil at worst, the Grand Inquisitor at the least. Houdini developed a strange kind of ambivalence, a love-hate attitude, toward the spirit world that, according to many of his biographers, developed after he failed to contact the spirit of his deceased mother through a medium. Others have commented that Houdini, known as a notorious self-promoter, initiated the highly publicized attempts to expose fraudulent mediums only because of the attention that such exploits would receive in the press.

Houdini was born Ehrich Weiss in Budapest, Hungary, on March 24, 1874, and he was only 13 weeks old when his family emigrated to the United States and settled in Appleton, Wisconsin. He was only a boy when he read the memoirs of the great French conjuror Robert-Houdin (1805–1871), who is today known as the "Father of Modern Magic." Ehrich became so impressed with the life and the talent of Robert-Houdin that he resolved to become a magician, and when he was 17, he added an "i" to his idol's name and became "Houdini."

Houdini practiced long hours with a childhood friend who also aspired to become a master conjuror. When his friend's interests drifted elsewhere, Houdini began playing carnivals and amusement parks with his brother, Theodore, billing themselves as the Houdini Brothers. Houdini also added the first name Harry, which was an adaptation of his family nickname, "Ehrie."

The Houdini Brothers' first major booking was at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, and Houdini found great audience response to their act when he spontaneously added a handcuff escape during an evening performance. After the fair ended, he billed himself in a solo act as the "Handcuff King" and played a successful run at the Kohl and Middleton Dime Museum in Chicago. When that engagement came to a close, he rejoined Theodore in their double-act and played vari-

Harry Houdini (1874–1926) had himself wrapped in chains as part of his escape act.
(THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

ous high schools and social events. It was when the Houdini Brothers were performing at a girls' school that Houdini met Beatrice (Bess) Rahner, who would soon become his wife. After they were married, the newlyweds began playing the theatrical circuit as "The Houdinis," and Theodore went solo under his new stage name, "Hardeen."

Until they decided to try their luck in England in July 1900, the Houdinis barely managed to survive in show business. There had been brief stints with a circus, a burlesque show, a traveling medicine show, and an ill-fated attempt to begin a school of magic. Houdini was featuring escapes more and more in their act, but even the publicity gained from such risky ventures as freeing himself from a prison cell under the watchful eye of law enforcement officers didn't bring customers to the theaters. Utilizing his bold personality to the utmost degree, Houdini managed to secure a contract with the Alhambra Theatre, one of the largest music halls in London. By July 1901, Houdini and his daring escapes were receiving top billing all over Europe—and it wasn't long before accounts of his dangling from tall buildings wrapped in chains, freeing himself from casks, kegs, and trunks submerged in rivers, and escaping from coffins, giant milk cans, and huge mail bags were creating a stir back in the States, where audiences had once been unmoved by the Great Houdini.

It is difficult to ascertain exactly when or why Houdini became the great nemesis of Spiritualist mediums—or even if he really did, in fact, set about instituting any sort of vendetta against them. Some writers and researchers believe that Houdini truly did believe in survival of the spirit after physical death, and his supposed vicious attacks against spirit mediums were but an expression of his great disappointment that he never really found any whom he felt had truly provided him with actual proof of his mother's afterlife existence. Others maintain that he only set out to expose mediums as a means of keeping himself in the headlines.

Houdini's friendship with **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** (1859–1930), the creator of Sherlock Holmes and an avid supporter of **Spiritualism,** suggests his sincerity in seeking to pierce the veil of death. During the Doyles' lecture tour of the United States in June 1922, Houdini and Beatrice joined Sir Arthur and Lady Doyle for a brief vacation in Atlantic City. On June 17, Houdini's mother's birthday, Lady Doyle said that she felt she could establish contact with her. Houdini later claimed that he had kept an open mind regarding the alleged communication, but he publicly renounced the messages that Lady Doyle had produced through automatic writing. Houdini doubted that his mother would have begun writing the message by making a cross, since she had been Jewish. And since she spoke only broken English and couldn't write the language at all, he was skeptical of the answers that she had written so perfectly. Doyle was outraged at what he felt was his friend's betrayal of trust and the belittling of a spirit communication. Their friendship ceased after Houdini's statement.

HARRY *Houdini became the great nemesis of Spiritualist mediums.*

Houdini's attacks on Spiritualist mediums also draws a parallel in many researchers' minds to his strange vitriolic assault on his childhood hero, Robert-Houdin, who provided the source of young Ehrich Weiss's inspiration to be a magician as well as the origin of his professional name. As he was beginning his own rise to fame, Houdini wrote a book about Robert-Houdin in which he not only ceased praising him, but ruthlessly sought to destroy the great conjuror's reputation. In *The Unmasking of Robert-Houdin* (1908), Houdini twisted facts and fictionalized others in order to fit the accusations that he had contrived. Houdini's critics point out that this kind of underhanded procedure was what he appeared to do with so many mediums. While Houdini's admirers state that he exposed some of the most famous mediums of the day as being fraudulent, his critics protest that he resorted to trickery, then loudly claimed that he had caught them in deceit when it was truly he who was the deceiver.

Dr. Walter Franklin Prince, head of the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) at the time of Houdini's campaign against mediums, stated that the magician showed "considerable bias by his selection of mediums and phenomena." According to Prince, Houdini "only chose to investigate those [mediums] already deemed spurious or very dubious by careful researchers in America and Britain, and ignored psychics and phenomena generally treated with respect by the same people."

Houdini's most publicized encounter with a medium was his alleged exposure of the famous Boston medium **Mina "Margery" Crandon** (1888–1941) in 1924. The investigating committee, sponsored by *Scientific American* magazine, had sought Houdini's expertise as a magician, but many of the members soon became irate over his attempts to employ trickery against the medium. Although Houdini claimed that he had caught Crandon in fraudulent actions, certain committee members felt that the medium's **spirit guide,** Walter, had been the one who had exposed Houdini and the tricks that he used in his attempts to confuse Crandon.

The great magician's crusade against fraudulent mediums, as well as his career as a conjuror and escape artist, was cut short on October 22, 1926, when a student who was visiting backstage at a Montreal theater wished to test Houdini's much vaunted muscle control, and caught him off guard with a punch to the stomach that ruptured his appendix. Houdini died nine days later on Halloween.

The controversy over whether or not the Houdini after-death code was broken will no doubt continue to rage on for many years. Houdini pledged to his wife, Bess, that if at all possible he would communicate with her after his death, and in order to prove his identity beyond all doubt and to eliminate the possibility of deception, the magician's prearranged message was a secret known only to Bess. To add to the mystique, Houdini, the master showman, stated that a **seance** should be held each anniversary of his death in an attempt for him to transmit the code words to a medium.

The Reverend Arthur Ford (1896–1971), formerly an orthodox clergyman, had become a trance medium and had gained an international reputation for the accuracy of his spirit communication, receiving accolades from such luminaries as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who called him one of the most amazing mental mediums of all times. In 1929, Reverend Ford received a message that he believed to have originated from Houdini and conveyed it to Bess Houdini's attention. Immediately a storm of fierce arguments pro and con erupted in the media. Perhaps betraying their own personal prejudices, some feature writers championed the authenticity of Reverend Ford's relayed communication from Houdini, while others quoted the magician's widow as saying that the message was incorrect.

On February 9, 1929, however, Beatrice Houdini wrote Reverend Ford to state with finality: "Regardless of any statement made to the contrary: I wish to declare that the message, in its entirety, and in the agreed upon sequence, given to me by Arthur Ford, is the correct message prearranged between Mr. Houdini and myself."

Critics of the paranormal downplay Ford's having received the code from the spirit of Houdini. They insist that Bess Houdini had inadvertently revealed the code to several reporters the year before when she explained that the message her late husband would pass on from the world beyond was based on their old vaudeville routine that utilized a secret spelling code that would pass information from her to Houdini. The various words in the code spelled out Harry's and Bess's secret message: "Roseabelle, believe."

DELVING DEEPER

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WILLIAM JAMES (1842–1910)

William James is best known for his classic work on the mystical experience *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). James had a career

as a psychologist, a philosopher, and a teacher. His father, Henry James, Sr. (1811–1882), was a philosopher, a friend of the poet and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), and an ardent follower of the teachings of **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772). William's brother, Henry James (1843–1916), was the acclaimed novelist of such American classics as *Daisy Miller* (1879), *The Europeans*, and the psychological thriller *The Turn of the Screw* (1898). James studied both science and art before receiving a degree in medicine from Harvard University in 1869. Two years later, he began teaching courses at Harvard, first in physiology, then in psychology and philosophy.

James's interest in mediumship and the afterlife was closely allied with his research in the psychology of altered states of consciousness. In 1882, while in London, he met **Fredric W. H. Myers** (1843–1901), Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900), Edmund Gurney (1847–1888), and other founding members of the newly formed British Society for Psychical Research (BSPR). James was impressed by Myers, a fellow psychologist, and his theory of the subliminal self, a secondary consciousness containing a number of higher-level mental processes which might be responsible for phenomena otherwise attributed to spirits. Returning to Boston, James, together with Sir William Barret and others, helped establish the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) in 1885.

That same year, James was brought to the seance room of **Leonora E. Piper** (1857–1950), the medium whom many psychical researchers would later declare the greatest mental medium of all time. Taking such precautions as identifying himself with a false name, the psychologist came away from the sitting completely baffled as to how the medium's **spirit control** had been able to provide accurate information on all the subjects about which he had queried. Although he was never greatly impressed by the phenomena produced by the physical mediums, James began a lengthy study of mental mediums, whom he hoped would be able to exhibit as much genuine phenomena as Piper.

James served as vice president of the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) from 1890 to 1910 and as president from 1894 to 1895. Although he was a stalwart champion of the scientific research of paranormal phenomena, he never quite found the proof in survival after death which he had hoped to discover through the study of mediumship. William James died on August 26, 1910, at his summer home in Chocurua, New Hampshire.

Delving Deeper

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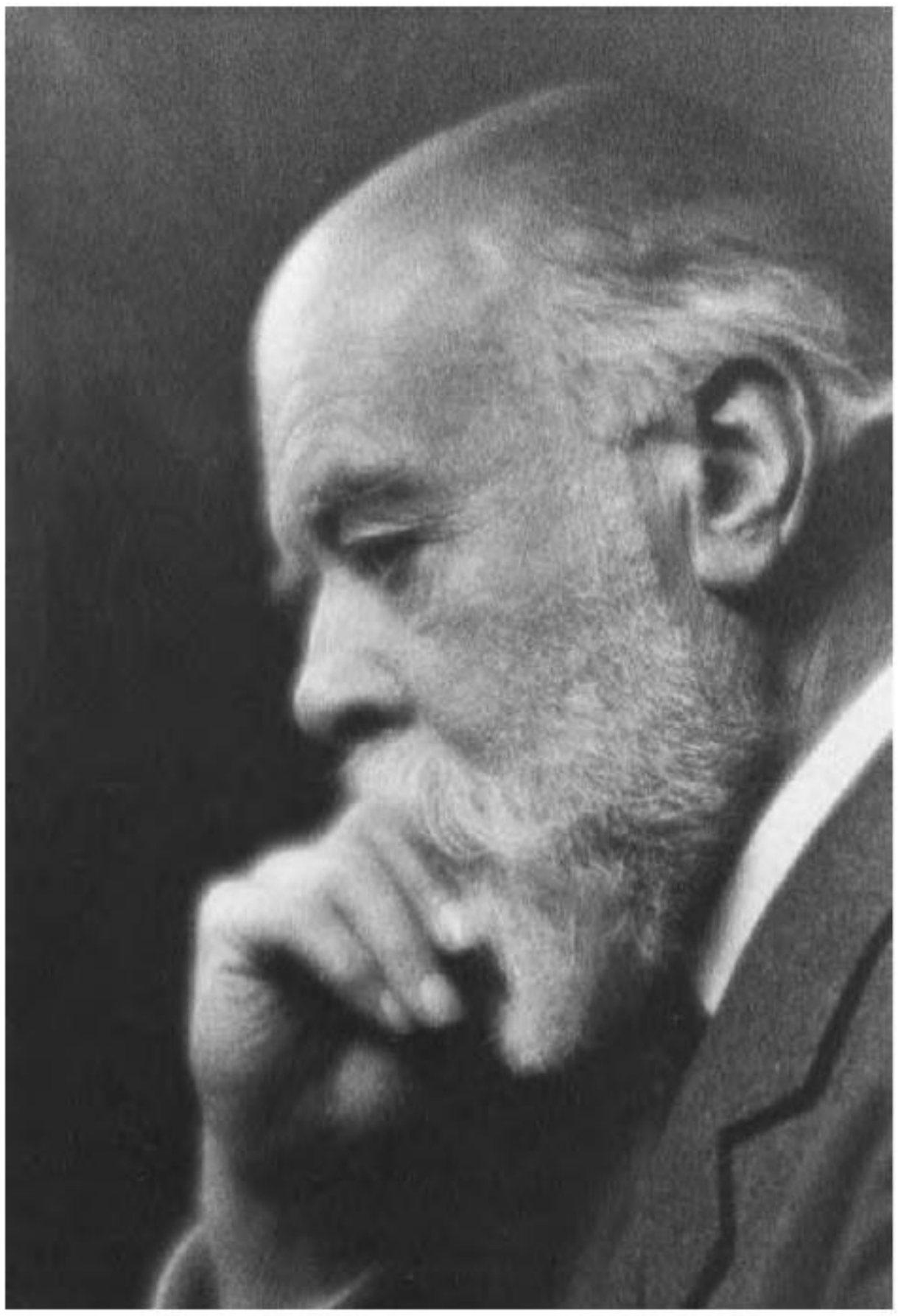
Sir Oliver Lodge (1851–1940)

Sir Oliver Joseph Lodge was a world-renowned British physicist whose first experiences in psychical research date back to 1881, when Malcolm Guthrie, the owner of a drapery shop, invited him to join his investigations in thought transference in Liverpool. Lodge was quite amazed with the results, and he began to conduct his own tests. Shortly thereafter, he joined the **Society for Psychical Research** (SPR).

In 1889, Lodge invited the famous Boston medium **Leonora E. Piper** (1857–1950) to England for tests and saw that she was made comfortable in his own home. Ever the exacting researcher, he took every conceivable precaution to eliminate any possibility of foreknowledge or fraud on Piper's part. He went so far as to temporarily dismiss all of his servants and replace them with others who knew absolutely nothing about any member of the Lodge family or Piper. Although a guest in the Lodge home, the medium was kept incommunicado and was constantly watched by experienced professional detectives. With Piper's permission, her private mail was opened and read. Every possibility of her communicating with others and receiving any type of information was completely eliminated, yet Piper's **spirit guides** provided accurate communication in every test that Lodge devised, which helped convince the researcher that spiritistic phenomena were real.



Sir Oliver Lodge (1851–1940). (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

"The messages received tend to render certain the existence of some outside intelligence or control," he said. "My sittings convinced me of survival. I am as convinced of continued existence on the other side of death as I am of existence here…I say this on distinct scientific grounds. I say it because certain friends of mine who have died still exist, because I have talked with them."

Five years later, in 1894, Lodge's first encounters with physical **mediumship** took place when he and **Fredric W. H. Myers** (1843–1901) traveled to the summer home of the French psychical researcher Charles Richet (1850–1935) to investigate the extraordinary **Eusapia Palladino** (1854–1918). Although Palladino had to be observed carefully to prevent her from resorting to trickery, Lodge was impressed with what he had witnessed. "Things hitherto held impossible do actually occur," the physicist concurred. "Certain phenomena usually considered abnormal do belong to the order of nature, and as a corollary from this, that these phenomena ought to be investigated and recorded by persons and societies interested in natural knowledge."

Oliver Lodge was knighted in 1902 while he was serving as president of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR). In 1913, he was elected president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. His fascination with **Spiritualism** did nothing to prevent him from accomplishing highly regarded work with electricity and with early forms of radio before Guglielmo Marconi (1874–1937).

In August 1915, Lodge received what he considered proof of survival after death when, in Boston, Leonora Piper relayed what he considered to be convincing messages from Fredric Myers, who had died in 1901, and Edmund Gurney, who had passed on in 1888—two close friends and associates. Such dramatic assurances of life in the spirit world helped to prepare Lodge for the death of his son Raymond, who was killed on September 14, 1915, in his capacity as a medical officer of the Second South Lancers.

On September 25, Lady Lodge sat with medium Gladys Osborne Leonard (1882–1968), who described a photograph that had been taken of Raymond with a group of fellow officers. Lady Lodge knew of no such photograph. The medium said that Raymond's spirit was insistent that he should tell Lady Lodge that in this particular photograph, Raymond was holding his walking stick under his arm. The Lodges had numerous photographs of their son, but they did not possess a single one depicting a group of medical officers in which Raymond would be included. Lodge was impressed with the emphasis that the medium had placed upon Raymond's insistence that they should locate such a photograph.

Then, according to Sir Oliver's report on the case (*Proceedings*, S.P.R. Vol. XXIX), on November 29, a letter was received from a Mrs. Cheves, who was a stranger to the Lodges, but

who was the mother of a friend of Raymond's. Cheves informed the Lodges that she had half a dozen photographs from a sitting by a group of medical officers in which Raymond and her son were present. Cheves inquired if the Lodges would like a copy of the photograph.

Although Lodge and his wife responded immediately and enthusiastically, the photograph did not arrive until the afternoon of December 7. In the interim, Lady Lodge had gone through Raymond's diary, which had been returned from the front, and had found an entry dated August 24 which told of such a photo having been taken. In his report for the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), Lodge noted that the photograph had been taken 21 days before their son's death. "Some days may have elapsed before [Raymond] saw a print, if he ever saw one," he wrote. "He certainly never mentioned it in his letters. We were, therefore, in complete ignorance of it."

While the Lodges were awaiting the photograph from Cheves, they visited another medium through whose spirit control Raymond gave them additional details concerning the group picture. Now, it seemed, Raymond was not so certain he held his walking stick, but he confirmed that there were a considerable number of men in the photograph, including two who were friends of his. These two men were prominently featured standing behind Raymond, one of whom annoyed him by leaning on his shoulder.

When the photograph was delivered to the Lodge home, Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge noticed at once that it offered a poor likeness of Raymond, but provided excellent evidence that their son had communicated to them from beyond the grave. The walking stick was there, though not under Raymond's arm, as the first medium had said. The fellow officers Raymond had named through the second medium were in the photograph and the general arrangement of the men was as both mediums had described it.

"But by far the most striking piece of evidence is the fact that some one sitting behind Raymond is leaning or resting a hand on his shoulder," commented Lodge in his report. "The photograph fortunately shows the actual occurrence and almost indicates that Raymond was rather annoyed with it, for his face is a little screwed up, and his head has been slightly bent to one side out of the way of the man's arm. It is the only case in the photograph where one man is leaning or resting his hand on the shoulder of another."

Lodge once again contacted Cheves and learned where he might obtain prints of other photographs that had been taken at the same time. Upon examination of all accessible prints, Lodge found that the basic group pose had been repeated with only slight variations for three different photographs. The Lodges felt the evidential value of the communication had been greatly enhanced by the fact that one medium had made a reference to the existence of Raymond's last photograph, and another medium, unknown to the first, had supplied the details of the photograph in response to Lodge's direct question. In his *My Philosophy* (1933), he wrote: "I am absolutely convinced not only of survival, but of demonstrated survival, demonstrated by occasional interaction with matter in such a way as to produce physical results."

Among the books written by Sir Oliver Lodge are such titles as: *Man and the Universe* (1908); *Science and Religion* (1914); *Raymond or Life and Death* (1917); *Raymond Revisited* (1922); *Science and Human Progress* (1927); *Why I Believe in Personal Immortality* (1928); *The Reality of a Spiritual World* (1930); and *My Philosophy* (1933).

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Fredric W. H. Myers (1843–1901)

Fredric William Henry Myers was born in 1843 in Keswick, Cumberland, England, into the family of a clergyman. He was educated at Cheltenham and Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1865, he became a lecturer in the classics at Cambridge, but in 1872, he resigned that position to become a school inspector. Myers published several volumes of poetry, though it was as an essayist that he became known (*Essays, Classical and Modern* [1885]).

Intrigued by the possibility of ghosts, spirits, and the survival of the soul since he was very young, Myers began sitting with mediums in 1872, often in the company of his friends, Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900) and Edmund Gurney (1847–1888). In 1882, he was one of the original group, together with Sidgwick and Gurney, who founded the British Society for Psychical Research (BSPR) and remained until the end of his life one of its most active and productive members, serving as the society's secretary from 1888 to 1899 and its president in 1900.

Although he was never a skeptic toward the paranormal, Myers deemed many of the manifestations of spirit mediums to be simplistic and puerile. In his opinion, the greatest evidence for survival of the human personality after death was to be found in what he called the "subliminal consciousness," that mysterious realm that lies beneath the threshold of ordinary consciousness wherein exist the faculties of **telepathy, clairvoyance, psychokinesis,** and **precognition.** All the phenomena of mediumism and the seance room Myers attributed to the manifestations of the subliminal consciousness.

Myers investigated one of the most evidential cases suggestive of the survival of human personality beyond the death experience recorded in the early annals of psychical research. The report, which has come to be known as "The Case of the Scratch on the Cheek."

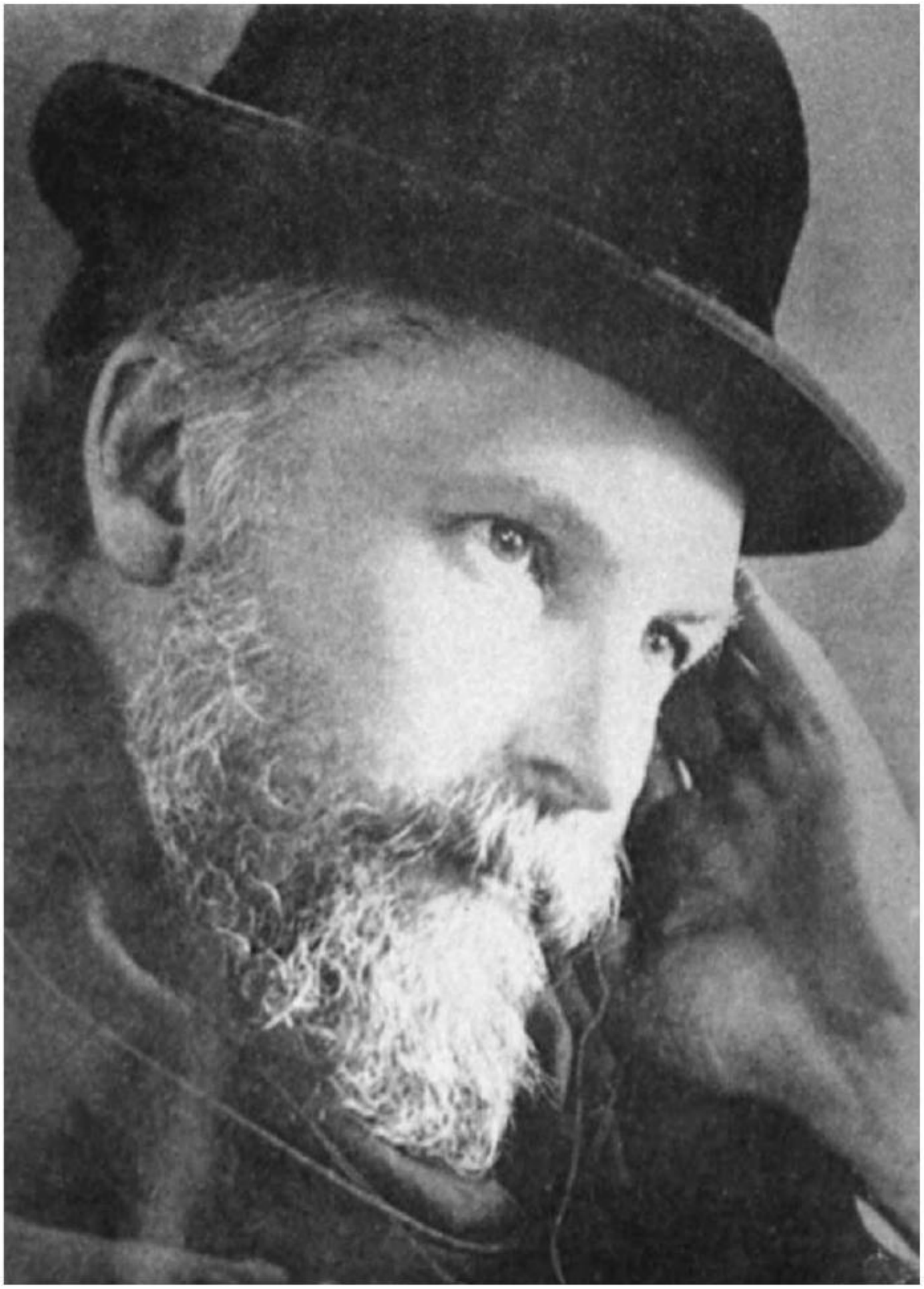
In 1876 Mr. F. G., a traveling salesman, was sitting in a hotel room in St. Joseph, Missouri. It was high noon and he was smoking a cigar and writing out sales orders. Suddenly conscious of someone sitting on his left with one arm resting on the table, the salesman was startled to look up into the face of his dead sister, a young lady of 18 who had died of cholera in 1867. "So sure was I that it was she," he wrote in an account to the American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR) (*Proceedings*, S.P.R., VI, 17), "that I sprang forward in delight, calling her by name."

As he did so, the image of his sister vanished, and Mr. F. G. resumed his seat, stunned by the experience. The cigar was still in his mouth, the pen was still in his hand, and the ink was still moist on his order blank. He was satisfied that he had not been dreaming, but was wide awake. He had been near enough to touch her, "had it been a physical possibility." He had noted her features, expression, and details of dress. "She appeared as if alive," he stated. "Her eyes looked kindly and perfectly naturally into mine. Her skin was so lifelike that I could see the glow of moisture on its surface, and, on the whole, there was no change in her appearance."

Mr. F. G. was so impressed by the experience that he took the next train home to tell his parents about the remarkable visitation. But his mother nearly fainted when he told them of "a bright red line or scratch on the right-hand side" of his sister's face. With tears streaming down her face, his mother told him that he had most certainly seen his sister's spirit since only she was aware of a scratch that she had accidentally made while doing some little act of kindness after the girl's death. Feeling terrible over what had occurred, his mother had carefully "obliterated all traces of the slight scratch with the aid of powder" and had never mentioned the unfortunate occurrence to a single person from that day onward until F. G. had mentioned seeing it on the spirit form of his sister.

It seems a bit more than coincidence when the anonymous narrator, F. G., adds: "A few weeks later my mother died, happy in her belief that she would rejoin her favorite daughter in a better world."

In discussing this case, Fredric W. H. Myers wrote that, in his opinion, the spirit of the daughter had perceived the approaching death of her mother and had appeared to the brother to force him into the role of message bearer. Also, by prompting F. G. to return home unexpectedly at that time, the spirit had enabled him to have a final visit with his mother. Myers was further intrigued by the fact that the spirit figure appeared not as a corpse, but as a girl full of health and happiness "with the symbolic red mark worn simply as a test of identity." Myers discounted the theory that the spirit figure could have been a projection from the mother's mind. "As to the spirit's own knowledge of the fate of the body



Frederic W. Myers (1843–1901). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

after death, other reported cases show that this specific form of post-mortem perception is not unusual," he concluded. "This case is one of the best attested, and in itself one of the most remarkable that we possess…It certainly seems probable that recognition was intelligently aimed at."

The Reverend Arthur Bellamy told Myers about the "lady" he saw one night sitting by the

side of the bed where his wife lay sound asleep. Bellamy stared at the strange woman for several minutes, noting especially the elegant styling of her hair, before the lady vanished.

When Mrs. Bellamy awakened, the reverend described her mysterious caller. He was startled to learn that the description fit that of a schoolgirl friend of his wife's with whom she had once made a pact that the first one to die should appear after her death to the survivor. The astonished clergyman then asked his wife if there was anything outstanding about her friend, so they might be certain it had been she. "Her hair," she answered without hesitation. "We girls used to tease her at school for devoting so much time to the arrangement of her hair." Later, Bellamy identified a photograph of his wife's friend as being the likeness of the specter that had appeared at her bedside.

The results, speculations, and conclusions of Frederic W. H. Myers's many years of research were published posthumously in *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (coauthored with Edmund Gurney and Frank Podmore, 1903). Myers died in Rome in 1901 and was buried in Keswick.

DELVING DEEPER

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SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH (SPR)

In 1882, a distinguished group of Cambridge scholars founded the British Society for Psychical Research (BSPR) for the purpose of examining allegedly paranormal phenomena in a scientific and unbiased manner. The first president of the society was Professor Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900), and the council numbered among its members Edmund Gurney (1847–1888), Frank Podmore (1856–1910), **Fredric W. H. Myers** (1843–1901), and Professor William Barrett (1844–1925). The initial major undertaking of the newly formed society, the first of its kind in the world, was to conduct a census of hallucinations by means of a circulated questionnaire that asked its respondents:

> Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being or inanimate object, or of hearing a voice; which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to any external physical cause?

The SPR received answers from 17,000 people, 1,684 of whom answered "yes." From this, the committee which was conducting the census estimated that nearly 10 percent of the population had experienced some kind of visual or auditory "hallucination." Those people who indicated that they had experienced some paranormal appearance or manifestation were sent forms requesting details.

The census of hallucinations enabled the researchers to arrive at a number of basic premises concerning ghosts and apparitions, which were strengthened by subsequent research. The committee was able to conclude, for example, that although apparitions are associated with other events besides death, they are more likely to be linked with death than anything else. Visual hallucinations were found to be the most common (1,087). This seemed especially important to note because psychologists have found that auditory experiences are most common among the mentally ill. Of the visual cases reported, 283 had been shared by more than one witness. This was also noted to be of great importance because critics of psychic phenomena have always argued that the appearance of a "ghost" is an entirely subjective experience. Those who answered the committee's follow-up form indicated that they had not been ill when they had witnessed the phenomena they reported, and they insisted that the "hallucinations" were quite unlike the bizarre, nightmarish creatures which might appear during high fevers or high alcoholic consumption. Of the 493 reported auditory hallucinations, 94 had occurred when another person had been present. Therefore, about one-third of the cases were collective—that is, experienced by more than one witness at the same time.

After the findings of the census of hallucinations were made public, the SPR began to be flooded by personal accounts of spontaneous cases of ghosts and apparitions. In order to aid an appointed committee in the handling of such an influx of material, the SPR worked out a series of questions that could be applied to each case that came into their offices:

1. Is the account firsthand?
2. Was it written or told before the corresponding event was known?
3. Has the principal witness been corroborated?
4. Was the percipient awake at the time?
5. Was the percipient an educated person of good character?
6. Was the apparition recognized?
7. Was it seen out of doors?
8. Was the percipient anxious or in a state of expectancy?
9. Could relevant details have been read back into the narrative after the event?
10. Could the coincidence between the experience and the event be accounted for by chance?

Later, committee member J. Fraser Nichol established three points of critique that could be used by the investigator of spontaneous phenomena:

1. That the experience be veridical—that is, that it relate to an actual event that was occurring, had occurred, or would occur;
2. That there be an independent witness who testifies that the percipient related his experience to him before he came to know, by normal means, that the experience had been veridical; and
3. That no more than five years have passed between the experience and the written account of it.

The American Society for Psychical Research (ASPR), first organized in 1885 with astronomer Simon Newcomb (1835–1909) as president, later became a branch of the British Society of Psychical Research (BSPR) and functioned in Boston under the guidance of Richard Hodgson (1855–1905), formerly of Cambridge University, until his death in 1905. The ASPR became independent of the BSPR and relocated to New York City in 1906 with James Hervey Hyslop (1854–1920), Professor of Logic and Ethics at Columbia University, as its secretary and treasurer. For the next 14 years, until his death in 1920, Hyslop expanded the scope of the society's work.

A GROUP *of Cambridge scholars founded the British Society for Psychical Research for the purpose of examining allegedly paranormal phenomena in a scientific and unbiased manner.*

At the ASPR all-day ESP forum held on November 20, 1965, in New York City, Dr. Gardner Murphy (1895–1979), president of the ASPR, told assembled parapsychologists and representatives from other scientific disciplines that "...Progress in parapsychology in the direction of science calls for major, sustained effort...devoted to the building of theories and systematic models. The primary need is not for lots and lots of further little experiments, but for bold and sound model building."

Murphy concluded his address, "Advancement of Parapsychology as a Science," by stating that the future of parapsychology as a science is going to depend on multidisciplinary cooperation between the psychical researcher and "...the medical man, the anthropologist, the sociologist, the physicist, the biologist, the psychologist, and a great many other kinds of people working together within a broad perspective and giving each other mutual support."

Making the Connection

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.

dogma A principle, belief, or set of beliefs considered to be absolutely true, whether religious, political, or philosophical.

ecclesiasticism Principles, practices, activities, or body of thought that is all-encompassing and adhered to in an organized church or institution.

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.

knockings/rappings Tapping sounds said to be coming from deceased spirits in an attempt to communicate with or frighten the living.

materialization Something that appears suddenly, as if out of nowhere. In the paranormal 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.

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.

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.

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.

phenomena Occurrences, persons, or things that are strange, extraordinary, or considered to be unusual and significant.

precognition The ability to foresee or to know what is going to happen in the future, before it occurs, especially if based on extrasensory perception.

psychokinesis The ability to make objects move or to in some way affect them without using anything but mental powers.

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.

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.

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.

stigmata Marks on a person's body resembling the Crucifixion wounds suffered by Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) during his Crucifixion on the cross.

telepathy Communication from one person's mind to another without the use of speech, writing, or any other signs or symbols, but through extrasensory means.

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.

Antichrist

Apocalypse

Apparitions of Holy Figures

Armaggedon

Cosmic Consciousness

Demons

Devil's Mark

Ecstasy

Exorcism

Faith Healing

Guardian Angels

Illumination

Inquisition

Miracles

Possession

Power of Prayer

The Rapture

Shroud of Turin

666

Snake Handling

Stigmata

Virgin of Guadalupe

Visions

Weeping Statues and Icons

Chapter 3

Religious Phenomena

This chapter will explore a number of the phenomena that surround a great variety of religious beliefs, from the veneration of sacred objects to the expectation of miracles, from the power of prayer to heal to the judgment of ecclesiastical tribunals to cause suffering.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a tremendous surge of interest in both organized religion and expressions of individual spirituality. People speak freely of their **guardian angels,** their belief in life after death, their efforts to elevate their consciousness, and the **power of prayer.** Others are concerned about being under psychic attack by **demons** when they learn from the mainstream media that the number of **exorcisms** of those who are suffering demonic **possession** has been rising steadily. In a Gallup poll released on June 10, 2001, the administrators of the survey 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, or **extrasensory perception;** 32 percent believe in the power of **prophecy;** and 38 percent agree that **ghosts** and **spirits** exist.

In a recent survey, it was revealed that 41 percent believe people can be possessed by the devil and 38 percent believe ghosts and spirits exist.

In the fall of 1988 the editors at *Better Homes and Gardens* conducted a survey of their readers' spiritual lives. The editors were astonished when the subject drew more than 80,000 responses, and more than 10,000 people attached thoughtful letters expressing remarkable strength of feeling. Of the 80,000 readers who responded to the survey: 86 percent believed in miracles; 89 percent in eternal life; 30 percent in a spirit world; and 13 percent accepted the possibility that beings in the spirit world can make contact with the living.

In December 1997, the editors of *Self* magazine published the results of a similar survey conducted with their readership: 91 percent believed in miracles; 87 percent, angels; 85 percent, spirits; 82 percent, heaven; 65 percent, hell; and 65 percent, the devil.

Some observers of the contemporary scene attribute this great spiritual questing to the advent of the millennium and the concerns of certain Christians about an approaching **Apocalypse,** when people will be called to account for their misdeeds. Others say that large masses of people have become disillusioned with the tenets of science and the tools of technology that promised an earthly paradise, but cannot answer the basic questions of why humans are here and what they are to do with themselves in their allotted time on the planet.

In *Why Religion Matters: The Future of Faith in an Age of Disbelief* (2001), Huston Smith states that a people with only science to guide them are morally lost. Smith readily grants that the scientific method is "nearly perfect" for understanding the physical aspects of human life. "But it is a radical [rather] limited viewfinder in its inability to offer values, morals, and meanings that are at the center of our lives," Smith says. The practice of science can deepen the understanding of the physical world, "but it can never answer the questions about our moral universe that have troubled our ancestors since the beginning of time—who are we, why are we here, and how should we behave while we are here?"

Why should there be such a dramatic spiritual awakening at this time? Dr. Walter Houston Clark, professor emeritus at Andover Theological Seminary, saw it beginning in the early 1970s. At that time (c. 1972) he said, "I think the best explanation is the obvious starvation of humankind's nonrational needs over many decades. Materialism, competition, power politics, and human exploitation can be endured only so long before they begin to make nonsense to sensitive natures jaded by the persistent denial of their essential longing, the longing for a living God and a vital religious experience."

All of the highly varied religious phenomena described in this chapter have one thing in common: They all involve human beings responding to an individual mystical experience. Whether one is soaring to the heart of the universe after receiving **cosmic consciousness,** standing in awe before a **weeping statue** of Mother Mary, or strengthening the spirit to resist the temptations of the fallen angels, a true blending of the phenomenon with the

Demonic Invasions

In the U.S., some clergypersons believe Satan and his demons appear to be busier than ever in the new millennium—and they admit that the ancient rites of exorcism are being performed in increasingly large numbers to combat the evil machinations of the powers of darkness.

While the Roman Catholic Church is most noted for conducting exorcisms, their clergy is actually extremely cautious in approving the rites. Once official approval has been granted to conduct an exorcism, the rites themselves may take hours, days, or weeks to complete. But in spite of their careful scrutiny of all claims of satanic possession, the church has admitted to having ten official exorcists on duty in the United States today; ten years ago, they had only one.

Most experts agree the majority of exorcisms currently being conducted in the Americas are being performed by Protestant churches and sects. Approximately 600 evangelical exorcism ministries are in operation, in addition to numerous exorcisms being conducted by Pentecostals and other Christian sects. These religious bodies see Satan as an active force. They perceive a heightened campaign of evil in what they believe are the fast-approaching End-Times before the Second Coming of Christ. They believe the devil and his demonic hordes must put in overtime to lead as many people astray as possible before the Lord conquers Satan and casts him into the pit of fire.

In some of these exorcisms, little more is done than prayers for deliverance of the afflicted and the laying on of hands to heal the victim of demonic influences. In others, the so-called exorcism may be a kind of counseling session in which the troubled individual is advised how best to escape the lures of the demons of lust, greed, anger, and so forth. In still other instances, those accused of being possessed might be tied to chairs and subjected to teams of exorcists praying and screaming for the demons to retreat. Some observers have compared the techniques of some of the more elaborate exorcisms to a kind of psychodrama in which the possessed is able to enact a kind of release of guilt and feel reborn and freed of sin.

While not all contemporary clergypersons believe in the possibility of demon possession, but prefer to speak of mental health problems that may trouble certain parishioners, most still concede that there appears to be an intelligence of some kind that directs evil in the world. They caution that those who suspect possession in themselves or others are not gullible or that they open themselves to the suggestion of demonic possession when other mundane explanations may exist.

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individual psyche occurs during the awesome splendor of a mystical experience.

In his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), **William James** (1842–1912) states his view that personal religion has its origin in the mystical consciousness. "The mother sea and fountainhead of all religions lie in the mystical experiences of the individual, taking the word mystical in a very wide sense. All theologies and all ecclesiasticisms are secondary growths superimposed."

At the same time that men and women are examining various aspects of religious phenomena and evaluating them in terms of their own spiritual quest, scientists around the world are assessing the individual mystical experience and asking whether spirituality cannot be explained in terms of neural transmitters, neural networks, and brain chemistry. Perhaps that feeling of transcendence that mystics describe could be the decreased activity in the brain's parietal lobe, which helps regulate the sense of self and physical orientation. Perhaps, these neurotheologians theorize, the human brain is wired for God.

And the great mystery will always remain. Is it the wiring of the human brain that creates God and the mystical experience? Or was it God who created this brain wiring so humans might experience the splendor within and all religious phenomena?

ANTICHRIST

The Antichrist, as the word implies, is one who opposes Christ or who falsely presents himself or herself as Christ. Although the word is most commonly associated with the apocalyptic New Testament book of Revelation, the word "Antichrist" is nowhere to be found within its text. In 1 John 2:18, the epistle writer declares that the "enemy of Christ" has manifested and that many false teachers have infiltrated the Christian ranks. In verse 22, John names as the Antichrist anyone who would deny Jesus as the Christ and the Father and the Son, and in 2 John verse 7 he declares that there are many deceivers already at work among the faithful.

The concept of an earthly opponent or antagonist of the Messiah also appears in the Old Testament. The earliest form of the Antichrist is probably the warrior King Gog, who appears in the Book of Ezekiel and who reappears in Revelation along with his kingdom of Magog, representing those earthly minions of Satan who will attack the people of God in a final great battle of good versus evil. In Jewish eschatology, writings about the "end of days" state that the armies of Gog and Magog will eventually be defeated and the world will finally be at peace.

Throughout the Bible the Antichrist bears many titles: Son of Perdition, Man of Sin, Man of Lawlessness, the Prince of Destruction/Abomination, and the Beast. The prophet Daniel describes the man in great detail: He shall be an evil king who will "...exalt himself and magnify himself above every god and shall speak outrageous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper until the indignation is accomplished: for that which has been determined shall come to pass. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate he shall (secretly) honor a god of forces and a god whom his fathers never knew. To these he will worship with gold and silver and with precious stones and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in his fortress with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many and shall divide the land for gain" (Daniel 11:36).

St. Paul, writing in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, had a similar vision concerning the arrogant and evil king: "The man of sin...who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, displaying himself as if being God...for the mystery of lawlessness is already at work in the world: only he who now restrains (the coming of the Antichrist) will do so.... And then shall that Wicked [one] be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth.... Destroying him whose coming is in harmony with the working of Satan with all power and signs and false miracles...."

In both the prophecies of Daniel and John the Revelator, the evil king, the Antichrist, is associated with 10 rulers who give their power and allegiance to him in order to form a short-lived empire of bloodshed and destruction. "And the ten horns of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them, and he shall be diverse…and speak great words against the most high God and shall wear down the saints of the Highest One and think to make changes in times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand for three and one half years" (Daniel 7:24). "And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue only for a short time" (Revelation 17:10).

In Matthew 24:3–44, Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) speaks to his disciples at great length concerning the false Messiahs and prophets who will deceive many people with their rumors about the end of the world. He makes reference to the prophet Daniel and his warnings concerning the end times and the Antichrist, and he admonishes the disciples not to chase after false teachers who will produce great miracles and signs to trick God's chosen ones. No one knows when the Son of Man shall appear again coming on the clouds of heaven, Jesus tells them, not even the angels.

Although Jesus makes it clear that no one knows the hour or day of his Second Coming, for many centuries now certain Christian clergy and scholars have steadfastly associated the rise of the Antichrist to earthly power as a kind of catalyst that would set in motion **Armageddon,** the last final battle between good and evil, the ultimate clash between the armies of Jesus Christ and Satan. Throughout the centuries, Christians have attempted to determine the Antichrist from among the powerful and ruthless leaders of their day. Ever since the Protestant Reformation, the pope has been a favorite of Evangelicals for the ignominious title. While many of the pontiffs in the Middle Ages did exercise great power over the rulers and the people of the emerging European nations, contemporary popes wield little political influence, surely none that would place them in world-threatening positions.

Aleister Crowley (1875–1947) of the Order of the Golden Dawn. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

There have been such men as **Aleister Crowley** (1875–1947), who actually appeared to seek the position by calling himself the Beast and **666.** The numerical value of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's (1882–1945) name reportedly added up to 666, and since he held the office of president of the United States for 12 years—and during the Great Depression and World War II—many of his conservative Christian critics began thinking of him as the Antichrist. And even the former President Ronald Wilson Reagan (1911–), had certain dissenters calling attention to the fact that he had six letters in each of his three names—6-6-6.

In recent decades, the term of Antichrist has been applied to so many individuals in popular culture that it has lost much of its meaning and its sense of menace. During the Gulf War in 1992, Saddam Hussein (1937–) received many votes for the title of the Beast, especially when he announced plans to begin to restore the ruins of Babylon to a splendor that would approximate the wicked city's former glory. Before Hussein, there were many nominations for the Ayatollah Khomeini (1900–1989) to don the mantle. But later when certain extremists named President Reagan, former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger (1923–), and even the children's television icon Barney the Dinosaur as the Antichrist, the word began losing its threat for the general population. However, those Christians who believe strongly in the coming time of Tribulation, the Apocalypse, the **Rapture,** and the great final battle of good versus evil at Armageddon, firmly believe that the title of Antichrist maintains its fear factor and that those signs and warnings of the Beast as prophesied in the book of Revelation should be seriously heeded.

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APOCALYPSE

In apocalyptic visions, prophets see ahead to the end time. Humankind's salvation lies in the future, and the meaning of the present is obscured in the chaos of survival on the Earth's plane. In apocalyptic thought, humankind's destiny is viewed as steadily unfolding according to a great design of God. The present is a time of trial and tribulation, and its meaning will only be made clear in the last days before the final judgment occurs. Placing the ultimate revelation of God at the end time seems to imply a history for God, as well as for his creation—or at least an evolution, or transformation, from one sphere of activity to another.

In the Jewish tradition, apocalyptic thought presupposes a universal history in which the Divine Author of that history will reveal and manifest his secrets in a dramatic end time that with finality will establish the God of Israel as the one true God. The "end of days" (*acharit ha-yamin*) is bound up with the coming of the Messiah, but before his appearance governments will become increasingly corrupt, religious schools will become heretical, the wisdom of the scribes and teachers will become blasphemous, young people will shame their elders, and members of families will turn upon one another. Then, just prior to the arrival of the Messiah, the righteous of Israel shall defeat the armies of evil that have gathered under the banner of Gog and Magog, and the exiles shall return to the Holy Land. The world will be at peace and all people will recognize the one true God. With the advent of the Messiah will come the great Day of Judgment in which the dead shall rise from their graves to begin a new life. During the period known as the World to Come (*Olam Haba*), the righteous will join the Messiah in partaking of a great banquet in which all foods, even those previously judged impure, shall be declared kosher. All the many nations of the world will communicate in one language; the Angel of Death will be slain by God; trees and crops will produce fresh harvests each month; the warmth of the sun shall heal the sick; and the righteous will be nourished forever by the radiance of God.

To most orthodox Christians, the profound meaning of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) will one day return in the Last Days and his Second Coming will prompt the resurrection of the dead and the Final Judgment. The heart of the gospels is eschatological, or end-oriented. The essential theme of Jesus and the apostles is that the last stage of history, the end time, was being entered into with his appearance. In Matthew 24:3–44,

Jesus speaks to his disciples at great length concerning false Messiahs and prophets who will deceive many people with their rumors about the end of the world. He makes reference to the prophet Daniel and his warnings concerning the end times and the **Antichrist,** and he admonishes the disciples not to chase after false teachers who will produce great miracles and signs to trick God's chosen ones. No one knows when the Son of Man shall appear again coming on the clouds of heaven, Jesus tells them, not even the angels.

As in Jewish apocalyptic tradition, Christians also recognize that there must come the terrible time when the Antichrist, summoning great powers of evil, will triumph for a period over the righteous believers and that there will be one last awful clash between the forces of good under the banner of Christ and his angels and the minions of evil under the banner of Satan. Before that final battle in the valley of **Armageddon,** the faithful may look for various signs to alert them that the end time, the Apocalypse, has begun. Drawing upon the apocalyptic traditions of his Jewish background, John the Revelator, presents in Revelation, the last book in the New Testament, a guidebook for the Christian on what to expect during the Apocalypse, the time of Tribulation. Specifically, the book was written for the members of the churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea in order to prepare them for what John believed to be a fast-approaching time of persecution and the return of Jesus Christ.

The first of Seven Seals to be opened (Revelation 6:1–2) by the Lamb (Christ) discloses a conquering king astride a white horse, the first of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. Scholars disagree whether this triumphant king represents Christ returning to do battle with Satan or the Antichrist emerging to summon the forces of evil to oppose Christ and his angelic army. The Second Seal (6:3–4) reveals the red horse, representing civil war; the third, the black horse, symbolizing famine (6:5–6); the fourth, the pale horse, representing the suffering that follows war and famine. The Fifth Seal to be opened by the Lamb yields a vision of the persecution of the Church throughout history and during the Last Days. When the Sixth Seal is revealed, it displays the coming signs of a great Day of Wrath at hand when there will be Earthly upheavals, a darkened sun, stars falling from the heavens, mountains and islands removed, and more strife and revolution throughout the nations. The Seventh and final Seal releases seven trumpets that sound the triumphant blast signaling the approach of the final and everlasting victory of Christ over the kingdoms of the world.

John Collins, author of the *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism.* **(AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)**

But rising out of the abyss to block Christ's triumph at Armageddon is a monstrous army of demons, some resembling locusts and scorpions, others a repulsive mixture of humans, horses, and lions. These demons are soon joined by 200,000 serpentine-leonine horsemen capable of belching fire, smoke, and brimstone. Led by Satan, the once-trusted angel who led the rebellion against God in Heaven, the Prince of the World sets his legions upon the faithful to make their lives as miserable as possible in the end time. To make matters even more complex for those who serve God, the Antichrist appears on the scene pretending to be the Lamb, the Messiah. John the Revelator is told that this man, this beast in lamb's clothing, can be recognized by a name, the letters of which, when regarded as numbers, total 666.

The Four Riders of the Apocalypse. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Although the term "Antichrist" is frequently used by those Christians who adhere to the New Testament book of Revelation as a literal guide to the end of days which they feel is here, the word is nowhere to be found within its text. Traditionally, it was believed for many centuries that the apostle John, the one especially loved by Jesus, was the author of Revelation. Contemporary scholarship generally disputes that St. John was the lonely visionary on the Island of Patmos who foresaw the time of great tribulation. It is, however, likely that the apostle John is the first to mention the Antichrist. In 1 John 2:18, he declares that the "enemy of Christ" has manifested and that many false teachers have infiltrated the Christian ranks. In verse 22, John names as the Antichrist anyone who would deny Jesus as the Christ and the Father and the Son as the Antichrist, and in 2 John verse 7 he declares that there are many deceivers already at work among the faithful.

According to Revelation, Christ and his angelic armies of light destroy the forces of darkness at Armageddon in the final battle of good versus evil. Babylon, the False Prophet, and the Beast (the Antichrist) are dispatched to their doom, and Satan, the Dragon, is bound in a pit for a thousand years. With Satan imprisoned and chained, the Millennium, the Thousand Years of peace and harmony, begins.

Although Christ's Second Coming is said to be mentioned over 300 times in the New Testament, the only references to the Millennium are found in Revelation 20:2–7. Christian scholars disagree whether or not there will be an initial resurrection of the just at the advent of the Millennium and a second one a

Doomsday clock's minute hand is moved to show the world that it is closer to a nuclear apocalypse. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

thousand years later immediately prior to the Final Day of Judgment. While many Christian theologians link Christ's Second Coming, the Resurrection, and Judgment Day all occurring after the defeat of Satan and the beginning of the thousand years of peace and harmony, others maintain that the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment of God will not take place until after the Millennium has come to a close.

For some rather incomprehensible reason, Satan is released from the pit at the conclusion of the Millennium; and true to his nature, he makes a furious attempt to regain his earthly kingdom. His former allies, the Beast (the Antichrist), the False Prophet, and the hordes of Babylon, were destroyed at Armageddon, but there were some demons who escaped annihilation at the great battle who stand ready to serve their master. In addition to these evil creatures, Satan summons Gog and his armies of the Magog nations to join them in attacking the saints and the righteous followers of God. Although the vast multitude of vile and wicked servants of evil and grotesque monsters quickly surround the godly men and women, God's patience with the rebellious angel has come to an end. Fire blasts down from heaven, engulfing and destroying the satanic legions and the armies of Gog and Magog. Satan himself is sent to spend the rest of eternity in a lake of fire.

ALTHOUGH Christ's Second Coming is said to be mentioned more than 300 times in the New Testament, the only references to the Millennium are found in Revelation 20:2–7.

And now (Revelation 20:11–15) comes the Final Judgment, the time when God shall judge the secrets of all men and women (Romans 2:16). This Judgment will be com-

plete. Every person from every age and nation will be there. And there shall only be classes: the Saved and the Lost. The Book of Life will have the names of the Saved. For those whose names do not appear on those heavenly records, there is the final doom: to be sentenced to join Satan and his angels in the place where the fire is never quenched. When the Judgment has been completed, the first heaven and Earth shall pass away and a new heaven and new Earth shall be established for those Saved to occupy with their glorified, incorruptible, spiritual bodies.

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APPARITIONS OF HOLY FIGURES

In the twelfth century, St. Francis of Assisi (1181–1226) was credited with seeing an apparition of Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.). St. Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) reported seeing Jesus in the fourteenth century. The Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart as a symbol of love was begun in the seventeenth century after an apparition of Jesus Christ had been seen by the French nun St. Margaret Mary (1647–1690).

At the height of his illness in December 1954, Pope Pius XII (1876–1958) had a vision of Jesus in which the Savior spoke to him in "His own true voice." The Vatican kept Pius's revelation secret for nearly a year, then through the "affectionate indiscretion" of one of the Holy Father's close friends, the magazine *Oggi* broke the story in its November 19, 1955, issue. On December 12, the Vatican confirmed the remarkable disclosure, declaring the vision not to have been a dream. Sources near to the pope said that he had been wide awake and lucid.

Vatican authorities said that there had not been a more vivid or specific vision of Jesus since the days of the Apostles than that reported by the pontiff. According to Church records, Christ had appeared to a pope only once before, and that was in the fourth century, when Pope Sylvester (d. 335) consecrated the mother church of St. John Lateran in Rome after Emperor Constantine had ended the brutal persecutions of the Christians.

Although devout Christian laypersons occasionally report apparitions of various saints and the image of Jesus, by far the greatest number of apparitions of religious figures are those of Mother Mary. Pope John Paul II (1920–) has proclaimed his firm belief that it was a number of significant apparitions of Mother Mary that brought about the end of communism in the former Soviet Union, thus fulfilling a prophetic pronouncement to one of the three children to whom she appeared six times between May 13 and October 13, 1917, in Fatima, Portugal.

In his book *Russia Will Be Converted* (1950), John Haffert detailed a series of apparitions of Mary in the 1940s that began eroding communist doctrine and converting thousands to Roman Catholicism. In one instance, a young girl was said to have beheld the apparition of a beautiful lady who told her to return to the same spot for 15 days. After having received visions on each of these successive days, the girl was presented with the materialization of seven perfect rose petals. It was claimed that the petals did not fade or lose their fragrance. It was also said that a botanist declared that the petals could not have come from an ordinary Earth rose.

Ann Matter, a specialist in the history of Christianity at the University of Pennsylvania, has commented that contemporary times constitute the most active age of devotion to Mother Mary, not the twelfth century or the

Mother Mary Appears in Egypt

On April 2, 1968, two mechanics working in a city garage across the street from St. Mary's Church of Zeitoun, Egypt, were startled to see what appeared to be a nun dressed in white standing on top of the large dome at the center of the roof. Fearful that something might happen to the sister, one of the men ran into the church to get a priest, the other telephoned for a police emergency squad.

When the priest ran from the church to look up at the dome, he was the first to recognize it as a manifestation of Mother Mary. The image of the Blessed Mother remained in full view of the priest, the two mechanics, and a growing crowd of excited witnesses for several minutes, then disappeared.

The news of the Holy Mother's visitation spread rapidly from Zeitoun, a suburb of Cairo, to the greater metropolitan population of over six million. While the religious makeup of Cairo is largely Muslim, there is a fairly large Coptic Catholic minority. Thousands began to gather at the majestic church of Zeitoun at Tomanbey Street and Khalil Lane to see for themselves the place where the Queen of Heaven had come to Earth.

Amazingly, for the next three years, the visions of the Holy Mother manifested sporadically atop the dome of the church. Millions claimed to witness the visitations, and numerous photographs of the spiritual phenomenon can be found on the Internet.

Although thousands of people claimed miraculous cures as they looked upward at the glowing figure of the Holy Mother, no one announced receiving any special messages from her. No visionaries ever claimed to have received any warnings of impending disasters or relayed any admonitions from Mother Mary to repent or to cease sinning.

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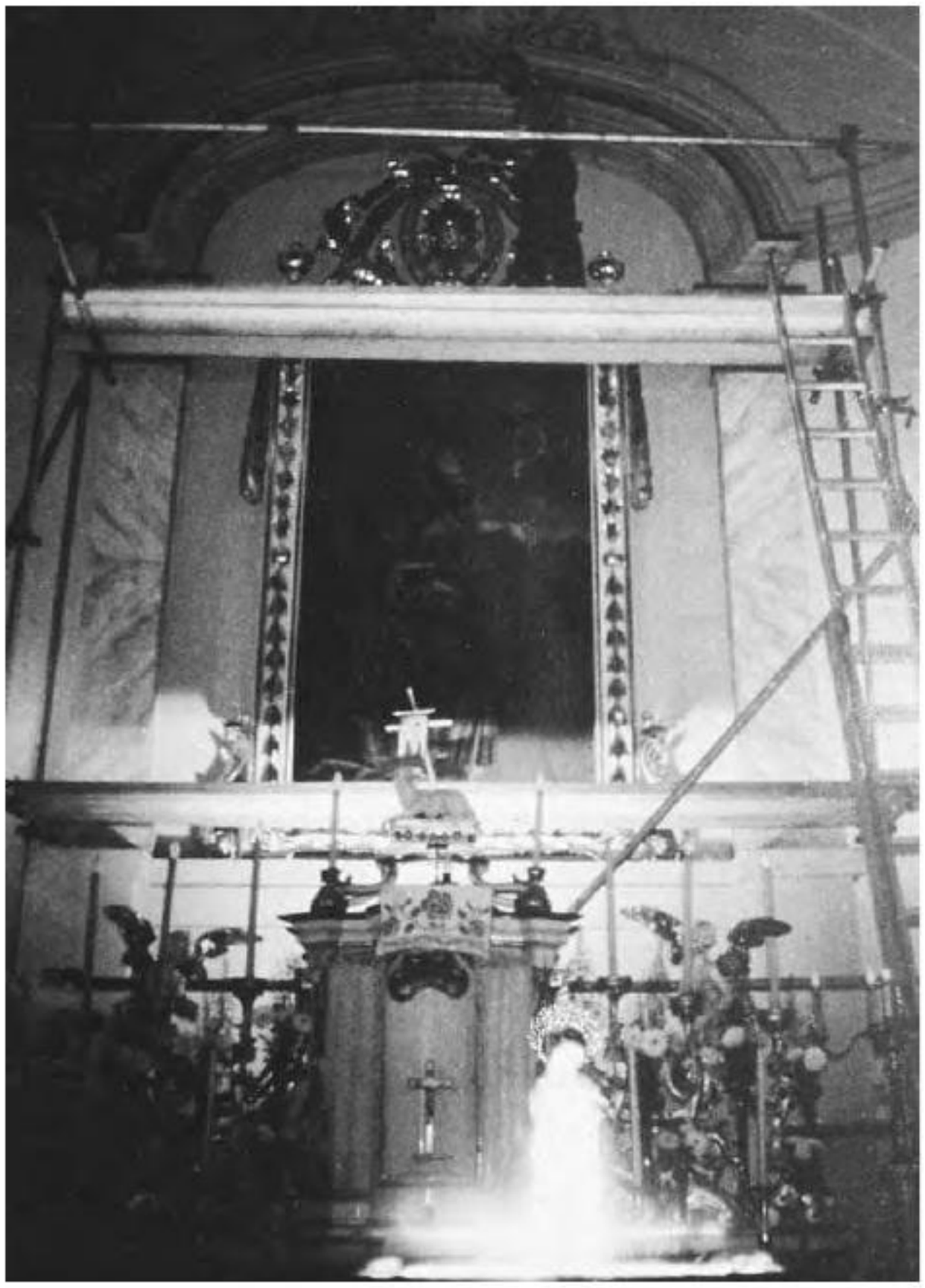


Virgin Mary and Jesus vision in Hungary. (KAROLY LIGETI/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

ninth century, but "right now." Matter stated that the interest in apparitions of the Holy Mother has been building for the past 150 years, "with more and more reports of visions of Mary in more and more places."

In the past few decades, apparitions of Mother Mary and her attending angels have been seen in places as varied as Betania, Venezuela; Cuapa, Nicaragua; Akita, Japan; Damascus, Syria; San Nicholas, Argentina; Cairo, Egypt; Naju, Korea; and Hrouchiv, Ukraine. In spite of an increasing number of apparitions around the world, the Roman Catholic hierarchy officially recognizes only seven appearances of Mother Mary:

Guadalupe, Mexico: In 1531, a Native American named Juan Diego saw Mother Mary four times and was given a miraculously created serape as evidence of her heavenly visitation.

Paris, France: The Holy Mother appeared to a nun in 1830 and asked her to fashion a medal to commemorate the Immaculate Conception.

La Salette, France: A weeping, sorrowful Mary manifested to two peasant children on September 19, 1846, and instructed them to do penance for their sins.

Lourdes, France: Identifying herself as the Immaculate Conception, Mary appeared 18 times to 14-year-old Bernadette Soubrious between February 11 and July 16, 1858. The waters of the miraculous spring that appeared according to Mary's promise are world famous for their healing powers.

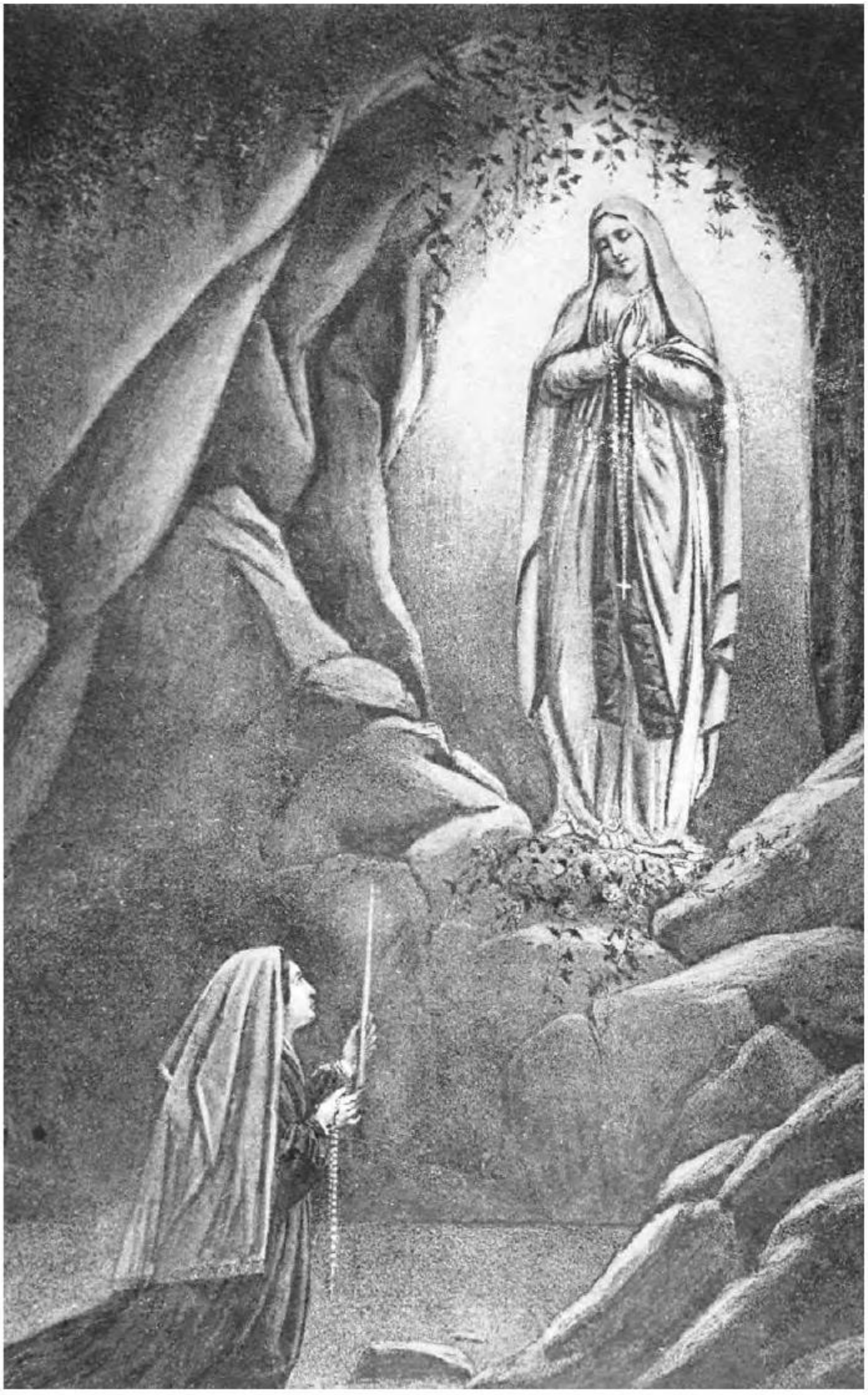
Fatima, Portugal: Mother Mary appeared to three children near Fatima, instructing them to say their rosary frequently. During her six visits between May 13 and October 13, 1917, Mary issued a number of prophecies, many of which are said to be held secret by the Vatican.

Beauraling, Belgium: Between November 29, 1932, and January 3, 1933, five children at a convent school experienced a remarkable 33 encounters with Mother Mary in the school garden.

Banneaux, Belgium: Mother Mary appeared to an 11-year-old girl eight times between January 15 and March 2, 1933, in the garden of her parents' humble cottage.

In addition to the above listed Vatican-recognized meetings with Mother Mary, there are a number of other encounters with her that have been highly publicized and may even be better known than many of those on the approved roster.

Village of Knock, County Mayo, Ireland: In 1879, in the midst of terrible famine, devout villagers gathered in their church to ask for deliverance from hunger. Then, at one end of the church, a glowing light began to form that soon revealed the figures of Mother Mary, St. Joseph, St. John, and a lamb surrounded by golden stars. A short time after the villagers had reported their collective vision, many ill, diseased, or crippled people who visited the church began to claim miraculous cures as they knelt at the statue of Mother Mary. Since that



Virgin Mary appearing before Bernadette Soubirous (1844–1879) at Lourdes. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

time, the small village of Knock has come to be called the "Irish Lourdes."

Garabandal, Spain: A series of ecstatic visions of Mother Mary began for four children one Sunday after Mass in 1961. The visitations continued until 1965 and produced numerous accurate prophecies and astonishing **miracles.**

THE *Roman Catholic hierarchy officially recognizes only seven appearances of Mother Mary.*

Zeitoun, Egypt: As many as a million witnesses may have glimpsed the figure of the glowing Madonna standing, kneeling, or praying beside a cross on the roof of St. Mary's Coptic Church. Miraculous cures manifested among the pilgrims from 1968 to 1971.

Medjugorje, Yugoslavia: In 1981, six children saw Mother Mary holding the infant Jesus near the village. The holy figure appeared on an almost daily basis for five months, leaving behind a continuing legacy of miraculous healings.

Bayside, New York: From 1970 to the present day, the "Bayside Seeress," Veronica Lueken, issues pronouncements from Mother Mary against the spiritual abuses of contemporary society.

Conyers, Georgia: Since 1987, Nancy Fowler has been receiving daily messages from Mother Mary. On the thirteenth of each month, beginning in 1990, apparitions of Mary and Jesus began to appear. By 1993 as many as 50,000 pilgrims could be expected to gather for each month's demonstration of the divine.

Hollywood, Florida: A devout Catholic who had fled to Florida from Castro's Cuba in 1967, Rosa Lopez was left bedridden after a series of painful surgeries in 1982. In 1992, after making a pilgrimage to Conyers, Georgia, Lopez received a healing miracle; and in 1993, Jesus manifested to her and proclaimed that she, too, had been chosen to be a messenger for Mother Mary. Soon the Divine Mother began conveying messages to Rosa Lopez to be shared with the thousands of faithful who gather outside her modest home.

Roman Catholic scholarship holds that there are two kinds of visions: One is the imaginative vision, in which the object seen is but a mental concept or symbol, such as Jacob's Ladder leading up to heaven. St. Teresa of Avila (1515–1582) had numerous visions, including images of Christ, which Church authorities have judged were of this symbolic kind of vision. The other is the corporeal vision, in which the figure seen is externally present or in which a supernatural power has so modified the retina of the eye so as to produce the effect of three-dimensional solidarity.

By no means are Roman Catholics the only Christians who have religious visions and see apparitions of holy figures. In October of 2000, a Lutheran minister and a sociologist in Minnesota released their study that more than 30 percent of 2,000 Christians surveyed said that they had had dramatic visions, heard heavenly voices, or experienced prophetic dreams.

In April 2001, details of research conducted at the University of Wales detected a common core to religious experiences that crosses boundaries of culture and faith. An analysis of 6,000 such experiences revealed that Christians may describe a religious experience as an encounter with Jesus, Mary, or an angel; Muslims often interpret the phenomenon as the presence of an angel; and Jews describe the event as a sign of insight or an experience of God.

With all the interest in spiritual experiences, scientists have begun asking if spirituality can be better explained in terms of neural networks, neurotransmitters, and brain chemistry. Philadelphia scientist Andrew Newberg, who wrote the book *Why God Won't Go Away* (2001), says that the human brain is set up in such a way as to have spiritual and religious experiences. Michael Persinger, a professor of neuroscience at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, conducts experiments with a helmet-like device that runs a weak electromagnetic signal around the skulls of volunteers. Persinger claims that four in five people report a mystical experience of some kind when they don his magnetic headpiece. Matthew Alper,

Vietnamese Roman Catholic nuns in a commemorative anniversary procession of the Virgin Mary apparition in Vietnam. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

author of *The "God" Part of the Brain* (1998), a book about the neuroscience of belief, goes so far as to declare that dogmatic religious beliefs that insist particular faiths are unique, rather than the results of universal brain chemistry, are irrational and dangerous.

In his book *The Faith of Biology and the Biology of Faith* (2000), Robert Pollack concedes that religious experience may seem irrational to a materialistic scientist, but he argues that irrational experiences are not necessarily unreal. In fact, he states, they can be just as real, just as much a part of being human, as those things that are known through reason. Lorenzo Albacete, a Roman Catholic priest, a professor of theology at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, writes in the *New York Times Magazine* (December 18, 2000) that he is somewhat nervous about the new efforts of science to explain human spirituality: "If the religious experience is an authentic contact with a transcendent Mystery, it not only will but should exceed the grasp of science. Otherwise, what about it would be transcendent?"

Daniel Batson, a University of Kansas psychologist who studies the effect of religion on people, states that the brain is the hardware through which religion is experienced. "To say that the brain produces religion is like saying a piano produces music," he commented.

Numerous believers in the transcendent and in the possibility of experiencing religious apparitions argue that if God created the universe, wouldn't it make sense that he would wire our brains so it would be possible to have mystical experiences?

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ARMAGEDDON

In Revelation 16:16, the battlefield designated where blasphemers, unclean spirits, and devils join forces for the final great battle of the ages between their evil hordes and Christ and his faithful angelic army is Armageddon, "the mound of Megiddo." The inspiration for such a choice of battlegrounds was quite likely an obvious one for John the Revelator, for it has been said that more blood has been shed around the hill of Megiddo than any other single spot on Earth. Located 10 miles southwest of Nazareth at the entrance to a pass across the Carmel mountain range, it stands on the main highway between Asia and Africa and in a key position between the Euphrates and the Nile rivers, thus providing a traditional meeting place of armies from the East and from the West. For thousands of years, the Valley of Mageddon, now known as the Jezreel Valley, had been the site where great battles had been waged and the fate of empires decided. Thothmes III, whose military strategies made Egypt a world empire, proclaimed the taking of Megiddo to be worth the conquering of a thousand cities. During World War I in 1918, the British general Allenby broke the power of the Turkish army at Megiddo.

Most scholars agree that the word "Armageddon" is a Greek corruption of the Hebrew *Har-Megiddo*, "the mound of Megiddo," but they debate exactly when the designation of Armageddon was first used. The city of Megiddo was abandoned sometime during the Persian period (539 B.C.E.–332 B.C.E.), and the small villages established to the south were known by other names. It could well have been that John the Revelator, writing in the Jewish apocalyptic tradition of a final conflict between the forces of light and darkness, was well aware of the bloody tradition of the hill of Megiddo and was inspired by the ruins of the city on its edge; but by the Middle Ages, theologians appeared to employ Armageddon as a spiritual concept without any conscious association with the Valley of Megiddo. Armageddon simply stood for the promised time when the returning Christ and his legions of angels would gather to defeat the assembled armies of darkness. During that same period, those church scholars who persisted in naming an actual geographical location for the final battle between good and evil theorized that it might occur at places in the Holy Land as widely separated as Mount Tabor, Mount Zion, Mount Carmel, or Mount Hermon.

In the fourteenth century, the Jewish geographer Estori Ha-Farchi suggested that the roadside village of Lejjun might be the location of the biblical Megiddo. Ha-Farchi pointed out that Lejjun was the Arabic form of Legio, the old Roman name for the place. In the early nineteenth century, American biblical scholar Edwin Robinson traveled to the area of Palestine that was held at that time by the Ottoman Empire and became convinced that Ha-Farchi was correct in his designation of the site as the biblical Megiddo. Later explorers and archaeologists determined that the ruins of the ancient city lay about a mile north of Lejjun at what had been renamed by the Ottoman government as the mound of Tell el-Mutasellim, "the hill of the governor."

Today, tourists visit Tel Megiddo in great numbers, attracted by the site's apocalyptic mystique and the old battleground's significance as the place where the fate of ancient empires was decided with the might of sword and spear. The Israel National Parks Authority works in close coordination with the Megiddo Expedition and the Ename Center for Public Archaeology of Belgium in offering visitors a dramatic perspective of the history of Armageddon.

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Cosmic Consciousness

In his classic work, *Cosmic Consciousness* (1901), Dr. Richard Maurice Bucke (1837–1902) did not presume to place himself in the company of the illumined individuals whose lives he examined in his book, but he did relate—in the third person—the account of his own experience. It was in the early spring at the beginning of Bucke's 36th year. He and two friends had spent the evening reading selections from such poets as William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats and Robert Browning, with a special emphasis on Walt Whitman. The young men had become so enraptured by their readings that they didn't part until midnight, and Bucke faced a long ride home in a horse-drawn hansom cab. He recalled that his mind was still deeply under the influence of the many inspirational ideas, images, and emotions that had been provoked by the reading and discussions of the evening. He was feeling calm and peaceful when, without any warning of any kind, "he found himself wrapped around as it were by a flame-colored cloud." For an instant, he thought of a great fire somewhere in the city, then "he knew that the light was within himself."

Upon this realization, Bucke experienced a great sense of exultation, of joyousness, "immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe." It seemed as if there streamed into his brain "one momentary lightning-flash of the Brahmic Splendor" which would henceforth forever lighten his life. He saw and knew that the cosmos is not dead matter but a living presence, that the soul of man is immortal, that the universe is so built and ordered that without peradventure all things work together for the good of each and all, that the foundation principle of this world is what we call love and that the happiness of everyone is in the long run absolutely certain. Bucke would ever after insist that he learned more within the few seconds during which the illumination experience lasted than in previous years of study—and "he learned much that no study could ever have taught."

Among those historic individuals whom he saw as definitely having attained cosmic consciousness, Bucke included Gautama the Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.), Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), Paul (d. 62–68 C.E.), Plotinus (205–270 C.E.), Muhammed (c. 570–632 C.E.), Dante (1265–1321), Francis Bacon (1561–1626), Jakob Behmen (1575–1624), William Blake (1757–1827), and his own idol, Walt Whitman (1819–1892). It is apparent from the above listing that Bucke saw such illumination occurring more often to men than to women. In added chapters, he named a number of other individuals whom he considered lesser, imperfect, or doubtful recipients of cosmic consciousness—men such as Moses (fourteenth–thirteenth century B.C.E.), Gideon, Isaiah (eighth century B.C.E.), Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.), Spinoza (1632–1677), **Emanuel Swedenborg** (1688–1772), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), and Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886).

In order for one to achieve cosmic consciousness, Bucke maintains that he or she must first belong to the "top-layer of the world of Self-Consciousness." One must have a good intellect, a good physique, good health, but above all "…he must have an exalted moral nature, strong sympathies, a warm heart, courage, strong and earnest religious feelings." Bucke's extensive study of those whom he considered possessed of cosmic consciousness led him to consider the approximate age of 36 as the most propitious time in one's life to achieve this elevated state of consciousness. In summation, he found the marks of the "Cosmic Sense" to be the following:

1. Subjective light: The person suddenly finds himself or herself immersed in flame, or a rose-colored cloud, or "perhaps a sense that the mind is itself filled with such a cloud of haze."
2. Moral elevation: The recipient is bathed in an emotion of "joy, assurance, triumph, 'salvation.'" But, Bucke explains, it is not "salvation" in its usual context of deliverance from sin, but it is the realization that "no special 'salvation' is needed, the scheme upon which the world is built being itself sufficient."
3. Intellectual illumination: The recipient does not merely come to *believe*, "but he sees and knows that the cosmos, which to the self-conscious mind seems made up of dead matter, is in fact far otherwise—is in very truth a living presence."
4. Sense of immortality.
5. Loss of the fear of death.
6. Loss of the sense of sin.
7. Instantaneousness of the illumination.
8. Previous character of high intellectual, moral, and physical degree.
9. Age about 36.
10. Added charm of the illumined personality.
11. Transformation or change of appearance: Although this change may gradually pass away, Bucke writes, "In those great cases in which the illumination is intense, the change in question is also intense and may amount to a veritable transfiguration."

Bucke's primary thesis is that during the centuries of humankind's evolutionary development as a species there have been three forms of consciousness. First, there was simple consciousness, our instinctual awareness. Next came a self-consciousness, a self-awareness that allowed human beings to realize themselves as distinct individuals. And now, developing among the human species, are those individuals possessed of cosmic consciousness, a new faculty of consciousness, that will lead humankind to the pinnacle of human evolution.

Such spiritual prophets as **Rudolf Steiner** (1861–1925) also foretold that humankind is entering a "fullness" of time in which a new consciousness shall emerge. Steiner termed the new awareness "Christ consciousness," a transformative energy that would transcend orthodox Christianity. In his view, "the rest of humanity must now, in imitation of Christ, gradually develop what was present for 33 years on the Earth in one single personality."

Steiner acknowledged that spiritual history is replete with many sincere and insightful prophets and teachers who lived before the Master Jesus, but, in his opinion, they could only speak to their fellow humans by using the faculties transmitted through their earthly natures. They used the energy and the wisdom of Earth. Jesus, however, tapped into an awareness of that higher energy that comes from the realm of the Divine. He knew that a speck of this energy no larger than a mustard seed could exalt the human psyche. He knew that even the slightest infusion of this energy into a man or a woman would transform the individual into a citizen of a higher dimension of reality, the "Kingdom of God." And, at the same time, he taught that the doorway to enter such a wondrous kingdom lay within the heart of each sincere pilgrim who sought to join him there.

Author/philosopher John W. White (1939–) also sees Jesus as an evolutionary forerunner of the higher race that will inherit the Earth, a "race of people that will embody Cosmic Consciousness, the Christ Consciousness on a species-wide basis, rather than the sporadic individual basis seen earlier in history when an occasional avatar, such as Buddha or Jesus, appeared." White gives the name of *Homo Noeticus* (pertaining to higher consciousness) to this evolving form of humanity. "Because of their deepened awareness and self-understanding, the traditionally imposed forms, controls, and institutions of society are barriers to their full development," White says. "Their changed psychology is based on expression, not suppression, of feeling. Their motivation is cooperative and loving, not competitive and aggressive. Their sense of logic is multilevel, integrated, simultaneous.... Their identity is sharing-collective, not isolated-individual.... The conventional ways

of society do not satisfy them. The search for new ways of living concerns them."

In the 1950s, Albert Einstein (1879–1955) strongly advised people that humankind had to develop a new way of thinking if they were to survive as a species. Since that time, the great genius physicist has not been alone in suggesting that humanity must develop an inner road to salvation involving a synthesis of rational understanding with the mystical experience of oneness, of unity.

In his *Mystics as a Force for Change* (1981), Dr. Sisirkumar Ghose argues that throughout the evolution of humankind, the mystics have always been among people as evidence of transitional forms within the species. Instead of accusing mystics of being dropouts and escapists, Ghose insists that "it might be fairer to say that in breaking the illusions of the cave dwellers they have been more responsible to reality and to the race.... They have been the true scientists of catharsis and conversion.... The only radical thinkers, they alone go to the root of the matter, beyond the various shaky schemes of mundane perfection, swaying between the worship of the Fatted Calf and the horror of the Organization Man."

Since many saints, prophets, and mystics have seemingly achieved a state of cosmic consciousness and/or **illumination, William James** (1842—1910), writing in his classic work *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), lists the features that he believes form a composite picture of "universal saintliness, the same in all religions:"

1. A feeling of being in a wider life than that of this world's selfish little interests; and a conviction, not merely intellectual, but as it were sensible, of the existence of an Ideal Power....
2. A sense of the friendly continuity of the ideal power with our own life, and willing self-surrender to its control.
3. An immense elation and freedom, as the outlines of the confining selfhood melt down.
4. A shifting of the emotional center toward loving and harmonious affections, towards "yes-yes" and away from "no," where the claims of the self-ego are concerned.

Many contemporary researchers use the term "peak experience" when referring to cosmic consciousness. In her *Ordinary People as Monks and Mystics* (1986), Marsha Sinetar writes that the peak experience is "critical to any discussion of the mystic's journey, since through it and because of it the individual gains an overarching and penetrating view into what he is at his best, into what he is when he simply 'is.' The peak experience means that the person experiences himself 'being,' rather than becoming." Sinetar goes on to state that the person undergoing such an expansion of consciousness is able to have a direct experience with "the transcendent nature of reality." The person then "enters into the Absolute, becoming one with it, if only for an instant...a life-altering instant." The peak experience expands "the individual's field of consciousness to include everything in the universe...he feels he has everything because he experiences everything within."

In his *Watcher on the Hills* (1959), Dr. Raynor C. Johnson sets forth the following three criteria to test the validity of mystical experience, those moments when one feels that he or she has touched "the transcendent nature of reality":

1. The pragmatic test. Has it led to well-balanced, happy, serene living of an enhanced quality?
2. Is it consistent with the well-established findings of reason? (This need not imply that it is supported by reason.)
3. Is it unifying and integrative, or isolating and destructive so far as the individual's relationship to an all-embracing whole is concerned?

Johnson contends that it is obvious that "...all psychotic products resulting in obsessional feeling-states cannot pass the first criterion." It is also clear, he writes, that "all allegedly religious people who...have only intolerance in common and are sure that if people only believed as they do, all would be well, are ruled out by the third criterion."

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DEMONS

In the teachings and traditions of all world religions, demons are spiritual entities without physical bodies that roam the Earth seeking to torment whomever attracts them through a wide variety of means—from weakness to wizardry. According to these ancient traditions, demons have supernatural powers; they are numerous; and they are organized. They can inflict sickness and mental disorders on their victims. They can possess and control humans and animals. Demons lie and deceive and teach false and misleading doctrines of spirituality. They oppose all teachings and actions that seek to serve the good and God.

DEMONS are spiritual entities without physical bodies that roam the Earth seeking to torment whoever attracts them.

According to the great teachers of the world religions, the main tasks of demons are to disseminate error among humans and to seduce believers into forsaking good for evil. Since they are such skilled deceivers, it is nearly impossible to develop an adequate litmus test that will unfailingly distinguish between good spirits and bad ones. Unless one is truly pure in heart, mind, and soul and has the ability to maintain only clean thoughts and good habits, it is very difficult to discern with unfailing accuracy the true nature of demon spirits.

Theologians remind their followers that as mortal beings they are in the midst of a great spiritual warfare between the angels of light who serve God and the fallen angels who serve the forces of darkness—and that their souls may be the prize for the victors. Accomplished spiritual teachers of all faiths advise their congregants that the good spirits will never try to interfere with the free will of humans or seek to possess their bodies. On the other hand, the evil spirits desire the physical host body of a human being. In fact, they must have such a vehicle if they are to experience earthly pleasures. When a demon invades a human body, it is said that **possession** has occurred and an **exorcism** by a priest or shaman may be required to free the victim from the evil spirit's grasp.

Demonic entities are credited with will and intellect, but these attributes are invariably directed toward evil as they exert their malevolent powers. When these evil spirits penetrate the material world and the circumstances of human life, they conceal themselves in every aspect of human existence.

In many instances, the gods of the old religions become the demons of the new. The *Asuras*, a race of gods in the early *Vedas* (sacred Hindu texts composed around 1500 to 1200 B.C.E.), are transmuted to powerful evil beings with the advent of the new deities of Indra and Vishnu. The *raksasas* are a class of entities who attack humans with the intended goal of driving them insane or causing them material ruin. As in many theologies, there is an ambivalence concerning certain deities. In Hinduism, the most terrifying of the gods, such as Kali, Durga, and Shiva, although seemingly demonic and destructive, often perform deeds that ultimately turn out to be good.

In the scriptures of the world religions, the chief of the legions and hordes of demons is known by various names: Satan, Lucifer, Iblis, Mara, and Angra Mainyu, among others. The word "devil" is derived from the Greek *diabolos*, which means "accuser" or "slanderer," and is one of the names for Satan. *Daimon*, the Greek word from which "demon" is derived, originally meant a tutelary spirit or a **spirit guide,** but it is frequently, and incorrectly, translated as "devil" or "demon."

In the traditions of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, the animosity between demons (the

fallen angels) and the human race can be traced to the moment when God granted his earthly creations of dust and clay with the priceless gift of free will. In the biblical and qur'anic traditions are found references to the jealousy that afflicted certain angels regarding the attention that God displayed toward his human creation. In the Qur'an (17:61–64), Iblis (Satan), the leader of the rebellious angels, refuses to bow to a creature that God has created of clay, and he threatens to make existence miserable for the descendants of the being that the Creator has honored above them. Because of the declared animosity of the fallen angels against those heavenly beings who remain faithful to the Creator and against those mortals who seek to follow the higher teachings of revealed truth, the epistle writer Paul (d. 62–68 C.E.) gave counsel when he warned that humans not only engage in spiritual warfare with those of flesh and blood who serve evil, "but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Although Buddhism generally rejects a cosmological dualism between good and bad, angels and demons, there is an aspect within the traditional lives of the Buddha which echoes the jealousy motif of various entities toward humans. Mara, who tempted the Awakened One on the night of his enlightenment, is said to be an *asura* or a Deva (a being of light) who was jealous of the power that was about to be bestowed on a human, for to become a Buddha would be to achieve spiritual status greater than they possessed. Tibetan Buddhism borrows its demons from Hinduism and adds a number of indigenous entities, who are ambivalent toward the inhabitants of the Himalayas, sometimes appearing as fierce and malevolent creatures, other times manifesting as teachers of enlightenment.

Various scriptures state firmly that regardless of their strength, power, and majesty, angels are not to be worshipped, and religious teachers advise that true heavenly beings will immediately discourage any humans from attempting to bow their knees to them. On the other hand, the fallen angels, the demons, are motivated by their own selfish goals and delight in corrupting humans. They encourage mortals to express greed and to seek the acquisition of material, rather than spiritual, treasures. As a general spiritual law, these negative entities cannot achieve power over humans unless they are somehow invited into a person's private space—or unless they are attracted to an individual by that person's negativity or vulnerability.

According to certain Christian teachers, there was an outburst of demonic activity upon the occasion of Jesus' coming to Earth, which was perceived as a great threat to Satan's material kingdom. Other church scholars state that another such outburst is expected just before the Second Coming of Christ. Some fundamentalist Christians believe that that time has begun.

THE *word "devil" is derived from the Greek* diabolos, *which means "accuser" or "slanderer."*

Regardless of the general view of the vast majority of contemporary scientists and psychologists—and even many members of the clergy—to regard a belief in demons as a superstitious holdover from the past and to attribute the traditional accounts of possession by evil spirits as primitive ways of describing mental illness, there are professional caregivers and clerics who maintain that these evil creatures are as much a part of the twenty-first-century world as they were in the Middle Ages. And the results of a Gallup poll released in June 2001 reveal that 41 percent of adult Americans believe that people can be possessed by the Devil or his demons.

Professor Morton Kelsey, an Episcopal priest, a noted Notre Dame professor of theology, and the author of *Discernment—The Study of Ecstasy and Evil* (1978), states that demons are real and can invade the minds of humans. "Most people in the modern world consider themselves too sophisticated and too intelligent to be concerned with demons," he commented. "They totally ignore the evidence around them.

But in thirty years of study, I have seen the effects of angels and demons on humans."

Kelsey insists that a demon is not a figment of the imagination. "It is a negative, destructive spiritual force. It seeks to destroy the person and everyone with whom that person comes into contact. The essential mark of the demon—and those possessed by demons—is total self-interest to the exclusion of everyone and everything else."

Agreeing with many other contemporary religious scholars, Kelsey expressed his concern that most people in today's world offer little challenge for demons. "They find it easy to enter and operate in the unconscious parts of the mind, taking control of the person and his character," he said. In offering advice for those who may fear themselves to be under demonic attack, Kelsey said that they should not despair. They must focus their thoughts on God, and "try to reach out to Him and find His light."

There are numerous admonitions in the New Testament to be cautious of any manifesting entity and to test it to determine its true motives. "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1).

While such a passage is easily quoted, its admonition is much more difficult to put into practice when warned in 2 Corinthians 11:14, "Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

Dr. Wilson Van Dusen is a university professor who has served as chief psychologist at Mendocino State Hospital in California. Based upon his decades of research, Van Dusen has stated that many patients in mental hospitals may be possessed by demons and that people who hallucinate may often be under the control of demonic entities. Van Dusen also affirms that he has been able to speak directly to demons that have possessed his patients. He has heard their own guttural, otherworld voices, and he has even been able to administer psychological tests to these tormenting entities.

An accomplished psychologist, Van Dusen has lectured at the University of California, Davis; served as professor of psychology at John F. Kennedy University; and published more than 150 scientific papers and written several books on his research, such as *The Presence of Other Worlds: The Psychological/Spiritual Findings of Emanuel Swedenborg* (1974) and *The Natural Depth in Man* (1974).

In a landmark research paper, the clinical psychologist noted the "striking similarities" between the hierarchy of the unseen world described by the Swedish inventor-mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) and the alleged hallucinations of his patients in a state mental hospital. Van Dusen began to seek out those from among the hundreds of chronic schizophrenics, alcoholics, and brain-damaged persons who could distinguish between their own thoughts and the products of their hallucinations. He would question these other supposed entities directly and instruct the patient to give a word-for-word account of what the voices answered or what was seen. In this manner, he could hold long dialogues with a patient's hallucinations and record both his questions and the entity's answers.

On numerous occasions the psychologist found that he was engaged in dialogues with hallucinations that were above the patient's comprehension. He found this to be especially true when he contacted the higher order of hallucinations, which he discovered to be "symbolically rich beyond the patient's own understanding." The lower order, Van Dusen noted, was composed of entities that were consistently antireligious, and some actively obstructed the patient's religious practices. Occasionally they would even refer to themselves as demons from hell, suggest lewd acts, then scold the patient for considering them. They would find a weak point of conscience and work on it interminably. They would invade "every nook and cranny of privacy, work on every weakness and credibility, claim awesome powers, lie, make promises, and then undermine the patient's will."

Van Dusen also found that the "hallucinations" could take over a patient's eyes, ears, and voice, just as in traditional accounts of demon possession. The entities had totally different personalities from his patients' normal dispositions, which indicated to him that they

were not simply products of his patients' minds. Some of the beings had **ESP** and could predict the future. Often they would threaten a patient and then cause actual physical pain. The demons were described in a variety of shapes and sizes, but generally appeared in human form, ranging from an old man to alleged space aliens, but any of them could change form in an instant. Some were so solid to the victims that they could not see through them. At times the patients would become so angry at the apparitions that they would strike at them—only to hurt their hands on the wall.

Van Dusen made detailed studies of 15 cases of demonic possession, but he dealt with several thousand patients during his 20 years as a clinical psychologist. In his opinion, the entities were present "in every single one of the thousands of patients." He even admitted that some of the entities knew far more than he did, even though he tried to test them by looking up obscure academic references.

One of Van Dusen's conclusions was that the entities took over the minds of people who were emotionally or physically at a low ebb. The beings seemed to be able to "leech on those people because they had been weakened by strains and stresses with which they could not cope."

Considering once again some of the implications of Swedenborg's thoughts and works, Van Dusen commented that it was curious to reflect that, as Swedenborg has suggested, human lives may be "the little free space at the confluence of giant higher and lower spiritual hierarchies." The psychologist finds a lesson in such a consideration: "Man freely poised between good and evil, is under the influence of cosmic forces he usually doesn't know exist. Man, thinking he chooses, may be the resultant of other forces."

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Devil's Mark

During the time of the **Inquisition** of the Middle Ages, it was believed that the Devil placed upon his human brides, the witches, a special mark that was insensitive to pain. Because it was supposed that such a mark might be well hidden somewhere on the witch's body, one of the first of the many degrading and painful ordeals of the Inquisition began when the accused woman was turned over to the torturers to have her body shaved in search of the "Devil's Mark."

Once the alleged spot—which could well have been a mole or a birthmark—was found, the torturers would insert long, sharp pins into the victim's flesh or sear the mark with red-hot branding irons in order to test its resistance to pain. The fact that the suspected area gave no indication of being immune to pain did nothing to absolve the woman accused of witchcraft from later being burned at the stake.

In 1486, Malleus Maleficarum ("A Hammer for Witches") became the handbook of the professional witch hunters.

In 1486, two devout priests, Jakob Sprenger and Heinrich Kramer, published *Malleus Maleficarum* (A Hammer for Witches), the book that became the handbook of the professional witch hunters. Charles Williams, writing in his *Witchcraft*, believes that Sprenger and Kramer proceeded with great care to examine the nature of witchcraft and to ana-

The Spanish Inquisition was ordered to rid Europe of heretics. By 1257, the Church officially sanctioned torture as a means of forcing witches, sorcerers, and shapeshifters to confess their alliance with Satan. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

lyze the best methods of operating against its menace. They perceived the witches as making use of their unholy alliance with Satan to corrupt the generative powers of humankind. In addition, they believed that witches sought to depopulate Christendom by demanding the sacrifice of children and babies.

The tribunal judges of the Inquisition examined, tried, and tortured female witches over male witches at a ratio of (depending upon the authority) 10 to 1, 100 to 1, or 10,000 to 1. And beginning with the brutal search for the Devil's Mark, the inquisitors directed their tortures toward the private parts of the body.

Once a woman accused of witchcraft found herself in prison through the testimonies of witnesses who had seen her alleged evil powers at work (these could be a neighbor woman jealous of her beauty, a suitor disappointed at her rejection of his love, a relative who sought her share of an inheritance), she was often as good as condemned. At the height of the witch hunt mania, an accusation was the equivalent of guilt in the eyes of judges. And few lawyers would dare defend an accused witch for fear that he would himself be accused of witchcraft or heresy if he pled her case too well.

The common justice of the Inquisition demanded that a witch should not be condemned to death unless she convict herself by her own confession. Therefore, the judges had no choice other than to order her to be examined for the Devil's Mark and to turn her over to the torturers to extract a confession from her. In a bizarre rationalization and paradox of justice, the law insisted that the tribunal could not use torture to wring a confession from an accused witch, so they turned her over to black-hooded torturers to burn, stretch, starve, and beat her until she confessed. Once this confession had been accomplished, the accused was made to stand once again before the judges (usually standing of one's own volition was impossible at this stage, so the woman was supported by priests) and confess of her "own free will without torture." Once the confession was properly recorded, the victim of the Inquisition would be led directly from the courtroom to be burned at the stake.

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ECSTASY

"All that the soul knows when it is left to itself is nothing in comparison with the knowledge that is given it during ecstasy. When the soul is raised aloft, illumined by the presence of God, when God and it are lost in each other, it apprehends and possesses with joy good things which it cannot describe. The soul swims in joy and knowledge." (Angela da Foligno, mystic, quoted by Father A. Poulain in *The Graces of Interior Prayer* [1910])

Many students of spirituality describe the ecstatic experience as the mystic state *par*

Jerusalem Fever

The city of Jerusalem contains some of the most venerated sites in the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religions. To name only a few, the Muslims built the Dome of the Rock over the place from which Muhammad ascended to heaven; the Jews revere the Wailing Wall, all that remains of the great Temple of Solomon destroyed by the Romans; and the Christians flock to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built around the tomb from which Jesus rose from the dead. Because of the extreme emotionality and religious fervor which exists around such sacred sites, a bizarre psychological condition known as "Jerusalem Fever" plagues certain visitors to the city, causing them to believe that they are on a mission from God and that they must carry out His will.

Thousands of pilgrims come each year from all over the world to experience the sacred sites of Old Jerusalem. The visitors are able to walk the streets where many of their biblical heroes and heroines trod. In Jersusalem, citizens of our modern, fast-paced technological society can meditate under the shade of olive trees and reflect upon the divine inspiration that guided the ancient prophets, teachers, and kings to write the psalms, sermons, and scriptures. The pilgrims can leave the city and travel through the same landscapes where the great figures of the bible and the Qu'ran sought God and heard His messages.

Such a total immersion in the places and events recounted in scripture overpowers some visitors with a desire to bring about a oneness of all religions and all people on Earth. They develop a deep sense of sadness for all the religious wars and crusades that have been waged over earthly possession of the Holy City; they want to do whatever they can to bring together all believers. At the other end of the spectrum, other pilgrims are struck with a paranoia that makes them think the End-Times are near and that they must prepare at once for Armageddon—the last great conflict between good and evil and the precursor to Christ's Second Coming and the Final Judgment.

Both psychological conditions are clinically identified as "Jerusalem Fever." While these peculiar psychological symptoms are usually fleeting, they can occasionally be severe enough to result in bizarre behavior and acts of violence against others.

Sources:

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excellence. Mystics from all traditions agree in regarding ecstasy as a wonderful state—the one in which the human spirit is swept up and into an immediate union with the divine. As Evelyn Underhill points out in her *Mysticism* (1961), the word has become synonymous with joyous exaltation: "The induced ecstasies of the Dionysian mysteries, the metaphysical raptures of the Neoplatonists, the voluntary or involuntary trance of Indian mystics and Christian saints—all these, however widely they may differ in transcendental value, agree in claiming such value, in declaring that this change of consciousness brought with it a valid and ineffable apprehension of the Real."

Ecstasy differs from meditation—one of the stages that may precede it—both in character and development. In all the lengthy preliminary training of the mystical consciousness, a constant exertion of the will is required. But when at last the new and long-desired experiences come to the mystic "like a flash" into the psyche, he or she knows that there is nothing more to do than to accept that which has been given.

In a state of ecstacy, the human spirit is swept up and into an immediate union with the divine.

Fredric W. H. Myers (1843–1901) observed that the evidence for ecstasy is stronger than the evidence for any other religious belief. "Of all the subjective experiences of religion, ecstasy is that which has been most urgently, perhaps to the psychologist most convincingly asserted; and it is not confined to any one religion," Myers said. "From the medicine man…up to St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul, with Buddha and Mahomet on the way, we find records which, though morally and intellectually much differing, are in psychological essence the same."

Evelyn Underhill states that ecstasy "represents the greatest possible extension of the spiritual consciousness in the direction of Pure Being: the blind intent stretching here receives its reward in a profound experience of Eternal Life. In this experience, the consciousness of 'I-hood,' of space and time…all that beings to the World of Becoming and our own place therein…are suspended. The vitality which we are accustomed to split amongst these various things, is gathered up to form a state of pure apprehension…a vivid intuition of the Transcendent."

Underhill goes on to explain that in the perfect unity of consciousness that comes in a state of ecstasy, the mystic is so concentrated on the Absolute that his or her faculties are suspended and he or she ceases to think of himself or herself as separate from the "All That Is." The mystic becomes so immersed in the Absolute that "as the bird cannot see the air which supports it, nor the fish the ocean in which it swims, [the mystic] knows all, but think naught, perceives all, but conceives naught."

In addition to the passive nature of the ecstasy, another characteristic of its content is its relative unity and the narrowness of its conscious field. To a large extent, the outside world is shut out, and the five senses are completely closed to external stimuli. Every other thought, feeling, or emotion is pushed out of the mind but the idea of God and the emotions of joy and love. These fill the mind to the exclusion of nearly everything else, and are themselves blended into a single whole. The mystic does not *believe* God to be present; he or she *feels* God united with his or her soul, so that this intense awareness and its strong emotional accompaniment leave no room in his or her consciousness for anything else.

A story is told that St. Ignatius (1491–1556) was seated at the side of a road, looking at the stream that crossed it, absorbed in contemplation, when the eyes of his soul were opened and inundated with light. He was able to distinguish nothing with his five senses, but he comprehended marvelously a great number of truths pertaining to the faith or to the human sciences. The new concepts and ideas were so numerous and the light so bright that St. Ignatius seemed to enter into a new world. The amount of this new knowledge was so great that, according to Ignatius, all that he had learned in his life up to his 62nd year, whether supernatural or through laborious

study, could not be compared to what he had learned at this one ecstatic experience.

The knowledge that one receives while in a state of ecstasy is immediate and leaves the percipient with a complete sense of the noetic, an inner knowing and awareness that what was shown to him or her in the ecstatic vision is the way things truly are. The knowledge received in such a state often has very little to do with conceptual or representative knowledge about things. To the mystic, true reality does not lie in such knowledge. Only in an immediate experience, a visionary ecstatic experience, which stands for itself alone, can one find true reality—and most certainly of all, there alone can one find the ultimate reality with God.

St. Teresa of Avila (1515–1582), the esteemed Spanish Carmelite nun, mystic, and writer, referred in her last great work, the *Interior Castle* (1577), to four degrees of the mystic union with God:

1. the incomplete mystic union that comes with a quieting of the mind;
2. the semi-ecstatic union;
3. the ecstatic union;
4. the transforming union of complete oneness with God.

Perhaps the most dramatic characteristic of the ecstatic experience is the occasional phenomenon of visions, often of Christ, Mary, various saints, or angels. Since so many of these visionary encounters are compatible with the ecstatic's religious beliefs, certain researchers maintain that the visions of the mystics are determined in content by their spiritual orientation and are set in motion by the imagination working in dreamlike fashion upon the mass of theological material which fills the mind. Some researchers also find it likely that the vision, much like a normal dream, originates from some sensational stimulus which the imagination proceeds to interpret and elaborate.

Mystic ecstasy, to the percipient of the experience, reveals a genuine truth. He or she is brought face-to-face with ultimate reality that is experienced with emotions and intuition. A transcendence of the self is achieved. The mystic returns from the experience with the certainty of having been somewhere else where a revelation of some remarkable truth was given, a truth such as reality is unitary and divine; even ordinary human experiences are phenomenal; the soul, which is the key to reality, may rise to oneness with God; that God's presence may be found everywhere hidden in the midst of daily life.

In her *Ecstasy: A Study of Some Secular and Religious Experiences* (1961), Marghanita Laski lists five principal manifestations of the ecstatic mystical experience:

1. The feelings of loss: i.e., loss of time, of place, of worldliness, of self, of sin, and so on.
2. The feelings of gain: i.e., gain of a new life, of joy, of salvation, of glory, of new knowledge, and so on.
3. Ineffability: experiences which the person finds impossible to put into words at all.
4. Quasi-physical feelings: i.e., reference to sensations suggesting physical feelings, which may accompany ecstatic experiences, such as floating sensations, a feeling of swelling up, an impression of a shining light, and so on.
5. Feelings of intensity or withdrawal: i.e., a feeling of a 'winding up,' an accumulation of force to the point at which it is let go, whereas withdrawal is the opposite—an ecstatic condition reached 'not by accumulation but by subtraction,' a feeling of withdrawal of force and energy.

Laski states that ecstatic experiences can never be satisfactorily explained if it is suggested that ecstasies are "...only this or only that—only a phenomenon of repressed sexuality or only a concomitant of some or other morbid condition." In her examination of the recipients' convictions of the value of the ecstatic experience, she came to believe that such manifestations must be "treated as important outside religious contexts, as having important effects on people's mental and physical well-being, on their aesthetic preferences, their creativity, their beliefs and philosophies, and on their conduct...." To ignore or to deny the importance of ecstatic experiences, Laski contends, is "to leave to

the irrational the interpretation of what many people believe to be of supreme value."

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EXORCISM

On September 11, 2000, newspapers around the world carried the story about how Satan had invaded the Vatican in Rome and screamed insults at Pope John Paul II (1920–) through the agency of a teenage girl, reported to have been a "splendid girl in terms of purity and goodness" before being possessed by the devil at the age of 12. The 19-year-old began shouting in a "cavernous voice" during a general papal audience in St. Peter's Square. Despite the efforts of the pope to quiet the attack, the Prince of Darkness laughed at the Holy Father's efforts to drive him away. When Vatican guards attempted to constrain the girl, she violently pushed them back in a display of superhuman strength.

THE *practice of performing an exorcism on candidates for baptism was first recorded by the church father Hippolytus (c. 170–c. 235) in third-century Rome.*

Vatican exorcist Father Gabriele Amorth said that he and another exorcist, Father Giancarlo Gramolazzo, had previously worked with the girl and that the pope had spent half an hour with her the day before the incident and had also exorcised the teenager. However, it soon became apparent when the girl began insulting the pope and speaking in unknown tongues during the papal audience that neither of the exorcisms had managed to banish Satan. Vatican sources were quick to remind the media of Pope John Paul II's successful exorcism of an Italian woman named Francesca Fabrizzi in 1982.

Later in September 2000, Reverend James Le Bar, an exorcist for the Archdiocese of New York, commented that there had been a "large explosion" of exorcisms in recent years. In New York alone, he said, the number had accelerated from none in 1990 to a total of 300 in the last 10 years. Reverend Le Bar said that as men and women have diminished self-respect for themselves and decreased reverence for spirituality, for other human beings, and for life in general, one of Satan's **demons** can move in and "attack them by possessing them and rendering them helpless."

On November 26, 2000, an Associated Press story datelined Mexico City, Mexico, stated that a steady procession of men and women believing themselves to be possessed pass through the doors of the city's Roman Catholic parishes seeking exorcism from the eight priests appointed by the archbishop to battle Satan and his demons. Reverend Alberto Juarez told of seeing a young woman who began to speak in a man's voice and then growl like a dog. Father Enrique Maldonado spoke of houses where he witnessed locked doors open and objects move about the rooms. Reverend Daniel Gagnon stated that he had once considered himself scientific, pragmatic, but he had changed his mind. "Psychology is where you begin, but there is an area that science cannot explain," he said.

The casting out of demons and the healing of the sick and the lame were two of the great facets of the apostolic commission that Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) gave to his followers, but the practice of performing an exorcism on candidates for baptism was first recorded by the church father Hippolytus (c. 170–c. 235) in third-century Rome. The priest or layman instructing those who would join the church was instructed to lay his hands upon the heads

Mother Teresa's Exorcism

Mother Teresa (1910–1997), winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, had led such an exemplary life as a nun devoted to healing the poor of India that, shortly after her death on September 5, 1997, Pope John Paul II (1920–) waived the customary five-year-waiting period and began the process to consider her for possible sainthood. On September 5, 2001, on the fourth anniversary of her death, the Archbishop of Calcutta, Henry D'Souza, revealed that Mother Teresa had an exorcism performed on her while she was hospitalized in 1997. Because the Roman Catholic Church performs exorcisms only when someone is believed to be possessed by the devil, the world was shocked by such a disclosure.

According to D'Souza, shortly before her death at the age of 87, Mother Teresa was admitted to a hospital because of heart trouble. D'Souza happened to be a patient in the same hospital during her stay, and he learned that the nun was having difficulty sleeping. When it was determined that there was no medical reason to account for such problems, it occurred to him that some evil spirit might be trying to disturb her during the night.

With the nun's consent, D'Souza arranged for a priest to perform an exorcism as a precautionary measure. Mother Theresa participated with the priest in a prayer for protection and slept peacefully after the ritual had been completed. Not wishing to tarnish Mother Teresa's sanctity, immediately after he had made the disclosure of her exorcism, D'Souza insisted that she had not been satanically possessed, and he was firm in his assertion that the exorcism should in no way affect her candidacy for sainthood.

Sources:

"Archbishop: Mother Theresa underwent Exorcism."
http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/asiapcf/south/09/04/mother.theresa.exorcism/. 7 September 2001.

of the catechumens and pray. It was then supposed that it would be impossible for a demonic entity to remain quiet and unnoticed at this time, thereby betraying its presence and presenting the unfortunate human host for the process of exorcism.

According to the September 1, 2000, issue of the *National Catholic Reporter*, the first mention of "exorcist" as an office in the Roman Catholic Church exists in a letter of Pope Cornelius in 253. Historian Jeffrey Burton Russell states that in the early medieval liturgies, there were three kinds of common exorcisms—the exorcism or blessing of houses or objects, of those about to receive baptism, and of people believed to be possessed by demons. In various parts of Europe, the priest conducting the exorcism might also use the rites to banish such pre-Christian deities as Thor and Odin.

Accounts of demonic possession were commonplace in ancient Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia from the earliest times. Although there are no accounts of demonic possession or of exorcism in the Old Testament, the casting out of demons is an integral part of Jesus' ministry and it is an important aspect of the earthly assignments that he gives to his followers. ("Then he called together his twelve apostles and sent them out two by two with power over evil spirits" [Mark 6:7]. "Finally, Paul…turned and said to the spirit, 'In the name of Jesus Christ, I order you to leave this girl alone!'" [Acts 16:18]. The New Testament also refers to Jewish exorcists who begin to cast out demons in Jesus' name (Mark 9:38–40): "'Teacher, we saw a man using your name to force demons out of people. But he wasn't one of us, and we told him to stop.' Jesus said to his disciples: 'Don't stop him! No

Perry King in the 1972 movie *The Possession of Joel Delaney.* (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

one who works miracles in my name will soon turn and say something bad about me. Anyone who isn't against us is for us.'"

Neither Jesus nor those who cast out demons in his name is called an "exorcist" in the New Testament, and the word "exorcise" is never used anywhere in the Bible in the context of banishing demons. By contrast to shamanic exorcisms of evil spirits in tribal cultures, which can last for hours or days; the rituals of demonic banishment in ancient Egypt or pagan Europe, which were dramatic ordeals of lengthy duration; or the rites of exorcism of the Roman Catholic Church, which can go on for many days, months, even years, Jesus' exorcisms consisted of his/her simple and direct command to the demon to leave its unwilling host body.

IN the Kabbalist tradition, the exorcist demands to know the nature of the sin that led the demon to attach itself to a human body so that after expulsion the soul can be rectified and placed at rest.

When Jesus triumphs easily and immediately over the evil beings that have infested a human body and soul in the many encounters described in the gospels, the possessing entities are always demons, never Satan himself. Although these are victories that diminish Satan's earthly powers, it may be that the great showdown between Jesus, the Son of God, and Satan, the Lord of the Earth, is building for the great final battle between good and evil at **Armageddon** at the time of the **Apocalypse.**

Although accounts of exorcism are not to be found in the Old Testament, later Jewish tradition employs a ritual that involves the sounding of the shofar, the reciting of prayers, and the anointing of the afflicted person with oil and water over which passages from Psalms have been read. As in Christian exorcism, it is important that the true identity of the demon be learned so that it can be addressed by name and ordered out of the body of its victim. In the Kabbalist tradition, the exorcist also demands to know the nature of the sin that led the demon to attach itself to a human body so that after expulsion the soul can be rectified and placed at rest.

John L. Allen, Jr., a staff writer for the *National Catholic Reporter,* acknowledged (September 1, 2000) that in a few well-publicized cases "failure to make a careful assessment of possible brain dysfunction before performing exorcism has resulted in disaster." Allen then mentions a 1976 case in which two Bavarian priests were convicted of negligent homicide when medical treatment for a 23-year-old epileptic was discontinued in favor of exorcism and the young woman died. He also refers to a 1996 case in which a Korean Protestant exorcist in California was convicted of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to four years in prison for inadvertently trampling a woman to death during a four-hour exorcism.

Vatican exorcist Gabriele Amorth said that he always asks for a person's medical history and consults a psychiatrist if he feels such information will be useful before beginning an exorcism. He argues, however, that only performing an exorcism can provide certainty, because it is in the response to the rites that one can detect the presence of a demon.

While many priests appear to have the attitude that a little exorcism could never hurt

anyone, Father Joseph Mahoney, a Catholic chaplain in Detroit who works with individuals suffering from multiple personality disorder, sees it quite differently. He believes that an exorcism can be "extremely destructive" when applied to patients with undiagnosed multiple personality disorders, and he refers to research carried out by the Royal Ottawa Hospital in Canada, which concluded that the process of exorcism could create new personalities in such subjects.

In January 1999, the Vatican issued a revised Catholic rite of exorcism for the first time since 1614, reaffirming the existence of Satan and revamping his image for the millennium. Officials stressed that the church was not revising scriptural references to the Devil or suggesting that people should cease believing in the Evil One. But priests who conduct exorcisms should now deal with evil as a force lurking within all individuals, rather than one that threatens people from without.

Father Malachi Martin, a Jesuit who served as an advisor to three popes, has authored a number of books dealing with demon possession and exorcism, including *Hostage to the Devil*. When he was asked why there has been such a spectacular rise in the number of people possessed by demons and in need of exorcism, he replied that it was as St. Paul (d. 62–68 C.E.) had declared: "There is a spiritual war on, a war with the spirits...a war with the invisible forces that want men's souls."

Describing the process of exorcism, Martin explained that an exorcism was a confrontation, not a mere exercise in prayer. The exorcist was at war with the demon. Once begun, the process must be finished. If the exorcist should stop the rites for any reason, the demon will pursue him.

The exorcism continues with a kind of conversation between the demon and the exorcist, who is attempting to learn as quickly as possible the demon's name. Often the entity's name is a reflection or a symbol of that demon's function, and it must be forced to admit it.

The demon systematically ridicules human love and faith and constantly probes the exorcist for any signs of weakness, any area of his past that might be open to reproach. Objects in the room may move, windows shatter, doors open and close. "At a certain moment," Martin told journalist Wen Smith, "everybody in the room knows there's *something* in the room that wants you dead. It's a horrible feeling knowing that unless something happens, you are going to die—now."

Linda Blair in the popular 1973 film *The Exorcist*.
(THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

Martin freely admitted that not all exorcisms end in triumph for the exorcist. Sometimes the demon remains in control and the victim remains possessed. Even when the demon is expelled from its unwilling human host, it may still wander about seeking other vulnerable men and women to inhabit. And the exorcist himself may continue to pay a price for interfering in the demon's possession of its host body. Martin said that he had been flung out of bed, knocked off stools, and had his shoulder broken—reminders that the demon was still around and very angry with him.

Ellen Burstyn and Linda Blair in a scene from *The Exorcist*. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

On September 22, 2000, the 1973 horror film *The Exorcist* was rereleased with added footage that had been excised from the original, and priests across the nation braced themselves for a tidal wave of cases of alleged demonic possession. Arguably the most frightening movie ever made, the film was based on the best-selling novel by William Peter Blatty and was directed by William Friedkin. As many motion picture reviewers and commentators have discussed, the film presentation of demonic possession touched a kind of collective primal fear in its audiences that was made all the more horrible by the fact that the victim was a smiling, cherubic, innocent young girl. Demons became all the more real when people realized that possession could occur to their child, to their spouse, even to them. Father Merrin, the exorcist in the film, uses the actual Roman Ritual of exorcism that was created by the Roman Catholic Church in 1614, and the repetitious chanting of the actors performing the rites gave the presentation an added aura of reality and of participation in a supernatural event.

Reverend Bob Larson, an evangelical preacher and author who runs an exorcism ministry in Denver, told the *New York Times* (November 28, 2000) that he had 40 exorcism teams across the country and that his goal was that "no one should ever be more than a day's drive from a city where you can find an exorcist." Larson could not see why anyone would be "freaked out" over the idea of an exorcism: "It's in the Bible. Christ taught it."

Michael W. Cuneo, a Fordham University sociologist, has been studying the subject of exorcisms for many years. His research indicates that as recently as the 1960s, exorcism in the United States was nearly completely abandoned as a church rite. Then, in 1973,

the motion picture *The Exorcist* changed that. By the mid-1980s, there was a "proliferation of exorcisms being performed by evangelical Protestants." In the 1990s, Cuneo says that there is an "underground network" of exorcists numbering in the hundreds, and a "bewildering variety of exorcisms being performed."

Reverend Martin Marty, a Lutheran minister and an analyst of religious trends and customs in the United States, commented that exorcisms were "all over the place" and the driving out of evil spirits has a long and varied history. Marty noted that the godparents at the baptismal service in many Christian faiths are asked, on behalf of the child they sponsor, if they renounce the devil and all his works and ways. That, he explained, is a mild version of exorcism. And exorcism is a smaller part of modern Western religions than it was in ancient Babylon, Egypt, and Greece. There are witchdoctors in African societies who perform exorcisms, medicine people among Native American tribes who are exorcists, and shamans throughout Asia who banish evil spirits.

As long as there are human beings who believe in supernatural powers, there will be exorcists who will be summoned to rid the innocent of the demons who have possessed them. A survey of its readers conducted by *Self* magazine in 1997 revealed that 65 percent of those surveyed believed in the Devil; and the results of a Gallup poll released in June 2001 indicated that 41 percent of adult Americans believe that the Devil or his demons can possess humans.

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FAITH HEALING

Faith healing refers to the termination of an illness or a debilitating physical condition through supernatural means, such as the **power of prayer** or an intervention of God through a **miracle.** In the New Testament, one of the principal facets of Jesus' (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) earthly ministry was the healing of those who sought surcease of pain and suffering. Throughout the gospels, Jesus heals the lame, the blind, the diseased, and those **possessed** by **demons,** and he charges his apostles to go out into the world to do as he has done in their presence.

The early churches included a time for the healing of its members within the formal service, a practice which many contemporary Christian congregations still maintain, as a prayer for the sick if not as an actual time for the laying on of hands. The pattern for such a procedure within the church service was set forth in the epistle of James (5:14–16): "Is any one of you sick? He should call upon the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

The May 1, 2000, issue of *Newsweek* magazine released the results of a survey that its staff had conducted regarding such miracles as faith healing. According to its statistics, 71 percent of all Christians said that they had prayed for miracles regarding the healing of the terminally ill. A national Gallup poll released in June 2001 revealed that 54 percent of adult Americans of all faiths believed in spiritual healing and the power of the mind through prayer to heal the body.

Many people of faith find that a pilgrimage to a holy shrine or icon can accomplish miracles of healing. Among the most famous in the world is the healing Grotto of Bernadette at Lourdes, France, which was constructed on the spot where Bernadette

According to the Gallup Poll, belief in God has always been very high in the United States, ranking in the mid-90 percent range over the last sixty years. Interestingly, while 95 percent of Americans believe in God, only eight in ten envision that the Supreme Being is one who watches over them and answers their prayers. And even fewer, six in ten, recently declare their complete trust in God.

When the Gallup Poll asked Americans how important religion was in their lives, six in ten (about 58.7 percent) say it is very important. In fifty years of measurement, the highest percentage regarding the importance of religion (75 percent) was registered in 1952; the lowest (52 percent) in 1978.

According to a 2000 Gallup poll, 64.9 percent of respondents believed that religion has the ability to answer today's problems. This particular statistic has ranged from a high of 81 percent in 1957 to a low of 53 percent in 1993.

Church membership reached a high of 76 percent in both 1943 and 1947 and dropped to a low of 65 percent in 1988 and 1990. In 1939, when Gallup first began measuring church attendance, 41 percent of Americans claimed to attend weekly worship services. The high point for weekly observance of religious faith was reached in the mid- and late 1950s, when 49 percent of the adult population said that they attended church or synagogue once a week.

Ninety-Five Percent of Americans Believe in God

SOURCES:

Gallup, George Jr. "Americans More Religious Now Than Ten Years Ago, but Less So Than in 1950s and 1960s." Gallup News Service, 29 March, 2001. http://www.gallup.com/poll/releases/pr010329.asp. 17 October 2001.

Soubrious (1844–1879) had the vision of Mother Mary in 1858. Since the time the miracle occurred to the young miller's daughter, pilgrims have journeyed to Lourdes to seek healing and salvation from the waters of the natural spring that appeared in the hillside after the apparition of the Holy Mother appeared to Bernadette. Consistently, for decades, an average of 200,000 people visited the shrine every year. During the centennial celebration of Lourdes in 1958, more than two million people came to the tiny community in southern France seeking a healing. In recent years, annual attendance has risen to over five million.

Thousands of pilgrims have left their crutches and canes at the shrine. Thousands more have been cured of such fatal diseases as advanced stages of cancer. Hundreds of thousands of cures have been claimed by men and women who immersed themselves in the cold spring waters of the shrine, but the Lourdes Medical Bureau has established certain criteria that must be met before it will certify a cure as an example of miraculous faith healing:

1. The affliction must be a serious disease. If it is not classified as incurable, it must be diagnosed as extremely difficult to cure.
2. There must be no improvement in the patient's condition prior to the visit to the Lourdes shrine.
3. Medication that may have been used must have been judged ineffective.
4. The cure must be totally complete.
5. The cure must be unquestionably definitive and free of all doubt.

The results of a *Time*/CNN poll (*Time*, June 24, 1996) stated that 82 percent of those surveyed believed in the personal power of prayer to heal; 73 percent believed that their prayers could heal others of their illness; 77 percent expressed their faith that God could sometimes intervene to heal people with a serious illness; and 65 percent indicated that a doctor should join their patients in prayer if so asked. Interestingly, with all these high percentages indicating a belief in faith healing, only 28 percent of those polled believed in the ability of faith healers to make people well through their personal touch. It would seem that in matters of faith healing, the great majority of individuals prefer a cooperative union between themselves and God.

Since Dr. Herbert Bensen's seminal research at Harvard in 1972 demonstrating the influence that the mind can have over the body, 92 of 125 medical schools offer courses in nontraditional healing methods. In his *The Relaxation Response* (1975), Bensen showed how patients could successfully battle a number of stress-related illnesses by practicing a simple form of meditation. Bensen, president of the Mind/Body Medical Institute of Boston's Deaconess Hospital and Harvard Medical School, has suggested that 60 percent to 90 percent of all visits to doctors are in the mind-body, stress-related area and that the traditional medical ways of treating such patients through prescription medicines or surgeries are not effective in such chronic cases. Perhaps, more and more researchers are discovering, faith can make a sick person well.

Dr. Jeffrey Levin, of Eastern Virginia, and Dr. David Larson, a research psychiatrist with the National Institute for Healthcare Research, have located more than 200 studies that touch directly on the role that faith and religion may have in the healing process. Among such research studies were a 1995 study at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center which found that heart-surgery patients who drew comfort and strength from religious faith were more than three times more likely to survive; a 30-year study on blood pressure that showed that churchgoers have lower blood pressure than non-churchgoers, even when adjusted for smoking and other risk factors; a 1996 National Institute on Aging study of 4,000 elderly which found that those who attend religious services are less depressed and physically healthier than those who don't attend or who worship at home; and numerous studies in which non-churchgoers have been found to have a suicide rate four times higher than regular churchgoers and much higher rates of depression and anxiety-related illnesses.

NATIONAL Institute on Aging study found that those who attend religious services are less depressed and physically healthier than those who don't attend or who worship at home.

In *Timeless Healing* (1996), Herbert Benson states that those patients who claim to feel the intimate presence of a higher power have generally better health and chances for much more rapid recoveries. He writes that the human genetic blueprint has made a belief in an Infinite Absolute a part of human nature in order to offset the uniquely human tendency to ponder one's own death: "To counter this fundamental angst, humans are also wired for God."

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GUARDIAN ANGELS

An old tradition says that guardian angels are appointed to children at the time of their birth. The seventeenth-

century mystic Amos Komensky (1592–1670) declared that each child has an angel "given to him by God and ordained to be his guardian, that [the angel] might guard him, preserve him, and protect him against all dangers and snares, pits, ambushes, traps, and temptations."

Those men and women who claim to have seen their guardian angels generally describe them as appearing youthful, commanding, beautiful of countenance, and often majestic and awesome. Manifestations of light often accompany them, which lend to the grandeur of their appearance and the feelings of profound reverence that suffuse those who encounter angelic beings.

Not all angels appear as blond, blue-eyed entities in flowing white robes. Angels are thought to have the ability to appear in a variety of forms and with a wide range of physical characteristics. They seem completely capable of shaping reality in the three-dimensional world to suit their heavenly purposes. In certain cases, they may even reveal themselves as beings of pure light.

According to a poll conducted by *Time* magazine and published in the December 27, 1993, issue, 69 percent of Americans believed in the existence of angels, and 46 percent were certain that they had their own guardian angels to watch over them and to guide them. Of those men and women polled by the news magazine, 32 percent claimed that they had personally felt the presence and/or guidance of ethereal entities in their lives; and 15 percent believed that the heavenly helpers who ministered to them were the benevolent spirits of humans who had died, rather than higher spiritual beings with special powers. A similar poll conducted by *Self* magazine for its December 1997 issue found that 87 percent of readers believed in angels.

All religions have some tradition of a guardian angel or type of **spirit guide** assigned to each individual human soul. In the ancient Sanskrit texts of the Vedas, the word for angel is *angira;* in Hebrew, *malakh*, meaning "messenger," or *bene elohim*, for God's children; in Arabic, *malakah;* and in India, multiwinged angels or beings are called *garudas*. As early as the third millennium B.C.E., the written records of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia recognized a hierarchy of supernatural beings that ruled over various parts of the Earth, the universe, and the lives of human beings. They also believed in lower levels of entities that might be either hostile or benign in their actions toward humans. The Mesopotamians wanted to be certain that they were well protected by their spiritual guardians, the *shedu* and the *lamassu*. The *lamassus* were portrayed in art as grotesque creatures that looked like lions or bulls with human heads and large wings, and they were often represented by statues at the entrances of temples to ward off evil. The people of Mesopotamia considered them to be guardian spirits. An ancient magical text of the Mesopotamians invokes the good *shedu* to walk on one's right hand and the good *lamassu* to walk on the left.

In nearly all stories of angels, the beings appear to be paraphysical—that is, they are both material and nonmaterial entities. Although they originate in some invisible and nonphysical dimension, they are often seen to manifest as solidly in human reality as those humans whose lives they affect. There is no question that in both the Old and New Testaments angels are considered fully capable of becoming quite physical and material—at least long enough to accomplish their appointed mission of rescue, healing, or guidance. Throughout the Bible there are accounts of angels who wrestle with stubborn shepherds, guide people lost in the wilderness, and free persecuted prophets from fiery furnaces and dank prisons. Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) himself was fed by angels, defended by angels, and strengthened by angels.

Although popular culture has for centuries perpetuated the idea that humans become angels when they die, the holy books of the great world religions are in agreement that angels are an earlier and separate order of creation from human beings. According to these ancient teachings, humans were created a "little lower than the angels," and mortal men and women do not join their guardian spirits in the heavenly realm until after death—or, in

some traditions, until after the Final Judgment. But even though humans are "lower than the angels" and made of material, physical substance in comparison with their ethereal, heavenly spirits, the scriptures of various faiths state firmly that the angels are not omnipresent, omnipotent, or omniscient—and neither are they immune to falling into temptation or into error: "Even in his servants he puts no trust, and his angels he charges with error" (Job 4:18).

A number of religious traditions teach that each human individual has a good and a bad angel that remain with him or her throughout his or her entire earthly lifespan. Others maintain that there are two unseen angels that hover near each person, and it is the task of the one to record the good deeds; the other, the bad. The American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) gave expression to this concept in his poem "The Golden Legend" (1851):

> He who writes down the good ones,
> after each action closes his volume and
> ascends with it to God. The other
> keeps his dreadful day-book open until
> sunset, that we may repent.

The sacred writings of Islam also proclaim that every human is guarded by two angels—one taking the day watch, the other, night duty. As in Longfellow's poem, these two vigilant guardians record their human's good and bad deeds for Judgment Day.

In addition to their task as guardians, the benevolent unseen companions have as a considerable portion of their earthly mission, the task of guiding their humans toward spiritual awareness and leading their human wards to a clearer understanding of their true role in the cosmic scheme of things. Episcopal bishop Philip Brooks once observed that there is nothing clearer or more striking in the Bible than "the calm, familiar way with which from end to end it assumes the present existence of a world of spiritual beings always close to and acting on this world of flesh and blood.... From creation to judgment, the spiritual beings are forever present. They act as truly in the drama as the men and women who, with their unmistakable humanity, walk the sacred stage in successive scenes. There is nothing of hesitation about the Bible's treatment of the spiritual world. There is no reserve, no vagueness that would leave a chance for the whole system to be explained away in dreams and metaphors. The spiritual world, with all its multitudinous existence, is just as real as the crowded cities and the fragrant fields and the loud battlegrounds of the visible, palpable Judea, in which the writers of the sacred books were living."

The teachings of Islam state that there are three distinct species of intelligent beings in the universe: first, the angels, a high order of beings created of Light, the *malakh;* second, the *al-jinn*, ethereal, perhaps even multidimensional entities; and then human beings, fashioned out of the stuff of Earth and born into physical bodies. On occasion, the *al-jinn* can serve as helpful guides or guardians, but they can also be tricksters.

There are numerous admonitions in the New Testament to be cautious of any manifesting entity and to test it to determine its true motives. "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God." (1 John 4:1) While such a passage is easily quoted, its admonition is much more difficult to put into practice when people are warned in 2 Corinthians 11:14, "Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

A general admonition mentioned by several spiritual teachers is never to enter meditation or prayer with the sole thought of obtaining ego aggrandizement or material gain. Selfish motivation may risk one becoming easily affected by those spirit beings who rebelled against God and became ensnared in their own selfish lust for power.

On December 12, 2000, the *London Times* reported on the two-year study of the phenomenon of guardian angels that was conducted by Emma Heathcote, a Birmingham University researcher. Heathcote's study, the first academic research into the subject of angels, examined the stories of over 800 Britons who claimed encounters with heavenly beings. Almost a third of those who contacted the researcher reported seeing a traditional angel with white gown and wings.

Another 21 percent saw their guardian angel in human form. Others experienced the sensation of a force around them or being engulfed in light.

In one of the more dramatic accounts in Heathcote's research, an angel appeared during a baptism at a village church in Hertfordshire in front of 30 witnesses, including the rector, churchwarden, and organist. Confirming the story for journalist Carol Midgley, the rector said that he was baptizing a 22-year-old woman who was about to be married but had never been christened. Suddenly there appeared before the rector "a man, but he was totally different from the rest of us. He was wearing something long, like a robe, but it was so white it was almost transparent." The angelic figure didn't have wings, and he simply stood there silently, looking at those assembled for the baptismal service. Children came forward with their mouths open. People said later that they felt as if "warm oil" had been poured over them. Then, in a few seconds, the angel was gone. But, the rector stated, the appearance of the angel had changed the lives of everyone present that day.

Other witnesses of angelic activity told Heathcote stories of seeing guardian angels at hospital beds and deathbeds, ministering to the ill or manifesting to escort souls to heaven. A good number of accounts reported the appearance of majestic beings to allay people's fears, to let them know that they were not alone in dangerous or stressful situations.

Rather than external entities presenting themselves to provide assurance of a celestial helping hand, psychotherapist Dr. Susan Blackmore theorizes that angel sightings are merely apparitions created by the brain in times of crisis in order to provide comfort. Though she might agree with Blackmore that certain angel sightings might be "crisis apparitions," Heathcote returns to the baptism in the church in Hertfordshire as an incident to give the staunchest critic pause to wonder: "I interviewed a lot of people about that angel," she said, "and everybody told the same story. Their descriptions were totally consistent."

Emma Heathcote said that although humans have been preoccupied with angels for centuries, humankind may now be going through an increased period of interest in the heavenly beings because "people are feeling a spiritual shortage and angels fill the gap." In her opinion, men and women in contemporary times fashion their own faiths in what often seems like a "spiritual supermarket" of choices available to them. "They might take a bit of Christianity, a bit of Judaism and Buddhism, together with a belief in angels to create their own eclectic religion," she said.

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ILLUMINATION

The Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.) had spent one week in *samadhi*, a state of deep awareness when, on the morning of December 8, 528 B.C.E., he looked up at Venus, the morning star, beheld its brilliance, and exclaimed in a state of enlightenment, "That's it! That's me! That's me that's shining so brilliantly!"

Rinzai Zen master Shodo Harada Roshi (1940–) writes, in *Morning Dewdrops of the Mind: Teachings of a Contemporary Zen Master* (1993), that Buddha, in the rebirth of his consciousness, looked around and saw how wondrous it was that all beings were shining with the brilliance of the morning star. From such a deep illumination of the mind of Buddha, all of Buddha's wisdom was born and all of Zen was held within the deep impression of Buddha's mind at that moment. Therefore, each year as the eighth of December approaches, Zen monks anticipate the *rohatsu sesshin* (intensive meditation retreat) and vow to experience the brilliance of such a deep realization.

In *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1934), D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) describes satori, the state of illumination attained by reaching a higher level of consciousness, as the state that the masters of Zen call the mind of Buddha, the knowledge whereby humans experience enlightenment or Prajna, the highest wisdom. "It is the godly light, the inner heaven, the key of all the treasures of the mind, the focal point of thought and consciousness, the source of power and might, the seat of goodness, of justice, of sympathy, of the measure of all things," Suzuki states. "When this inmost knowledge is fully awakened, we are able to understand that each of us is identical in spirit, in being, and in nature with universal life."

The Hindu scripture Bhagavad Gita's instruction on how best to practice Yoga ends with the promise that "...when the mind of the Yogi is in harmony and finds rest in the Spirit within, all restless desires gone, then he is a Yukta, one in God. Then his soul is a lamp whose light is steady, for it burns in a shelter where no winds come."

In the chapter on "Basic Mystical Experience" in his *Watcher on the Hills* (1959), Dr. Raynor C. Johnson (1901–1987) places "the appearance of light" at the top of his list of illumination characteristics:

1. *The Appearance of light*. This observation is uniformly made, and may be regarded as a criterion of the contact of soul and Spirit.
2. *Ecstasy, love, bliss*. Directly or by implication, almost all the accounts [of mystical experience] refer to the supreme emotional tones of the experience.
3. *The Approach to one-ness*. In the union of soul with Spirit, the former acquires a sense of unity with all things.

Johnson lists other aspects of the illumination as profound insights given to the recipient of the experience; a positive effect on the person's health and vitality; a sense that time has been obscured or altered; and a positive effect on the individual's lifestyle. Johnson quotes a recipient of the illumination experience who said, "Its significance for me has been incalculable and has helped me through sorrows and stresses."

In her autobiographical work *Don't Fall Off the Mountain* (1970), actress/author Shirley MacLaine (1934–) tells of the night that she lay shivering in a Bhutanese hut in the Paro Valley of the Himalayas, wondering how she might overcome the terrible cold. Suddenly she remembered the words of a Yoga instructor in Calcutta who had told her that there was a center in her mind that was her nucleus, the center of her universe. Once she would find this nucleus, neither pain, fear, nor sorrow, could touch her. He had instructed her that it would look like a tiny sun. "The sun is the center of every solar system and the reason for all life on all planets in all universes," he had said. "So it is with yours."

With her teeth chattering, she closed her eyes and searched for the center of her mind. Then the cold room and the wind outside began to leave her conscious mind. Slowly in the center of her mind's eye a tiny, round, orange ball appeared. She stared and stared at it. Then she felt as though she had become the little orange ball. Heat began to spread down through her neck and arms and finally stopped in her stomach. She felt drops of perspiration on her midriff and forehead.

MacLaine writes that the light grew brighter and brighter until she finally sat up on her cot with a start and opened her eyes, fully expecting to find that someone had turned on a light. "I lay back," she said. "I felt as though I was glowing.... The instructor was right; hidden beneath the surface there was something greater than my outer self."

Parapsychologist Dr. W. G. Roll has commented that "It is true that this light phenomenon does occur. Some people believe it's a sort of quasi-physical light. When we get into these areas, it becomes difficult to distinguish between the physical and the spiritual worlds. What we call the spiritual, the physical, and the mental, are probably all the same thing."

Dr. Walter Houston Clark speaks of the phenomenon of the blinding light of illumination in connection with those who have undergone revelatory experiences as "...a kind of symbol of the new and freeing insight into the nature of the subject's existence. However, I am inclined to think that the profundity and

excitement of the experience causes some kind of nervous activity that produces the light. Of course, in some sense, this may have a cosmic origin."

Writing in *Psychiatry* (Vol. 29, 1966), Dr. Arthur J. Deikman refers to the mystical perceptions of encompassing light in terms of his hypothesis of a "sensory translation," which he defines as "the perception of psychic action (conflict, repression, problem solving, attentiveness, and so forth) via the relatively unstructured sensations of light, color, movement, force, sound, smell or taste.... 'Sensory translation' refers to the experience of nonverbal, simple, concrete perceptual equivalents of psychic action." In Deikman's theory, "light" may be more than a metaphor for mystical experience: "Illumination may be derived from an actual sensory experience occurring when, in the cognitive act of unification, a liberation of energy takes place, or when a resolution of unconscious conflict occurs, permitting the experience of 'peace,' 'presence,' and the like. Liberated energy experienced as light may be the core sensory experience of mysticism."

According to research conducted at the University of Wales, Christians, Jews, and Muslims have similar experiences in which they describe an intense light and a sense of encompassing love. The research-in-progress, funded by the Sir Alister Hardy Trust, has collected 6,000 accounts of religious experiences from people of all ages and backgrounds. About 1,000 of these describe a light which enters the room, and others tell of being enveloped or filled with light. Most people are alone when they have such an experience, but the researchers have collected accounts of a number of individuals witnessing the same light.

Sir Alister Hardy (1896–1985) formed the Religious Experience Research Unit, Manchester College, Oxford, in 1969 and began the program by studying a more general kind of spiritual awareness—the feeling of being in touch with some "transcendental power, whether called God or not, which leads to a better life." Although the researchers stressed their interest in collecting these kinds of reports, they immediately received an almost equal number "of the more ecstatic mystical type," which included experiences with the light phenomenon that accompanied illumination.

In his book *The Divine Flame* (1966) Hardy suggested that science should "entertain the possibility that the rapture of spiritual experience...may...be a part of natural history...and that perhaps it may have only developed as religion when man's speech enabled him to compare and discuss this strange feeling of what [Rudolf] Otto called the numinous...[and] what I am calling a divine flame as an integral part of the creative evolutionary process which man, with his greater perceptive faculties, is now becoming aware."

Hardy concedes that science can no more be concerned with the "inner essence" of religion than it can be with the nature of art or the poetry of human love. But he does maintain that "an organized scientific knowledge—indeed one closely related to psychology—dealing with the records of man's religious experience...need not destroy the elements of religion which are most precious to man—any more than our biological knowledge of sex need diminish the passion and beauty of human love."

With the advent of the twenty-first century, many scientists are involved in research projects dealing with religious, spiritual, and mystical experiences. *Varieties of Anomalous Experiences* (2000), edited by Etzel Cardena, of the University of Texas Pan American in Edinburg, Steven J. Lynn, of the State University of New York at Binghamton, and Stanley Krippner, of the Saybrook Graduate School in San Francisco, examines the scientific evidence for altered states of consciousness associated with mystical experiences and other so-called anomalous events. According to *Science News* (February 17, 2001), the three psychologists "see no reason to assume that supernatural worlds...exist outside of the minds of people who report them. Instead [they] want to launch a science to study the characteristics of human consciousness that make mystical experiences possible. Their focus on a spectrum of consciousness defies

the mainstream notion that there's a single type of awareness...."

David M. Wulff, a psychologist at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, has said that mystical experiences occur on a continuum: "Even if they are not religiously inspired, they can be striking, such as the transcendent feelings musicians sometimes get while they perform. I have colleagues who say they've had mystical experiences, although they have various ways to explain them."

Other scientists pursuing the study of mystical experiences suggest that the transcendent feelings noted by musicians, actors, and artists; the claims of two-thirds of American adults who claim to have been in touch with a force or spirit outside of themselves; and even the illumination of Buddha or the heavenly voices heard by Moses (14th–13th century B.C.E.), Muhammed (c. 570C.E.–632C.E.), and Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) were nothing more than the decreased activity of the brain's parietal lobe, which helps regulate the sense of self and physical orientation. And what of the feelings of unconditional love and overwhelming compassion for all living things that come over so many of those who claim illumination? These scientists argue that perhaps prayer, meditation, chanting, or some other religious or spiritual practice could have activated the temporal lobe, which imbues certain experiences with personal significance.

Other scientists testing the boundaries of the human psyche and the wonders of illumination are more open to the reality of the individual mystical experience. While researchers like Matthew Alper, author of *The "God" Part of the Brain* (1998), argue that human brains are hardwired for God and religious experiences, others, such as Daniel Batson, a University of Kansas psychologist, respond that the "brain is the hardware through which religion is experienced."

Duke psychiatrist Roy Mathew told the *Washington Post* (June 18, 2001) that too many of the contemporary neuroscientists and neurotheologians are "taking the viewpoints of the physicists of the last century that everything is matter. I am open to the possibility that there is more to this than what meets the eye. I don't believe in the omnipotence of science or that we have a foolproof explanation."

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INQUISITION

When Christianity became the state religion of Rome in the fourth century, those who held dissenting or differing views from the established church were condemned as heretics and excommunicated from church membership. Most of the early church fathers, such as St. Augustine (d. 604), were displeased by any action taken by the state toward heretics, but the clergy generally gave their reluctant approval, stressing that the church abhorred any kind of physical mistreatment of dissenters.

In 906, the *Canon Episcopi* by Abbot Regino of Prum (d. c. 915) condemned as heretical any belief in witchcraft or in the power of sorcerers to transform people into animals. The consensus of the Christian clergy was that those individuals who believed that they could fly through the air or work evil magic on another person were allowing Satan to deceive them. The clergy was more concerned with stamping out all allegiance to the goddess Diana and any other regional deities, and they regarded as primitive superstition any suggestion that witches possessed any kind of magical powers. In 1000, Deacon Burchard (d. 1025), later archbishop of Worms, published *Corrector*, which updated Regino's *Canon Episcopi* and stressed that God alone had the

kind of power that the untutored masses were attributing to witches. In 1022 there occurred the first fully attested burning of a heretic, in the city of Orleans.

By the twelfth century, the **Cathar** sect had become so popular among the people that Pope Innocent III (1160 or 1161–1216) considered it a greater menace to Christianity than the Islamic warriors who pummeled the crusaders and who threatened all of Europe. To satisfy his outrage, he ordered the only Crusade ever launched by Christians against fellow Christians, declaring as heretics the Albigensians, as the Cathars of southern France were known.

The Inquisition came into existence in 1231 with the *Excommunicamus* of Pope Gregory IX (c. 1170–1241), who at first urged local bishops to become more vigorous in ridding Europe of heretics, then lessened their responsibility for determining orthodoxy by establishing inquisitors under the special jurisdiction of the papacy. The office of inquisitor was entrusted primarily to the Franciscans and the Dominicans, because of their reputation for superior knowledge of theology and their declared freedom from worldly ambition. Each tribunal was ordered to include two inquisitors of equal authority, who would be assisted by notaries, police, and counselors. Because they had the power to excommunicate even members of royal houses, the inquisitors were formidable figures with whom to reckon.

In 1257, the church officially sanctioned torture as a means of forcing witches, sorcerers, shapeshifters, and other heretics to confess their alliance with Satan.

In 1246 Montsegur, the center of Albigensian resistance, fell, and hundreds of Cathars were burned at the stake. The headquarters of the Inquisition was established in Toulouse, and in 1252, Pope Innocent IV (d. 1254) issued a papal bull that placed inquisitors above the law. Another decree within the bull demanded that all civil rulers and all commoners must assist the work of the Inquisition or face excommunication. In 1257, the church officially sanctioned torture as a means of forcing witches, sorcerers, shapeshifters, and other heretics to confess their alliance with Satan.

The inquisitors would stay in a particular location for weeks or months, from which they would bring suit against any person suspected of heresy. Lesser penalties were levied against those who came forward of their own volition and confessed their heresy than against those who ignored the summons and had to be placed on trial. The tribunal allowed a grace period of about a month for the accused to come to them and confess before the heretic would be arrested and brought to trial. The penances and sentences for those who confessed or were found guilty during the trial were pronounced by the inquisitors at a public ceremony known as the *sermo generalis* or *auto-da-fe* and might consist of a public whipping, a pilgrimage to a holy shrine, a monetary fine, or the wearing of a cross. The most severe penalty that the inquisitors could pronounce was life imprisonment; therefore, when they turned over a confessed heretic to the civil authorities, it was quite likely that person would be put to death at the stake.

The wealthy and powerful **Knights Templar** were accused of heretical acts, such as invoking Satan and worshipping demons that appeared as large black cats. In spite of a lengthy trial and 573 witnesses for their defense, the arrested Templars were tortured *en masse*, burned at the stake, and their order was disbanded by Pope Clement V (c. 1260–1314). In 1313 as he was being burned to death on a scaffold built for the occasion in front of Notre Dame Cathedral, Jacques de Molay (1243–1314), the Knights Templar grand master, recanted the confession produced by torture and proclaimed his innocence to the pope and the king—and he invited them to meet him at heaven's gate. When both dignitaries died soon after de Molay's execution, it seemed to the public at large to be a sign that the grand master had been innocent of the charges of heresy.

With the Albigensian heresy destroyed, the Inquisition began to direct more of its attention toward witches. In 1320 Bernard Gui (c. 1261–1331) published *Practica*, an influential instructional manual for inquisitors, in which he urged them to pay particular heed to arresting those women who cavorted with the goddess Diana. Four years later, in 1324, Ireland's first witchcraft trial convened when Alice Kyteler was found guilty of consorting with a demon.

Separate from the Inquisition that extended its jurisdiction over all the rest of Europe, in 1478, at the request of King Ferdinand II (1452–1516) and Queen Isabella I (1451–1504), papal permission was granted to establish the Spanish Inquisition. More a political, than a religious, weapon, this Inquisition persecuted the Marranos or conversos, those Jews suspected of insincerely converting to Christianity; converts from Islam, similarly thought to be insincere in practicing the Christian faith; and, in the 1520s, those individuals who were believed to have converted to Protestantism. The support of Spain's royal house enabled Tomas de Torquemada (1420–1498) to become the single grand inquisitor whose name has become synonymous with the Inquisition's most cruel acts and excesses. Torquemada is known to have ordered the deaths by torture and burning of thousands of heretics and witches.

In 1484, Pope Innocent VIII (1432–1492) became so angered by the apparent spread of witchcraft in Germany that he issued the papal bull *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus* and authorized two trusted Dominican inquisitors, Heinrich Institoris (Henry Kramer) (1430–1505) and Jakob Sprenger (c. 1435–1495), to stamp out demonology in the Rhineland. In 1486, Kramer and Sprenger published *Malleus Maleficarum*, the "Hammer for Witches," which quickly became the "bible" of heretic and witch hunters. The book earnestly refuted all those who would claim that the works of demons existed only in troubled human minds. Certain angels fell from heaven, and to believe otherwise was to believe contrary to the true faith. And now these fallen angels, these demons, were intent upon destroying the human race. Any persons who consorted with demons and became witches must recant their evil ways or be put to death.

By the late sixteenth century, the power of the Inquisition was beginning to wane. In 1563, Johann Weyer (Weir) (1515–1588), a critic of the Inquisition, managed to publish *De praestigus daemonum*, in which he argued that while Satan does seek to ensnare and destroy human beings, the charge that accused witches, werewolves, and vampires possessed supernatural powers was false. Such abilities existed only in their minds and imaginations. As if to provide an antidote to Weyer's call for a rational approach to dealing with accusations of witchcraft, in 1580 the respected intellectual Jean Bodin (1530–1596), often referred to as the Aristotle of the sixteenth century, wrote *De La demonomanie des sorciers*, a book that caused the flames once again to burn high around thousands of heretics' stakes.

By the late sixteenth century, the power of the Inquisition was beginning to wane.

With the spread of Protestantism throughout Europe, in 1542 Pope Paul III (1468–1549) established the Congregation of the Inquisition (also known as the Roman Inquisition and the Holy Office), which consisted of six cardinals, including the reformer Gian Pietro Cardinal Carafa (1476–1559). Although their powers extended to the whole church, the Holy Office was less concerned about heresies and false beliefs of church members than they were with misstatements of orthodoxy in the academic writings of its theologians. When Carafa became Pope Paul IV in 1555, he approved the first *Index of Forbidden Books* (1559) and vigorously sought out any academics who were prompted any thought that offended church doctrine or favored Protestantism.

Although organized **witchcraft trials** continued to be held throughout Europe, and even the American colonies, until the late seventeenth century, they were most often civil affairs and the Inquisition had little part

in such ordeals. However, the Holy Office continued to serve as the instrument by which the papal government regulated church order and doctrine, and it did try and condemn Galileo (1564–1642) in 1633. In 1965, Pope Paul VI (1897–1978) reorganized the Holy Office and renamed it the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

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MIRACLES

According to a Gallup poll taken in 1988, 88 percent of the people in the United States believed in miracles. In the results of a survey on spirituality published in the December 1997 issue of *Self* magazine, 91 percent of the readers who responded answered that they believed in miracles. In that same month and year, a poll commissioned by the Pew Research Center found that 61 percent of Americans believed in miracles and that such acts originate from the power of God. The May 1, 2000, issue of *Newsweek* carried the result of that news magazine's poll that stated 84 percent of American adults said they believe that God performs miracles and 48 percent claimed to have witnessed one.

MIRACLES *have been defined as physical events that defy the laws of nature.*

Jon Butler, a Yale University professor of American history who specializes in American religion, defined miracles as physical events that defy the laws of nature. "Most miracles have some physical manifestation that is evident not only to the individuals involved, but may be evident to the people around them," he said. "The catch is, how do you explain it?"

Father James Wiseman, associate professor of theology at Catholic University, said that there are always going to be some people "who see immediately the hand of God in every coincidence, and those who are going to be skeptical of everything. And there is a great in-between."

Miracle stories are found in all the world religions, and while accounts of wonder-working saints and sages and the ancient acts of divine intervention in human affairs are celebrated regularly by the faithful who gather in churches, synagogues, and mosques throughout the world, contemporary Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, and Muslims still pray for and expect miraculous occurrences in their own lives today. And, according to the *Newsweek* survey, 43 percent of those polled who belonged to no religious body at all admitted that they had on occasion prayed for God's intervention.

Both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible are filled with miracles and wonders performed by prophets, angels, and God. So, too, does the Qur'an contain accounts of countless miracles, thus enabling the contemporary followers of Islam to expect such occurrences as proof of the validity of their faith. Islamic theologians have established two basic kinds of miracles: the *mu'jizat*, or prophetic miracles; and the *karamat*, those wonders performed by holy people and saints.

The Roman Catholic tradition contains many healing miracles performed by saints and popes—both alive and in spirit. Early in 1967 the *Irish Independent* of Dublin carried the account of a miracle healing that had brought a dying nun "from death's door to a healthy normal life" after the spirit of Pope John XXIII (1881–1963), who had died in 1963, appeared and spoke to her.

Sister Caterina Capitani (b. 1943 or 1944), a nun of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, suffered from varicose veins of the esophagus, a condition thought to be incurable and surgically inoperable. However, because the unfortunate sister endured con-

Liquefied Blood of Saints

In Italy alone there are 190 blood samples of various saints that are venerated by the faithful as important religious relics. In a number of cases, these vials of clotted blood become liquefied in a paranormal manner, especially during religious ceremonies, thus exalting the sample from relic to a supernatural miracle.

Perhaps the most celebrated of such relics is the vial of blood said to be that of St. Januarius (c. 272–305), an early bishop of Benevento, who was beheaded during the persecutions of the Christians by Emperor Diocletian (245–316) in 305. Once or twice a year since 1389, St. Januarius' dried blood has liquefied in full view of the pilgrims who arrive to pay tribute to his memory in Naples.

The blood of St. Lorenzo (d. 258) rests in a small flask in the right wing of the church of St. Maria in Amaseno. Lorenzo was martyred on August 10, 258 under the order of the Emperor Valerian (d. 260), and although he was condemned to be burned to death on a grill, some of his blood was caught and preserved by his fellow Christians. Each year on the anniversary of his martyrdom, the vial is brought near the altar and locked in a glass cabinet. There, in full view of the assembled worshippers at St. Maria, the transformation of the centuries-old clotted blood to liquid occurs.

Psychical researcher Luigi Garlaschelli has proposed that a process called "thixotropy" might explain how the blood of St. Januarius might liquefy each year. Thixotropy "denotes the property of certain gels to liquefy when stirred or vibrated, and to solidify again when left to stand." It is Garlaschelli's theory that the very act of handling the relic during the religious ceremony, the motions of a priest repeatedly checking the progress of the blood in the vial, might well provide the necessary movement to prompt the liquefaction of the saint's blood.

But the investigator is cautious about applying his theory to explain the liquefied blood of St. Lorenzo, which is only moved once on August 10 from its place of safekeeping to the altar, or the large vial containing the blood of St. Panatleone, which becomes liquefied on July 27 and is never moved from its resting place behind a grating.

Garlaschelli speculates that the overall look of the substances in the vials, together with their observed properties of softening and liquefying when near the warming effect of altar candles and human touch, then returning to solid once removed from the warmth, suggest that the relics may consist of fats or waxes and an oil-soluble red dye. While the rational mind insists that the substance in the vials of the saints cannot possibly be blood, until church authorities permit scientists to withdraw actual specimens from the receptacles, the question remains a puzzle to scientists and a miracle of faith to believers.

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tinual hemorrhages, physicians decided to attempt an operation at Medical Missionaries of Mary of the Clinca Mediterranea in Naples, Italy. Two surgeries were performed, but they were unsuccessful; and when the incision on her stomach opened, Sister Caterina's condition steadily worsened to the point where she collapsed. Desperate to attempt any new therapy, her doctors sent the nun south for a change of air, but she was soon returned to Naples when it was decided that she had only a brief time to live.

Sister Caterina lay in her room alone. She had turned on her side when she felt someone place a hand on her stomach. Summoning all her strength, she turned to see Pope John XXIII standing beside her bed. He was not attired in his papal robes, but she easily recognized him. In a quiet yet authoritative voice, the ethereal image of the pope, who had died on June 3, 1963, spoke words of great comfort: "Sister, you have called to me so many times…that you have torn out of my heart this miracle. Do not fear. You are healed."

VARIOUS *committees of the Roman Catholic Church takes serious steps to authenticate a miracle.*

The spirit of Pope John then told Sister Caterina to call in the sisters and the doctors so that a test could be performed. But before she did so, he assured her once again that no trace of her illness would remain. Just before the image vanished, he told Sister Caterina to come to Rome and pray at his tomb.

The moment the spirit of the deceased pope disappeared, Sister Caterina rose from her bed and was elated that she felt no pain. When she summoned the sisters and doctors into her room, they were astonished to find that the scar on her abdomen, which had been open and bleeding, was now completely healed. No other physical sign indicated that moments before there had been a gaping wound. The sisters declared the healing a miracle. Sister Caterina had not been expected to survive the day, yet that evening she was up and eating her supper with the community.

According to the *Irish Independent*, ever since her miracle healing by the apparition of Pope John XXIII, Sister Caterina lived a normal, healthy life in every way. "This is a phenomenon that cannot be explained in a human way," the account concluded.

Contrary to those skeptics who suggest that the Roman Catholic Church is likely to accept nearly all claims of miracles as genuine, many serious steps are taken by various committees to authenticate a miracle. Father Frederick Jelly, professor of systematic theology at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland, has served on miracles committees and has listed the questions asked to authenticate a miracle as the following: What is the psychological state of the person claiming the miracle? Is there a profit motive behind the miracle claim? What is the character of the person who is claiming the miracle? Does the miracle contain any elements contrary to scripture or faith? What are the spiritual fruits of the miracle—does it attract people to prayer or to acts of greater charity?

Once these questions have been determined and reviewed, the committee makes its decision as to whether or not the event was heaven-inspired. If the committee decides the event is miraculous and its implications have national or international effect, the case may be referred to the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome. The Sacred Congregation has the authority to institute a new investigation and make its own ruling and recommendation to the pope, who is the final arbiter of the validity of miracles.

Rather than miracles, Philip Hefner, professor of systematic theology at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, stated in an essay in *Newsweek* (May 1, 2000) that he would rather talk about blessings. "We receive blessings, often quite unexpectedly, and we want to praise God for them. We know we cannot claim the credit for these blessings. Even though we cannot predict their arrival, nor understand why so much of human life involves sorrow and evil, we can be grateful and render praise."

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POSSESSION

In February 2001, a 53-year-old Oklahoma woman who had no history of mental illness, drug or alcohol abuse, or domestic strife, began working a **Ouija board** with her daughter and two granddaughters. Later that night, claiming to be possessed by a spirit from the Ouija board that told her to kill, the woman stabbed to death her son-in-law, who was sleeping in another room, and attempted to kill other members of her family. Police later apprehended the woman, who was hiding in a wooded area, and commented how unbelievable it was that she could have allowed a Ouija board to "consume her life."

International newspapers carried an account in March 2001 describing how demands for **exorcisms** were soaring in Brazil due to the fact that demonic possession was on the rise. A priest was quoted as saying that he believed the number of evil spirits among the populace could only mean that the **Apocalypse** would soon be manifesting.

In April 2001, Croatian newspapers reported that the Roman Catholic clergy were desperately looking for exorcists to deal with the large numbers of men and women who gave evidence of being possessed by Satan.

In June 2001, a new Gallup poll of adult Americans indicated that 41 percent believe that people can be possessed by the devil or his minions.

The majority of healthcare professionals discount possession by spirits as superstitious nonsense and believe such claims to be primitive responses to a variety of mental illnesses, and there are few contemporary clergymen who will acknowledge the existence of demons and the possibility of demonic or spirit possession. However, Dr. Morton Kelsey, an Episcopal priest and a noted Notre Dame professor of theology, has this to say to those who protest that demon possession is a superstitious throwback to the Middle Ages: "Most people in the modern world consider themselves too sophisticated and too intelligent to be concerned with demons. But in thirty years of study, I have seen the effect of demons upon humans."

A MAJORITY of healthcare professionals discount possession by spirits as superstitious nonsense and believe such claims to be primitive responses to a variety of mental illnesses.

Kelsey maintains that demons are real and can invade the minds of humans. Demons are not the figment of the imagination, but are negative, destructive spiritual forces that seek to destroy the possessed host body and everyone with whom that person comes into contact. The most severe cases of possession can trigger suicide, Kelsey said, because the demon is trying to destroy people any way it can.

Among those traits which the Roman Catholic Church might find indicative of possession, rather than mental illness, are exhibition of superhuman strength; knowledge of languages outside of a person's education or training; demonstration of hidden insights into a person's private life or past indiscretions; and aversion to all things spiritual—holy water, the mass, a crucifix, or the name of Jesus.

While the skeptical might argue that LeBar is a priest, an exorcist, and that his theological training has conditioned him to believe in demons, they may wish to take into serious consideration the comments of Dr. Ralph Allison, senior psychiatrist at the California state prison in San Luis Obispo: "My

conclusion after 30 years of observing over one thousand disturbed patients is that some of them act in a bizarre fashion due to possession by spirits. The spirit may be that of a human being who died. Or it may be a spirit entity that has never been a human being and sometimes identifies itself as a demon, an agent of evil."

Dr. Wilson Van Dusen, a university professor who has served as chief psychologist at Mendocino State Hospital, is another health care professional who has stated his opinion that many patients in mental hospitals are possessed by demons.

"I am totally convinced that there are entities that can possess our minds and our bodies," Van Dusen said. "I have even been able to speak directly to demons. I have heard their own guttural, other-world voices."

And all too often, some researchers say, those hellish guttural voices have commanded their possessed hosts to kill, to offer human sacrifice to Satan.

In a recent report released by the American Psychological Evaluation Corporation, Dr. Andrew Blankley, a sociologist, issued statements about the rise in contemporary sacrificial cults, warning that society at large might expect a "serious menace" to come. According to Blankley, human sacrifice constitutes an alarming trend in new religious cults: "Desperate people are seeking dramatic revelation and simplistic answers to complex social problems. They are attracted to fringe groups who provide the ritualistic irrationality that they crave. In the last ten years, fringe rituals often include the sacrifice of a human being."

Dr. Al Carlisle of the Utah State Prison System has estimated that between 40,000 and 60,000 humans are killed through ritual homicides in the United States every year. In the Las Vegas area alone, Carlisle asserts, as many as 600 people may die in demon-inspired ceremonies each year.

Based on a synthesis of the studies of certain clergy and psychical researchers, following is a pattern profile of what may occur when someone has become the unwilling host of an uninvited spirit presence and become possessed:

The possessed may begin to hear voices directing him/her to do antisocial or perverse acts that he/she had never before considered. He/she will claim to see the image of a spirit or demonic presence. In the weeks and months that follow, he/she may fall into states of blacked-out consciousness, times of which he/she later has absolutely no memory. On occasions, he/she will fall into a trance-like state. The possessed will be observed walking and speaking differently, and acting in a strange, irrational manner. He/she will begin doing things that he/she has never done before. In the worst of cases, the possessing spirit or demon will consume the victim's life. It may reach to a climax where the possessed commits murder, suicide, or some violent antisocial act.

Healthcare professionals will point out that many of the above "symptoms" of possession may also indicate the onset of stress, depression, and certain mental illnesses.

Dr. Adam Crabtree, a psychotherapist in Toronto, has stated his view that the spirits of the deceased can possess their living relatives. Crabtree, who is a former priest and Benedictine monk, said that entities from beyond the grave usually seek a living person's mind and body because they have unfinished business on Earth. Crabtree has encountered such cases when emotionally disturbed patients came to him complaining that they seemed to feel a "presence" in them that was different from their usual mental awareness. Crabtree discovered that these people were adopting traits and characteristics that were not their own. They complained of hearing voices that told them what to do, and they saw mental images of dead relatives who were dictating their actions.

While more conventional psychotherapists might provide a different diagnosis from Crabtree's, in his opinion because the spirits were related to the living person and were emotionally tied to them, their physical relationship made possession easier to accomplish. The reasons for such possession vary. According to Crabtree's research, sometimes the dead simply do not realize that they have changed planes of existence and wish to maintain their relationship with their relatives. In other

cases, the spirits want to take care of unfinished business and have no compunction about using their living relatives to attain their goals.

Dr. C. Fred Dickason, chairman of the Theology Department at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, relates a number of cases of demonic possession through ancestral lines in his book *Demon Possession and the Christian* (1987). In one case, a Chicago-area pastor consulted Dickason to receive his advice concerning his father, who had been invaded by demonic spirits because his mother (the pastor's grandmother) had been heavily involved in occult practices. The entities had begun to enter the pastor's young daughter, but alert to possession, he prayed with his wife that the spirits be dismissed from her.

Dickason is of the firm opinion that demons, who are nonmaterial entities that may exist for thousands of years, feel that they have the right to enter any man or woman—regardless of how innocent he or she may be—whose ancestors were involved in occult and demonic activities.

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POWER OF PRAYER

Prayer is a basic element of religious expression. According to a survey taken by Lutheran Brotherhood and reported in *USA Today* (February 7, 1997) Americans are great practitioners of prayer: 24 percent of those polled said that they prayed more than once a day; 31 percent prayed every day; 16 percent, several times a week; 10 percent, several times a month; 9 percent, several times a year.

PRAYER is a basic element of religious expression.

For Christians worldwide the "perfect prayer" is the one that Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) gave to his apostles and which has been known for centuries as the Lord's Prayer: "And…as [Jesus] was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray as John [the Baptist] also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, "When ye pray, say,

> Our Father which art in heaven,
> Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom
> come. Thy will be done, as in heaven,
> so on Earth. Give us this day our daily
> bread. And forgive us our sins; for we
> also forgive everyone that is indebted to
> us. And lead us not into temptation;
> but deliver us from evil" (Luke 11: 1–4,
> King James Version). [Matthew 6:13
> adds: "For thine is the kingdom and the
> power and the glory, forever. Amen."]

The Lord's Prayer has long been esteemed as without equal or rival as a prayer. "Short and mysterious," the seventeenth-century bishop Jeremy Taylor (1613–1667) declared, "and like the treasures of the Spirit, full of wisdom and latent senses."

Jesus prayed a great deal throughout the gospels. In addition to his giving of the well-known prayer quoted above, he prayed at his baptism (Luke 3:21), before he chose the Twelve (Luke 6:12), before his invitation to all humankind to "come unto" him (Matthew 11:25–27), at the feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:11), before his Transfiguration (Luke 9:28–29), for little children (Matthew 19:13), at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26–27), in

SPEAKING IN TONGUES

The phenomenon of speaking in tongues during ecstatic religious experiences is also known as glossolalia, and began among the first Christians.

Described in Acts 2:1–18, the Holy Spirit granted to the apostles the ability to speak in the languages of the foreigners who had assembled in Jerusalem for the observance of Pentecost. The visitors were amazed they could speak with them in their native language.

While Holy Spirit allowed the apostles to converse suddenly in a foreign language, later references implied that glossolalia was a kind of religious ecstasy or unintelligible babbling. In I Corinthians, Paul lists the variety of spiritual gifts that might be received by Christians; he writes that one such blessing is the ability to interpret what another speaking in tongues might be saying. Paul states that those who speak in a tongue that only God can understand might well be pleasing themselves, but they deliver no edification to others in the church. He concludes that, if one speaks in unknown tongues and no one can interpret the speech, then "let him keep silence in the church and speak to himself and to God."

Paul's denigration of the act of speaking in tongues set the standard for Christians down through the centuries. Various church fathers advised against the practice, and St. John of Chrysostom (c. 347–407) believed that the usefulness of glossolalia for the Christian ended in the first century. St. Augustine (354–430) denied that any special ability, such as speaking in tongues, prophesy, and so forth, proved one's faith. With the advent of the Protestant Reformation, leaders such as Martin Luther (1483–1546) dismissed glossolalia as unnecessary to the Christian faith.

In the eighteenth century, however, certain new visionary sects, such as the Shakers and the Catholic Apostolic Church, began to consider speaking in tongues as one of the special gifts given to true believers. Then, in the early 1900s, Pentecostalism declared that "Spirit-baptism" brought with its indwelling power the ability to speak in tongues. In the 1960s, glossolalia became suddenly popular even among the more mainstream churches.

While the movement spread in the 1970s, the position largely taken by the mainstream church bodies was that, while it may be legitimate gift from the Holy Spirit, glossolalia was hardly the normative expression for Christians and did not denote a superiority over those who did not practice it. However, today's approximately 500,000 practicing Pentecostals continue to believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring about a baptism of the spirit like that received by the apostles that enabled them to speak in tongues.

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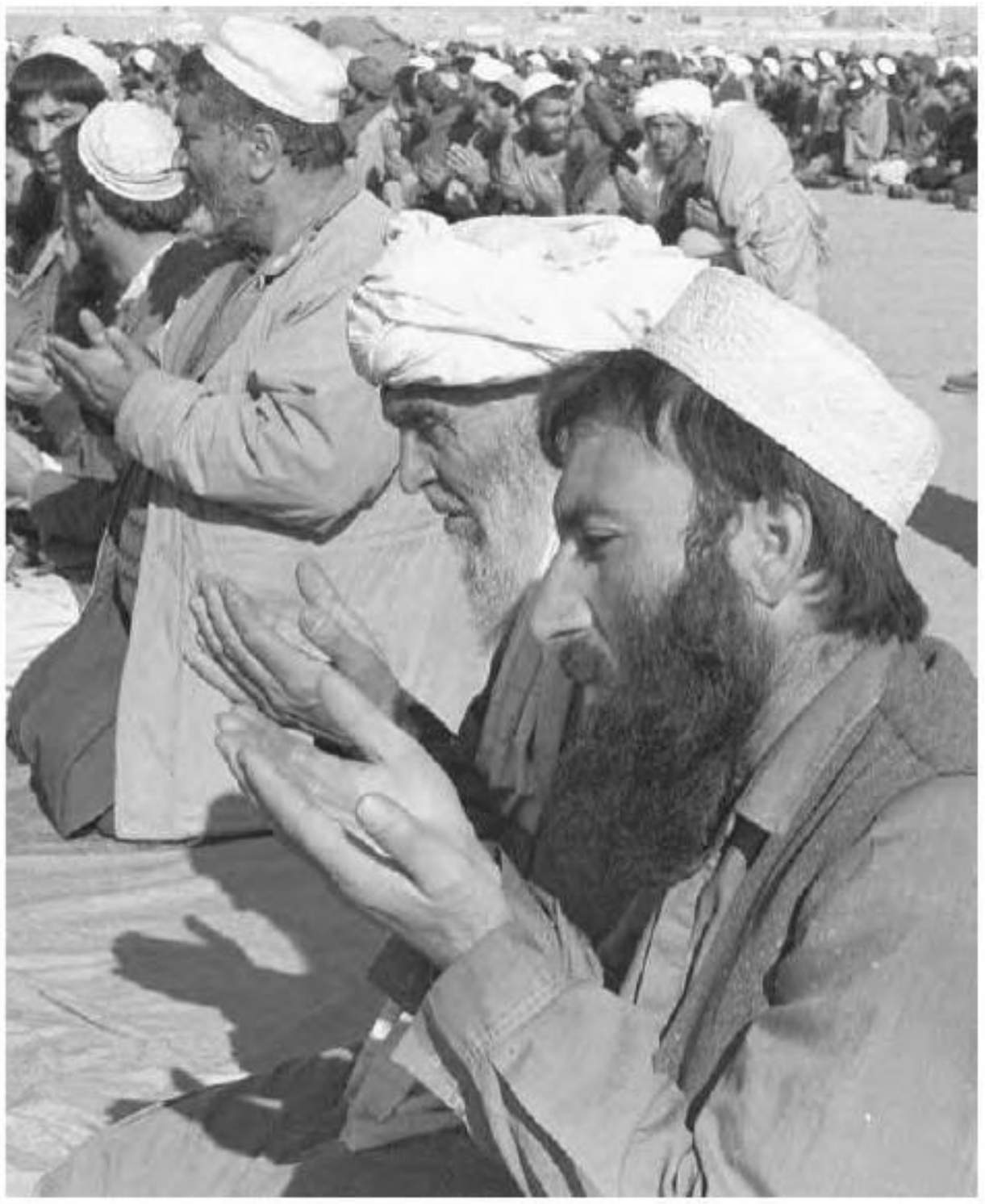
Gethsemane (Matthew 26: 36–44), and on the Cross (Luke 24:30) to name only some of the most significant prayers recorded by the gospel writers. But as often as Jesus declared that prayer could work mysteries and wonders, he also admonished his followers concerning the secret nature of the act of praying:

> "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men.... But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him" (Matthew 6: 5–8, King James Version).

In Islam prayer, *salat* is one of the five Pillars of Islam, and the true believer must say his prayers (*salla*) five times a day, as well as on special occasions. The set schedule of prayers—dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and nighttime—is strictly prescribed and regulated. There is another category of prayer, the *du'a*, which permits spontaneous expressions of supplication, petition, and intercession. The *du'a* may also be allowed after the uttering of the formal *salat*.

While many religions suggest that their supplicants fold their hands, bow their head, close their eyes, and so forth, the followers of Islam have many exact procedures that must be observed in their prayers. Before prayer, there is the ritual purification (*tahara*), which at the very least requires washing the face and the hands to the elbows, rubbing the head with water, and bathing the feet to the ankles. In addition, the mouth, nose, and teeth must receive a thorough cleansing. If water should be unavailable to someone on a journey or away from home, clean earth or sand may be substituted in an abbreviated ritual exercise of cleansing.



Believing in the power of prayer, a group of Muslims pray for rain in Kabul, Afghanistan. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

In a city or village, the call to prayer (*Adhan*) is announced from a minaret or tall building by a muezzin, a crier. When the worshippers have assembled, another crier issues the *iqama* in a rapid, but more subdued, voice, announcing that it is now time to begin the prayers. If the worshippers should be away from a city, a mosque, or a muezzin, they themselves may call out the two summons to prayer.

A TRUE believer of Islam must say his prayers (salla) five times a day—dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and nighttime.

While it is desirable to pray in a mosque, when the supplicants find themselves away from a formal place of worship, they must attempt to find as clean an area as possible.

THE MOST POPULAR PRAYERS OF AMERICANS

According to a 2001 survey on the prayer habits of Americans conducted by Yankelovich Partners for Lutheran Brotherhood, nine out of 10 adults responded by saying that they prayed regularly. When asked what they most often prayed for, 98 percent answered that they prayed most frequently for their own family members. Petitions for the children of the world were designated for 81 percent of the prayers; 77 percent for world peace, and 69 percent for the needs and concerns of their co-workers.

In an earlier survey (c. 1992), Andrew M. Greeley, the sociologist-novelist-priest, and his research center found that 78 percent of Americans pray at least once a week and 57 percent pray at least once a day. Combining the statistics of the Father Greeley research with those of a Gallup and Poloma poll, it was revealed that 91 percent of women pray, as do 85 percent of men. Twenty-six percent of those who pray say that they regularly sense the strong presence of God, and 32 percent feel a deep sense of peace.

SOURCES:

"Snapshot." *USA Today,* 14 June 2001.

"Talking to God." *Newsweek,* 6 January 1992, pp. 39–44.

Prayer rugs (*saijada*) are carried by many Muslims, but they are not an essential aspect of the ritual. It is essential to properly cover the body: males, at least from the navel to the knees; females, the entire body except for face, hands, and feet. It is also of utmost importance that wherever they may be, they face the *Qiblah*, the precise direction of Mecca. And while it is always preferable to perform the *salat* in the company of others, it is permissible under certain conditions to pray in private—except for the Friday congregational *salat*, which may never be performed alone.

Before kneeling on their prayer rugs, however, it is of the utmost importance that the supplicants perform a required number of bending and bowing postures (*rak'as*) with the appropriate accompanying phrases. There must be two *rak'as* at dawn, four at noon, four in the afternoon, three at sunset, and four at night.

Jewish liturgy did not begin to achieve its fixed form until the centuries after the destruction of the second temple, and the prayer book did not appear in its classical form until the Middle Ages. But spontaneous prayers are found throughout the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible, and the Old Testament in the Christian Bible. To list only a few: the prayers of Abraham (Genesis 15:2–3), Isaac (Genesis 25:21–23), and Hannah (1 Samuel 1:9–13) petitioning God for an heir; Moses' prayers for plagues on the Egyptians (Exodus 8:12), for the Red Sea to part its waters (Exodus 14:21), for a glimpse of God's glory (Exodus 33:18), for Aaron's forgiveness after his sin of making the gold calf (Deuteronomy 9:20); Samson's prayer for strength to bring the columns down

upon the Philistines (Judges 16:28–31); David's prayer to be forgiven for his immorality with Bathsheba (Psalms 51); Job's prayer to be forgiven for pride (Job 40:3–4; 42:6); Solomon's prayer for wisdom (1 Kings 3:5–9); Elijah's prayer for fire to consume the altars of Baal (1 Kings 18:36–37); Jabez's prayer for prosperity in his work (1 Chronicles 4:10).

There is a rich Jewish tradition that envisions angels carrying human prayers to heaven, and there is a belief that the entreaties of the righteous can more effectively intercede with God than ordinary mortals. As in the Christian and Islamic traditions, there are strict warnings against worshipping the angelic intercessors. God alone must be the sole and ultimate focus of all prayer.

In recent years, more and more doctors and scientists have begun to study the power that many religious men and women claim may be achieved by focusing their prayers upon God and asking healing for themselves or others. Dr. Larry Dossey (1940–), author of *Healing Words: The Power of Prayer and the Practice of Medicine* (1993), recalled when he was doing his residency at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas, Texas, and had his first patient with a terminal case of cancer. Whenever he would stop by the man's hospital room, Dossey found him surrounded by visitors from his church, praying and singing. Dossey thought this was appropriate since they would soon be singing and praying at the man's funeral, because the cancer had spread throughout both lungs. A year later, when he was working elsewhere, Dossey learned from a colleague that the terminally ill patient was alive and well. When he had an opportunity to examine the man's X-rays, Dossey was stunned to see that his lungs were completely clear. There was no trace of cancer. Although Dossey had long since given up the faith of his childhood, it seemed to him that prayer had healed this man of his terminal cancer.

Intrigued, but devoted to the power of modern medicine, Dossey became chief of staff at a large urban hospital. He observed that many of his patients prayed, but he put little trust in the practice until he came across a study done in 1983 by Dr. Randolph Byrd, a cardiologist at San Francisco General Hospital, in which half of a group of cardiac patients were prayed for and half were not. Those who were prayed for did better in a significant number of ways. Dossey could no longer ignore the evidence. The Byrd study had been designed according to rigid criteria. It had been a randomized, double-blind experiment—neither the patients, nurses, nor doctors knew which group the patients were in.

Inspired to search for other such experiments, Dossey was astonished to find more than 100 serious and well-conducted studies exhibiting the criteria of good science. About half demonstrated that prayer could bring about significant changes in those suffering from a variety of illnesses. Dossey has since given up the practice of medicine to devote himself full time to researching and writing about prayer and how it affects human health. His extensive studies have produced the following discoveries:

THE Jewish prayer book did not appear in its classical form until the Middle Ages.

1. The power of prayer does not diminish with distance. It can be as effective from the other side of the world as it is from the next room.
2. There is no right way to pray. There is no difference in the effectiveness of the various religious methods of praying.
3. Rather than asking for a specific healing for a particular health problem, the nonspecific prayer, "Thy will be done," works as well or better as attempting to specify the outcome.
4. Love added to prayer increases its power.
5. Prayer is outside of time. It can be answered even before it is made.
6. Prayer is a reminder that we are never alone.

In June 2000, researchers at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Caroli-

Harold Sherman.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

na, presented the results of a six-year study in the *Journal of Gerontology* in which nearly 4,000 mostly Christian men and women 65 and older were asked about health problems and whether they prayed, meditated, or read the Bible. Dr. Harold Koenig, one of the researchers, stated that this was one of the first studies showing that people who pray live longer. Relatively healthy seniors who said that they rarely or never prayed ran about a 50 percent greater risk of dying during the six-year study, compared with those who prayed at least once a month. People who prayed even once a month appeared to get the same protection as those who prayed more often.

Critics of such studies accuse the researchers of making subjective judgments concerning patients or of injecting hope into the equation. Others say that the results of people praying for the sick are no greater than random chance.

But, in general, Americans believe that the power of prayer is beneficial for their health. A 1999 CBS News poll found that 80 percent of adult Americans believe prayer improves recovery from disease. In June 2001, a Gallup Poll revealed that 54 percent of adult Americans believed in spiritual healing.

The contemporary mystic Harold Sherman was firm in stating that one should never pray out of a sense of duty or obligation or habit. One should not make a ritual of getting a prayer over with as quickly as possible. Nothing is accomplished by rapidly mumbling a prayer without thought or feeling behind it. It is the feeling behind a prayer, Sherman advised, not the words thought or spoken, which gets through to God, to the **cosmic consciousness** level of the mind. In his book *How to Solve Mysteries of Your Mind and Soul* (1965), Sherman presented "Seven Secrets for Successful Prayer":

1. Remove all fears and doubts from your mind before you start to pray.
2. Make your mind receptive so it is prepared to receive guidance and inspiration.
3. Picture clearly in your mind what it is that you desire to bring to pass in your life.
4. Have unfaltering faith that with God's help what you are picturing will come true.
5. Repeat your visualization and your prayer… until what you have pictured becomes a reality.
6. Review each day's activities and constantly strive to improve your mental attitude, so your mind can become a clearer channel attuned to the God Power within.
7. Realize that if your thinking is right and if you persist with faith and put forth every effort in support of your prayer, then that which you create in your mind must eventually come to pass.

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The Rapture

According to the beliefs of the born-again Christians concerning the end times, the Rapture is an event when Christians will be taken up into the air to meet Christ in the sky. Many believe that the Rapture will happen unexpectedly and that those Christians of special merit will be lifted suddenly from their homes, their automobiles, even from their passenger seats on airliners. The Rapture is a literal, physical occurrence, rather than a spiritual transformation. Those who are taken up by Christ may leave behind their clothing on the streets and their cars crashing into trees, but they will be lifted body and soul into the sky.

Most of humankind will be left behind, including those Christians whose faith requires strengthening. It is believed that the Rapture will cause great confusion and chaos. A time of tribulation will begin, making the world easy pickings for the advent of a charismatic savior who appears to have all the best ways, financial means, and power to make things right again. This individual shall rise to international domination and deceive many before he is revealed as the **Antichrist.**

Although those Christians who believe in the Rapture are certain that it will occur in association with the time of tribulation (the seven-year period of disasters, famine, and illness during which the Antichrist will be in power), there are differences of opinion whether it will come about just before the tribulation begins, midway through the seven-year reign of the Antichrist, or at the end of the time of tribulation. There is, however, general agreement that when this awful time of lawlessness and corruption has passed, Christ will return to Earth with his army of angels, defeat the forces of evil in a great final battle at **Armageddon,** and begin his 1,000-year reign, during which time there will be nothing but justice, peace, and joy on Earth. When this millennial reign comes to an end, history will end and Christ shall establish a new heaven and a new Earth.

Those Christians who believe in the Rapture maintain that it was Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) himself who established the format for such an event in the end times:

> "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven and then shall all the tribes of the Earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24:29–31, King James Version).

In Mark 13:24–27, the prediction of Jesus concerning the end times is essentially the same: "There will be an end to the time of tribulation; the sun and moon will be darkened and stars will fall; the Son of man will be seen in the clouds coming with great power and glory; angels will be sent to gather the elect from every part of the heavens and the Earth."

In two of his epistles, St. Paul speaks of the return of Christ and what many Christians believe to be the Rapture, when those who are believers shall be caught to meet the Lord in the air: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16–18). In 1 Corinthians 15:51–53, the epistle writer tells of the mystery when "in the twinkling of an eye" those who believe in Christ shall be changed: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

Although not all Christians accept the scenario of the Rapture, many Christians and

non-Christians alike find the premise intriguing and read the books in the "Left Behind" series as exciting science fiction. By June 2001, the first six volumes in the series based on the events of the Rapture by fundamentalist minister Tim LaHaye and professional writer Jerry Jenkins have sold over 12 million copies. Number seven in the series of planned 12 volumes, *The Indwelling* (2000), had an initial print run of two million and appeared on the bestseller lists a few days after its publication. In addition, a complementary "Left Behind" series for children has sold three million copies, and, altogether, over 18 million various products related to the series have been purchased.

DELVING DEEPER

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SHROUD OF TURIN

In the fall of 1978, the ancient Shroud of Turin was exhibited publicly for the first time since 1933, thus rekindling the fires of controversy that have raged intermittently around this **icon** since the first century C.E. Is this cloth truly the authentic burial shroud of Jesus of Nazareth (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.)? Is the full-sized human image impressed on its coarse fibers the actual physical representation of Jesus as he lay in the tomb after his death by crucifixion at the hands of Roman soldiers? When looking at the shroud, is one seeing a kind of supernatural photograph of Jesus that can accurately depict his actual human appearance?

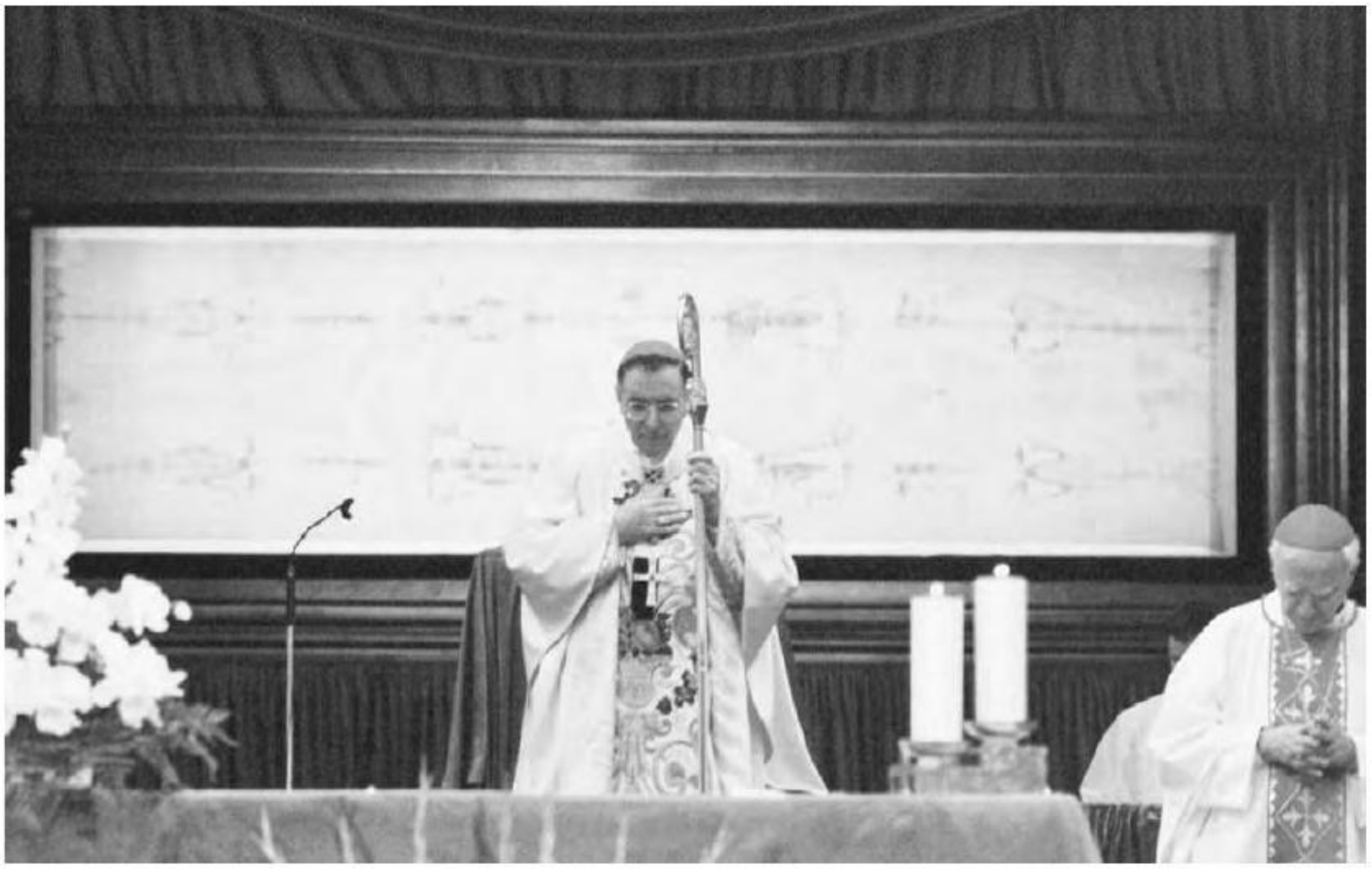
The fourteen-by-four-foot shroud has been kept under guard in a Roman Catholic chapel in Turin, Italy, since 1452, and it has been previously examined by technical investigators in 1973 and 1978. Although at that time the researchers were unable to date the cloth with certainty, scientists at the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico announced that the burial shroud appeared to be authentic, woven of a type of linen typically used in Jewish burials in the Holy Land about 30 C.E., thus approximating the date of Jesus' Crucifixion. As for the remarkable image imprinted on the shroud, Los Alamos chemist Ray Rogers, stated his opinion that the impression had been formed by "a burst of radiant energy—light, if you will."

Such a view is in harmony with gospel references to a brilliant light from heaven and the process of transformation undergone by Jesus at the moment of his Resurrection after three days in the tomb. A statement issued by the Los Alamos Laboratory, operated by the University of California for the U.S. Department of Energy, explains one hypothesis that draws a parallel between the mysterious images on the shroud "and the fact that images were formed on stones by fireball radiation from the atomic bomb at Hiroshima."

Many of the experts who have examined the shroud insist that the image was not painted on the cloth, for the portrait is not absorbed into the fibers. Neither could the image have been placed on the shroud by any ordinary application of heat, they argue, or the fibers would have been scorched.

The gospel accounts of Jesus' Crucifixion state that he was whipped and beaten by Roman soldiers, who placed a crown of thorns on the head of the man who was identified as the "King of the Jews." The beating completed completed, Jesus was marched through the streets of Jerusalem bearing the wooden cross on his back before he was nailed to its horizontal bar at the place of execution. After his apparent death, a spear was thrust into his side by a Roman soldier.

Certain researchers have declared the front and the back images on the Shroud of Turin to be anatomically correct if the cloth



The Shroud of Turin.
(AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

had been used to wrap a crucified man in its folds. The impressions on the shroud are of a tall man with a beard, his hands crossed with the imprints of nails through the wrists and feet. The right side of the man's chest was pierced. In addition, the image is said by investigators to bear the marks of whip lashes on the back. The man's right shoulder is chafed, as if from having borne a rough, heavy object. A number of puncture wounds appear around the head, and one cheek displays a pronounced bruise. The chest cavity is expanded, as if the victim had been trying desperately to draw air into the lungs, a common occurrence and a typical physical response during crucifixion.

Since its second examination in 1978, the Shroud of Turin has been hailed by some as physical proof of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead and his triumph over the grave, while others have condemned it as a hoax crafted by medieval monks who sought to create the ultimate in holy relics for spiritual pilgrims to venerate. Ray Rogers is one of a number of scientists who believes that the burial cloth is truly the shroud of Jesus Christ. In his view—and in that of many others—the Shroud of Turin answers the eternal question of whether humans can achieve immortality. "If Christ was resurrected from the dead," Rogers stated, "then the gospels are true, and eternal life is offered to all."

THE Shroud of Turin has been hailed by some as physical proof of Jesus' Resurrection, while others have condemned it as a hoax crafted by medieval monks.

In October 1978, the Shroud of Turin Research Project, the U.S. scientific group that examined the shroud, unanimously reported that "the image on the cloth is not the result of applied materials." In their estimation, the man on the shroud was not painted on the cloth and that an unknown event of oxidation selectively darkened certain fibrils

of the threads so as to make a superficial image of a man with accurate details valid when magnified 1,000 times. Through some paranormal occurrence the body image is much like a photographic negative.

During the September/October 1978 exhibition of the shroud in Turin, more than three and a half million people viewed the relic. The viewing was followed by a Sindonological Congress of experts on October 7 and 8, and on October 8–13, a detailed, around-the-clock, 120-hour scientific examination of the shroud that included more than 30,000 photographs of various kinds. The latter effort was conducted primarily by scientists from the United States who had brought 72 crates of equipment weighing eight tons.

Also in 1978, Ian Wilson published *The Shroud of Turin: The Burial Cloth of Jesus Christ?* in which he presented the results of his historical research which brought continuity, from 33 C.E. to 1204 C.E., to the story of the shroud and its travels. Wilson concluded that the "Face of Edessa" and the "Mandylion of Constantinople" were but other designations for the Shroud of Turin. He also postulated a **Knights Templar** connection for the so-called missing years of the shroud from 1204 to 1357 which indicates that the relic was in Athens and Bescancon, France, during that period. It may well have been, Wilson suggested, that the extensive copying of the face on the shroud by the Knights Templar could have led to the papal revocation of their charter, which was later followed by the execution of their leaders by the French ecclesiastical court. The Templar involvement appeared to be validated by the discovery of a matching shroud face that was found behind the false ceiling of an outbuilding in Templecombe, southern England, on grounds that had once served as a Templar recruitment and training center.

From its earliest years, in legends and in art, there have been claims of **miracles** and healings through the shroud. Four credible witnesses reported that in 544 when Edessa was threatened with siege by a Persian army, the image was rushed to the top of the city wall and prominently displayed; the army turned and abandoned the attack. Eusebius and others state that King Agabar V of Edessa was mortally ill and was instantly healed when shown the face on the cloth. While the shroud was being carried to Constantinople in 944, it was said that a man possessed of **demons** was cleansed when he touched it.

In 1954, in a small village of Gloucestershire, England, 11-year-old Josie Wollam was in the hospital dying of a severe bone disease, osteomyelitis, in hip and leg, plus lung abscesses. The doctor advised that there was no hope for Josie, and she was given the last rites of the church. However, Josie had learned that retired RAF Group Captain Leonard Cheshire (1917–1992) was giving lectures in the area on the Shroud of Turin, and she told her mother that she was certain she would be able to walk again if she could only see the shroud. At Josie's urging, her mother wrote Captain Cheshire and his office sent a photograph of the shroud face. Merely holding the photograph appeared to accomplish a partial remission of the bone disease, and two weeks later, Josie was sent home from the hospital.

The girl was still unable to walk, and she continued to declare that if she could actually see the shroud and be in its presence, she knew that she would be completely healed. Cheshire was so impressed by Josie's faith that he took her with him to Portugal to see former King Umberto II (1904–1983), the shroud's owner, to ask permission for a rare private session with the shroud. Umberto readily granted their request, and Cheshire and Josie traveled on to Turin, where the rolled shroud was placed across the arms of her wheelchair. Cautiously, respectfully, the girl reached a hand into the end of the roll to touch gently the inner surface.

At the 1978 public exhibition of the shroud 24 years later, Josie, now 35, walked into the cathedral at Turin, once again accompanied by Cheshire but no longer in a wheelchair. The child who had been given last rites in 1954 had been allegedly healed completely by being in the presence of the shroud. She met Father Peter Rinaldi while at Turin and told him that after her healing she had matured normally through childhood and adolescence, married, had a daughter, and was gainfully employed.

While many scientists urged increased usage of carbon-dating techniques to determine once and for all the true age of the shroud, other experts warned that an accurate carbon dating might not be technically possible with present-day laboratory techniques and practices. In the 1970s, two researchers independent of each another suggested that the 1532 fire at Chambery, France, which caused the silver reliquary to drip molten silver onto the cloth, also may have created a "pressure-cooker effect" of driving known contaminants on the cloth into the molecules of the cloth, so that the carbon content would be skewed. At the Rome Symposium of 1993, and subsequently, Dmitri Kouznetsov of the Sedov Laboratory in Moscow asserted that during the 1532 fire the molten silver acted as a catalyst for carboxylation of the cellulose, so that subsequently the cloth became enriched with carbon, thus making it appear to be younger than it may actually be. In spite of such protests regarding carbon-dating techniques, laboratory tests conducted in 1985 reported that 1320 was the median date that the shroud cloth had been woven.

As might be expected, large numbers of diligent researchers object to the date of 1320 and the suggestion that some talented artisan in the Middle Ages had created the image on the shroud as a work of piety or as an instrument of deception. Those who champion the authenticity of the shroud point out that the scalp punctures and blood rivulets as seen on the forehead of the man of the shroud have the characteristics and proper location for both veinous and arterial blood flow, and yet, if the shroud were a hoax created in approximately 1320, circulation of human blood was not discovered until 1593. The cloth-to-body distance correlates so precisely that the image perfectly encapsulates three-dimensional data perfectly. When the shroud image is fed into NASA's VP-8 image analyzer, it produces a bas-relief of the man of the shroud with no distortion. No other image, drawing, painting, or photograph has this quality—only star maps and the shroud image; everything else distorts.

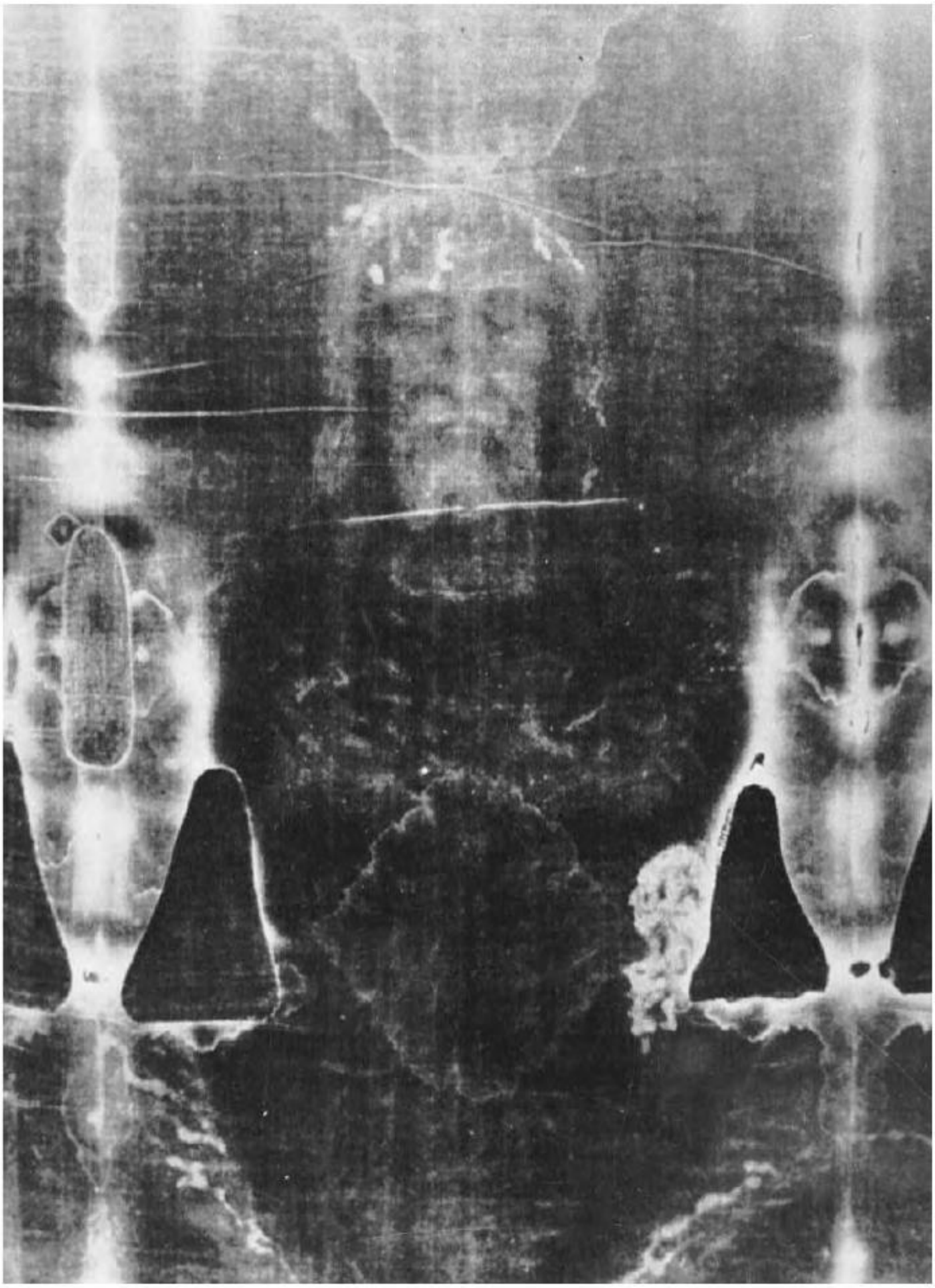
Other researchers who claim the shroud is authentic point out that the 70 varieties of pollen found on the burial cloth come from the Near East and 38 varieties come from within 50 miles of Jerusalem—and 14 of them grow nowhere else.

Among other significant data which would seem to testify to the shroud's authenticity are such items as the following:

- The Z-twist thread and 3-to-1 herringbone-twill weave used in forming the shroud were known only to the Near East and Asia until recent centuries. The cotton fibers in the shroud linen could have come only by weaving on looms of the Near East.
- Microscopes were perfected in the period between 1590 to 1610, and yet meaningful data in the shroud image has been found by magnifications up to 1,200 times. How could an artist working in the 1300s have fashioned such details?
- The feet of the man of the shroud bears smudges of actual dirt that contain travertine aronite, a rare form of calcium that matches the spectral properties of this limestone substance found in caves near Jerusalem's Damascus Gate. No other source is known.
- One oddity of the shroud image is that it can be seen only in an optimum viewing distance of six to 15 feet. Closer or farther and the image fades out of view. Did the supposed hoaxer paint the man on the shroud by holding a six-foot brush at arm's length?

Even the most recent translations of the gospels state that Jesus was nailed to the cross by his hands. But the shroud correctly displays a medical truth: He was nailed through the "space of Destot" in the wrist, because a nail in the soft flesh of the hands would not support a man's weight. Another medical fact is that a spike driven through the "space of Destot" in the wrist will lacerate the median nerve, causing the thumb to flex sharply into the palm. The man of the shroud has no discernible thumbs. Would an artist in the Middle Ages have known such medical idiosyncrasies?

The man was crowned with a *cap* of thorns, typical of the Near East Judeans, not the Greek-style wreath so often depicted in artists' renderings of Jesus' "crown of thorns."



Close-up of the Shroud of Turin. It is still disputed whether this is the authentic shroud of Jesus Christ or a hoax created by people during the Crusades. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

The bloodstains on the shroud are precisely correct, both biblically and anatomically. If the shroud had been lifted off the man, one of two things would have happened: If the blood was still wet the stain on the cloth would smear; if the blood was dry it would have broken the crusted blood that had soaked into the weave. Neither occurred, thus leading some researchers to believe that the body must somehow have dematerialized without the removal of the shroud. If the shroud merely collapsed and was not thrown back, then

the story of Peter and John's arrival at the tomb after Jesus' Resurrection (John 20:1–10) makes better sense when Peter saw "the linen cloths lying" and John "saw and believed."

Although the shroud had some contact with Jesus' body, for scientists have decreed the bloodstains on the cloth to have been made by real blood, the body-image is described by some of the researchers as "made through space" by an "image-making process" which they have named "flash photolysis," because the images are not pressure sensitive in that the back and front images of the man have the same shadow and lack of saturation characteristics. If contact with the bleeding physical body was the only factor, the man's lying on his back should have made the image darker and different.

Many of the critics of the authenticity of the shroud and its images argue that it is nothing more than a finely executed medieval painting. Some skeptics have even claimed that the shroud images were painted by Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519). Such an argument was quickly dissolved by pointing out that the great artist was born in 1452, nearly one hundred years after the shroud had been on exhibit in Lirey in 1357. At the scientific symposium on the shroud conducted in Rome in 1993, Isabel H. Piczek of Los Angeles presented her conclusions that the controversial cloth is not and cannot be a painting of any sort, technique, or medium. Piczek is a professional artist with degrees in physics who has won international awards for painting and figurative draftsmanship. She has personally executed art works in every ancient and modern technique known, including nearly 500 giant-size items in public buildings throughout the world. In her opinion, Piczek cautions that the shroud must not be conserved as a painting would be, "or else we may destroy the only object on Earth which is the blueprint of the future of our cosmos."

There have always been critics, skeptics, and disbelievers when it comes to the authenticity of the shroud. Even King Abgar's second son, Manu V, was a doubter, in spite of his father's alleged cure after viewing the face on the shroud. The sons of the Byzantine emperor were also skeptics. Bishop Henri de Poitieres of Troyes (fl. mid-fourteenth century) vacillated between praising the exhibition in Lirey, then trying to have it closed down. His successor, Bishop Pierre D'Arcis (fl. late-fourteenth century), attempted to stop later showings of the burial cloth in Lirey, but the pope ordered him to cease such efforts or face excommunication.

Critical researchers in the twentieth century found an alleged memo from Bishop D'Arcis written in 1389 and presumably intended for the pope in which the bishop claimed to know the identity of the painter who was responsible for creating the shroud images. The French scholar Ulysee Chevalier (1841–1923) believed in the testimony of the memo and so did the Jesuit Herbert Thurston (1856–1939). Dr. John A. T. Robinson, the English theologian, also accepted the document at first, but he later rejected its allegations and accepted the shroud as genuine. In the 1990s, Parisian researchers determined that the so-called "D'Arcis memo" was no memo at all, but merely a clerk's draft in poor Latin, never dated nor signed nor sent to the Vatican, and with no official copy in either Troyes or the Vatican archives.

In sharp contrast to those critical researchers who attempt to diminish the shroud's credibility are those scientists of faith who are personally convinced that the shroud is truly the one that briefly enveloped the body of Jesus Christ and that the images on its cloth were made by a supernatural energy as part of a spiritual event that Christians call the Resurrection. At the Rome Symposium of 1993, Dr. Gilbert R. Lavoie of the Fallon Clinic, Worcester, Massachusetts, demonstrated that the blood and body images on the burial cloth are of a man who had been suspended upright as if hanging on a cross. According to tradition, the body of Jesus hung on the cross from 9 A.M. until 3 P.M., and he was not placed on his back within the folds of a burial cloth until about 5 P.M. Thus, according to Lavoie, a truly spiritual image resulted on the shroud in order for the image to show Jesus as if hanging on the cross.

Pope John Paul II (1920–) authorized public exhibitions of the shroud for April 18 to

May 31, 1998, and for April 29 to June 11, 2000. Among the latest findings prompted by the most recent showings was the report by two Israeli scientists who stated in June 1999 that plant imprints and pollen found on the shroud supported the premise that it originated in the Holy Land. Avinoam Danin, a botany professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said that the shroud contained images of some plants, such as the bean caper (*Zygophyllum dumosum*), which grows only in Israel, Jordan, and Egypt Sinai desert. The rock rose (*Cistus creticus*) which grows throughout the Middle East was also detected, along with the imprint of a coin minted in the reign of the Roman Emperor Tiberius (42 B.C.E.–37 C.E.), who ruled at the time of the Crucifixion.

Clearly, while a number of scientists debate the accuracy of the radiocarbon dating results—some insisting that the most reliable results date the shroud to 1260–1390—and others defend the authenticity of the burial cloth and argue that it was the one that wrapped Jesus' crucified body until the cosmic event of the Resurrection, one can only echo the words of Archbishop Severino Poletto, the shroud's custodian: "The last word has not yet been said."

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666

The association of the number 666 with the **Antichrist** is derived from Revelation 13:18 in which John the Revelator is told in his apocalyptic vision that the number of the Beast is 666 and that the number stands for a person. In John's world of the first century, the Beast that ruled the Earth would have been the emperor, the caesar, of the Roman Empire, Nero (37C.E.–68 C.E.). Using the Hebrew alphabet, the numerical value of "Caesar Nero," the merciless persecutor of the early Christians, is 666.

Although Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) made it clear when speaking to the apostles that no one will know the exact hour or day of his Second Coming, for many centuries certain Christian theologians have associated the rise of the Antichrist to power and his achievement of a seven-year reign over all the Earth as a kind of catalyst that would set in motion **Armageddon,** the last final battle between good and evil—the ultimate clash between the armies of Jesus Christ and Satan.

Ever since the Protestant Reformation, the pope has been a favorite of certain Evangelicals for the ignominious title. Many of the pontiffs in the Middle Ages did exercise great power over the rulers and the people of the emerging European nations; and consequently, there were numerous embittered princes and fiery Protestant leaders who did seek to affix the blame for a large number of repressive social and religious programs on the Vatican. However, contemporary popes have wielded little political influence, surely none that would place them in world-threatening positions. There have been such men as **Aleister Crowley** (1875–1947), who actually appeared to covet and campaign for the position by calling himself the Beast and 666.

Hollywood has capitalized on the fascination of certain Christians and horror movie fans with the menacing evil of the Antichrist and depicted him in a number of motion pictures. In *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), an unsuspecting young wife (Mia Farrow) is selected to bear the Antichrist after her husband (John Cassavetes) makes a pact with Satan. *The Omen* (1976) spawned a series of three films that follow the Antichrist from early childhood to his position of wealth, power, and charismatic mastery as an adult. In the first of these films, Gregory Peck, as the unsuspecting surrogate father of the Antichrist, is warned of his son's true identity by a number of priests and other individuals who all meet untimely

ends. Although initially he considers such warnings as the babble of the demented, he is later shocked to discover the numerals "666" on his son's scalp and he resolves to do whatever must be done to stop Satan's will from being accomplished. In spite of a valiant effort on the part of the father, who now concludes rightfully that his true son was killed and supplanted by the disciples of the Antichrist, the demon seed continues his destructive path to world domination in two additional films. In the *The Chosen* (1977), Kirk Douglas plays another unaware father, an industrialist specializing in building nuclear power plants, who comes to realize that his son (Simon Ward) is the Antichrist. In *Lost Souls* (2000), a devout teacher played by Winona Ryder must convince an unsuspecting young journalist that he is the Antichrist before the fated hour when his newly awakened demonic awareness will seize control of his consciousness. Arnold Schwarzenegger is challenged by the almost impossible mission of preventing Satan (Gabriel Byrne) from fathering the Antichrist in *End of Days* (2000). In *Stigmata* (2000), Byrne switches sides and plays a priest who fights to thwart satanic interference toward a young stigmatist, a woman who bears the bleeding wounds of Christ's crucifixion. *Bless the Child* (2000) portrays a desperate mother (Kim Basinger) who must somehow prevent her specially gifted and blessed child from becoming the human sacrifice that would grant the Antichrist his full-powered entry into the world.

Christians who believe completely that the end times drama will play out according to certain scriptural references maintain a wary eye for signs of the Antichrist and the onset of the **Apocalypse,** but not all Christians accept the warnings of the advent of the Beast with his telltale numerical designation of 666 or believe that the traditional scenario of the Antichrist and his seven-year reign has any real relevance to the actual "signs in the sky" that will precede the Second Coming of Christ. In today's world the term "antichrist" lost much of its power to provoke fear after the concept entered the popular mass culture. For millions of modern secular men and women, the Beast 666 has become merely a sinister, but always defeated, villain in horror movies, and his once dreaded title is often loosely applied in an offhanded manner to everything from cartoon figures to a wide range of men and women in a vast spectrum of modern society.

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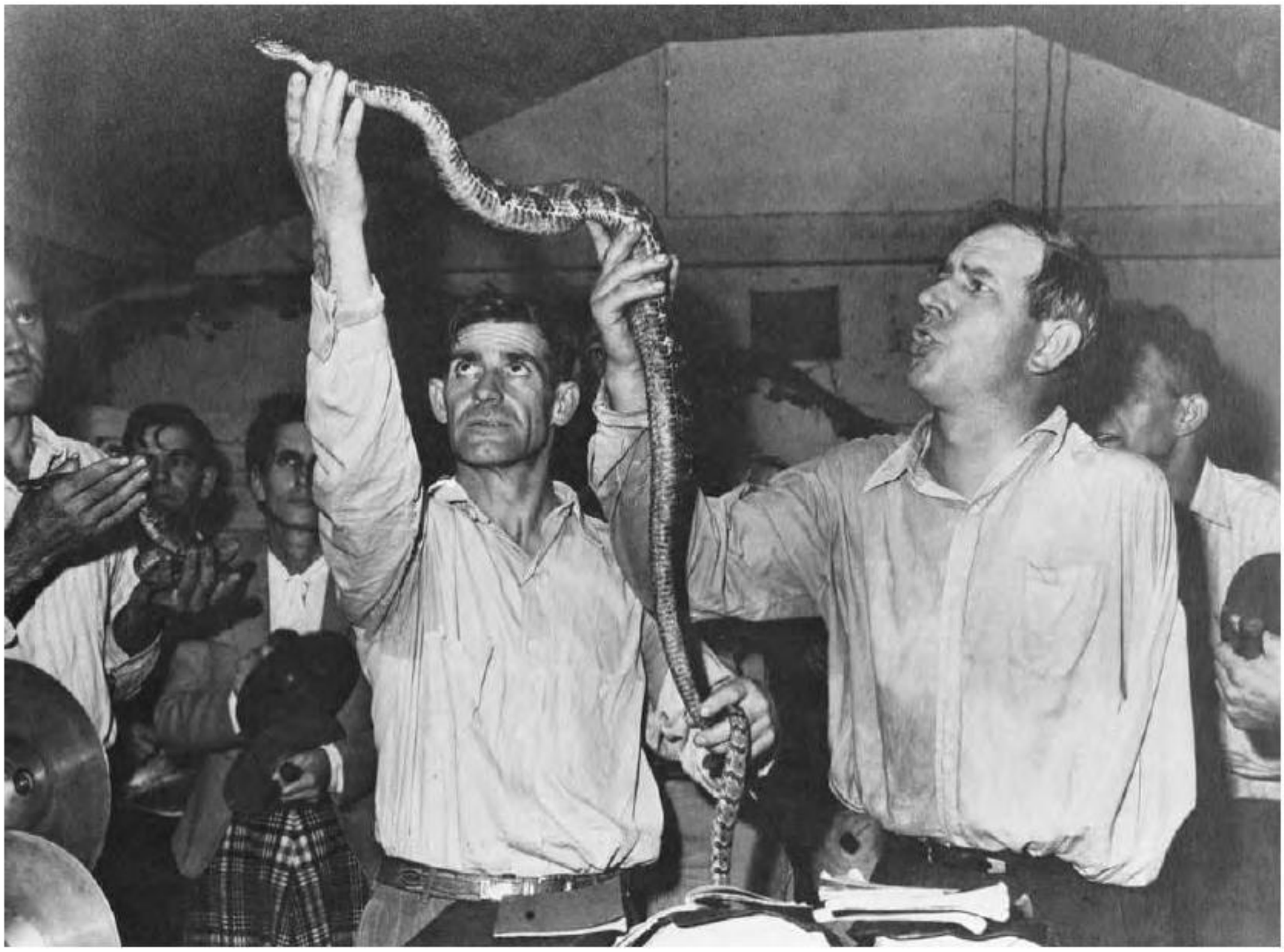
SNAKE HANDLING

In the sixteenth chapter of the gospel of Mark, the resurrected Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) appears to his disciples and, before ascending to heaven, sends them forth into the world to preach the gospel. Jesus promises that all who believe in him shall cast out devils and shall speak with new tongues. In addition, believers "shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them" (Mark 16:17–18).

In 1909, Reverend George Went Hensley (c. 1870s–1955) of the Church of God in Grasshopper, Tennessee, began to teach that those verses in Mark should be taken literally. If believers truly had the Holy Spirit within them, he argued from the pulpit, they should be able to handle rattlesnakes and any number of other venomous serpents. They should also be able to drink poison and suffer no harm whatsoever. Snake handling as a test or demonstration of faith became popular wherever Hensley traveled and preached in the small towns and backwaters of Tennessee, Kentucky, the Carolinas, Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana.

For a time, the Church of God defended the innovation of snake handling that had



According to the gospel of Mark believers "shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them." It is believed in some southern American Pentecostal churches that if a person truly has the Holy Spirit within them, they should be able to handle rattlesnakes and other venomous serpents. Snake handling is used as a test or demonstration of faith. (NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION)

been injected into the prescribed order of service by Hensley, but in 1922, it disavowed the practice. Other Pentecostal churches followed suit and discouraged their members from testing the Holy Spirit by picking up venomous snakes or drinking poison. Undaunted, Hensley established the Church of God with Signs Following.

Some researchers of the religious snake handling phenomenon state that the practice sprang up independently on Sand Mountain, Alabama, around 1912 without any assistance from George Hensley. Within a couple decades, snakes were being handled openly in outdoor worship services in east Birmingham. However, in 1950, the Alabama Legislature, reacting to a number of highly publicized snake fatalities, passed an act making it illegal to "display, handle, use, or exhibit any poisonous snake or reptile in such a manner as to endanger the health of another."

Those who have investigated snake handling have found that it is a popular misconception that the snakes won't bite the snake handlers in their religious ritual or that, if bitten, the handlers, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, won't die. Although exact records are difficult to substantiate, at least 71 people have been killed by poisonous snakebites during religious services in the United States. And that number includes the founder of the snake handling movement, George Went Hensley, who, it has been estimated, had been bitten over 400 times before his death in 1955. While some might consider such deaths as strong reasons to discontinue the practice of actually handling poisonous snakes during services, devout snake handlers say that it is a good thing that one of their members occasionally dies as a result of a snake bite. Such fatalities only prove to skeptics and nonbelievers that they are truly using dangerous snakes in their worship services.

In those rural churches in the Appalachian highlands where snake handling remains popular, no members of the congregations are required to handle the snakes, and in most churches, no one under the age of 18 is permitted to pick up the serpents. The American Civil Liberties Union has defended the religious freedom of snake handlers against various attempts to have the practice abolished. In Thomas Burton's *Serpent-Handling Believers* (1993), Burton states that snake handling is a complex traditional religious belief of a group of American Christians which should be respected for what it is.

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Stigmata

Stigmata are spontaneous bleeding wounds which appear in various places on the body, such as the hands, the feet, the back, the forehead, and the side, and, in the Christian context, are considered to be manifestations of the suffering endured prior to, and during, Jesus' (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) Crucifixion. While theologians debate whether or not St. Paul himself may have been a stigmatic (Galatians 6:17—"I bear on my body the marks of Jesus"), St. Francis of Assisi (1181–1226) suddenly bore the wounds of Christ while praying outside a cave after a 40-day retreat in 1224, thereby becoming the first stigmatic recorded in the annals of church history. St. Francis is also the only stigmatic on whom the wounds in the feet and the hands actually bore representations of nails.

In 1275, a Cistercian nun named Elizabeth received stigmata on her forehead, representing Christ's crown of thorns, after she witnessed a vision of the Crucifixion. Church tradition has it that St. Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) was visited with the marks of Christ's suffering, but through her great humility she prayed that they might become invisible, and, though the pain of the wounds remained, her entreaty was granted and the blood no longer flowed. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* states that the suffering that stigmatics endure is the "essential part of visible stigmata; the substance of this grace consists of pity for Christ, participation in his sufferings, sorrows, and for the same end—the expiation of the sins unceasingly committed in the world." If the stigmatics did not suffer, the wounds would be "but an empty symbol, theatrical representation, conducing to pride." And if the stigmata truly issue from God, it would be unworthy of his wisdom to participate in such futility, "and to do so by a miracle."

While not yet blessed with sainthood, Padre Pio (1887–1968), one of the most well-known stigmatics of the twentieth century, saw a vision of a mysterious person whose hands, feet, and side were dripping blood on August 20, 1918. After Padre Pio was delivered from such a terrifying sight, the priest suffered the first of the stigmata which would cause his wounds to bleed daily for 50 years.

Therese Neumann (1898–1962) was also a stigmatic who became familiar to the general public. Born between Good Friday and Easter at Konnersreuth, Bavaria, Neumann suffered a series of serious accidents that brought blindness, convulsions, and paralysis. Her eyesight was restored on the day of the beatification of St. Therese of Lisieux (1873–1897), April 29, 1923, and on the day of St. Therese's canonization on May 17, 1925, her mobility returned. Then, after a vision of Jesus on March 4, 1926, the stigmata began, and she would suffer bleeding from all the wounds, including shoulders and knees, on Fridays, especially during the church season of Lent. It is claimed that from Christmas 1926 until her death in 1962, Neumann didn't eat or drink anything except daily Communion.

For those saints who were also stigmatics or for those stigmatics who may be authentic, the church has issued three qualifications regarding the production of the phenomena on their bodies:

IS THERE A HIDDEN CODE IN THE BIBLE?

In 1997, Michael Drosnin's book *The Bible Code* claimed that the Hebrew Bible contains a complex code that had predicted events which occurred thousands of years after the ancient texts were first written.

Drosnin's book was based on the work of Dr. Eliyahu Rips, an Israeli mathematician, who discovered the codes along with Doron Witzman and Yoav Rosenberg. The mathematicians first arranged the 304,805 Hebrew letters of the Bible into a large array, removing all spaces and punctuation and running the words together one after another. Then a computer searched for matches in all directions for names, words, and hidden phrases. According to Rips, only the Hebrew Bible may be used, because God gave the Hebrew characters to Moses one at a time, with no spaces or punctuation. The colleagues published a peer reviewed paper in the *Statistical Science Journal* in 1994 regarding their findings when they applied the code to the book of Genesis. Since then, research has indicated that the hidden code exists throughout all the books of the Tanakh in the original Hebrew.

Rips and his associates tested the book of Genesis to see if the code could pick out the names of the 66 Rabbis who had the longest entries in various Jewish annals. The Bible code revealed all 66 names, together with either the Rabbis' birth date or death date. In test after test, the Bible code found people, places, and inventions that did not come into being until 3,000 years after the ancient Hebrew texts had been recorded.

Drosnin, an agnostic, states that his belief in the Bible code was confirmed when Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated in 1995. Drosnin states that he had seen the forecast in the code a year earlier and even warned Rabin of the danger.

While Drosnin is reluctant to state that the Bible code proves that God is its author, others have firmly stated their belief that God guided the ancient scribes and directed them to place the prophecies within the texts.

To test the claims of the Bible code, skeptical mathematicians have downloaded the texts of the Hebrew Bible and the King James Version. In the opinion of these researchers, hidden messages and prophetic statements made about famous politicians, inventors, military men, musicians, and so forth can also be located.

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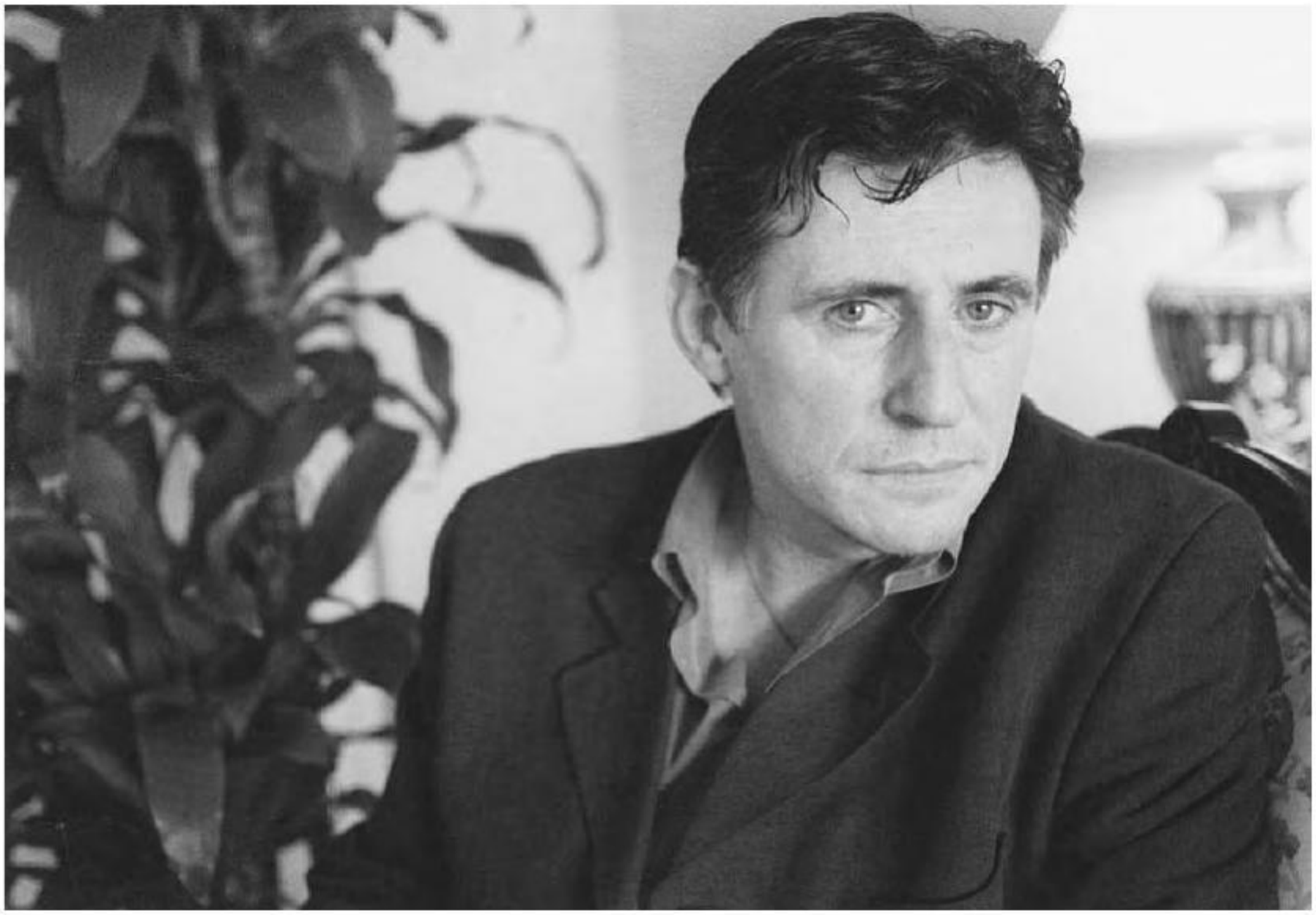
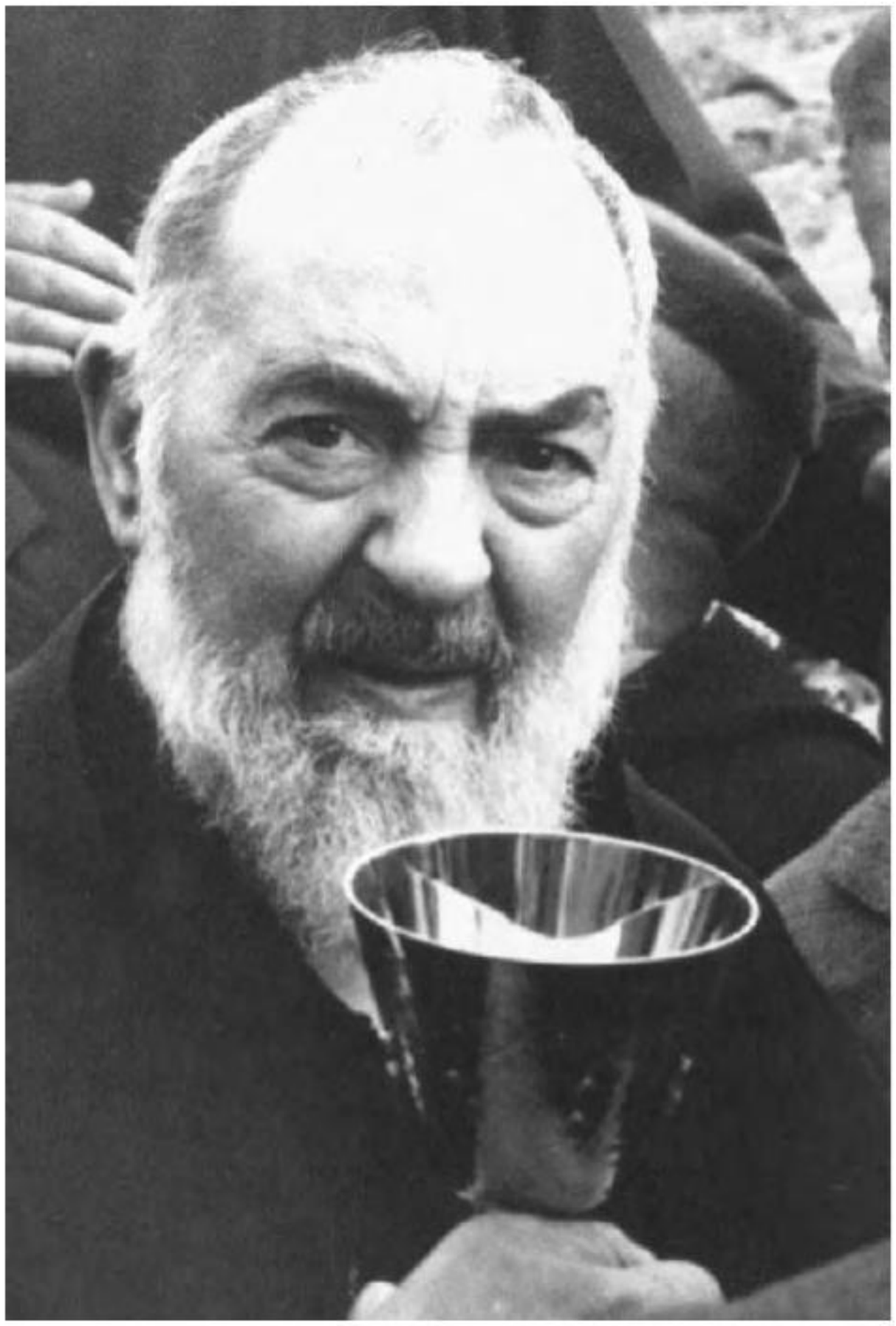


Gabriel Byrne portrays a priest in the movie *Stigmata.* (KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/ AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

1. Physicians could not succeed in curing the wounds with their remedies.
2. Unlike long-lasting wounds in others, those of stigmatics give off no foul or fetid odor.
3. Sometimes the wounds of the stigmatics emit the odor of perfumes.

In April 1998, various media carried the story of a priest who began to manifest stigmata in his side, hands, and feet while serving a parish in Antigua, West Indies. Reverend Gerard Critch was flown to New York to be treated by medical specialists. Dr. Joseph John was quoted as saying that no treatment he had given Critch had worked or been effective. According to Critch's parishioners, they were thrown to the floor by an invisible force or felt their injuries healed when he blessed them. R. Allen Stanford, a banker from the United States who flew Critch to New York City on his private jet, said that oil was oozing from the marks on the priest's feet, as it did from Jesus. "The wounds were real," Stanford said (*Evening Telegram*, April 11, 1998).

The Roman Catholic Church does not see the onset of stigmata as bringing with it any increase of holiness, so its clergy recognizes the real possibility of conscious or unconscious fraud in some of the cases of stigmata reported almost annually. The church also acknowledges the role that psychosomatic medicine might play in explaining many instances of the spontaneous wounds that mimic those of Christ's Crucifixion. Some people who suffer from stigmata report having felt sadness, depression, a general malaise, and physical pain prior to the bleeding. Many stigmatics could be so emotionally involved with the passion of Christ that their imagination could somehow manifest the physiological phenomena of the bleeding wounds. Perhaps those who enter deep states of trance or religious **ecstasy** might trigger a mind-body link capable of



Padre Pio (1887–1968) is one of the most well-known stigmatics of the twentieth century. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

producing stigmata. And the phenomenon is not exclusively a Christian one. Cases are also known of Muslim stigmatics who bear wounds that correspond to those known to have been suffered by Muhammed (c. 570 C.E.–632 C.E.) while doing battle.

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VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE

In Mexico, December 12, Virgin of Guadalupe Day, is a national holiday, and often as many as five million Mexicans—many crawling on bloodied knees—make their annual pilgrimage to the country's most venerated shrine, a basilica for the Virgin Mary in Mexico City. In 1996, eight people were killed and 15 were injured in the press of pilgrims gathered around the site.

The story of the Virgin of Guadalupe is one of a mystery within a miracle. In 1531, a 57-year-old Aztec Indian named Juan Diego (1474–1548), whose native name Cuauhtlatoatzin means "eagle that sings" (or in some translations, "eagle that talks"), claimed to have encountered the Blessed Virgin Mary on four occasions in desolate regions outside of Mexico City. At first she appeared as a beautiful, dark-skinned 14-year-old Mexican Indian girl, who then revealed herself as the "ever-virgin Mary, Mother of God." During later appearances, Mother Mary told Diego that she wished a church built to her in the place where she appeared to him–Guadalupe, the river of the wolf. As proof of her holy appearances, the Queen of Heaven projected an image of herself upon his *tilma* (cloak). It is that artifact that brought Bishop Juan de Zumarraga (1468–1548) of Mexico City and his entire household to their knees when he asked for some kind of tangible sign from the Holy Mother. It is that same image on the *tilma*, set in gold at the center of an elaborate altar, that still awaits today's pilgrim at the basilica of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

It has been said that the dark-skinned image of Mother Mary as a virginal Native American girl helped the Spanish priests convert millions of Mexican Indians to Catholicism. After an extensive examination, the committee from the Holy See in Rome declared the apparitions seen by Juan Diego to be authentic, thus making the miracle one of seven appearances of Mother Mary officially recognized by the Vatican.

Then, in 1929, an image was discovered within the right eye of the image of the Virgin on Juan Diego's *tilma*. Alfonso Marcue, official

photographer of the old Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City, discovered what appeared to be a clear image of a bearded man reflected within the right eye of the Virgin. At first doubting his own senses, Marcue made many black-and-white photographs of the image; and after he had examined them exhaustively, he went to the authorities of the basilica with his incredible finding. He was told to remain silent about his discovery, and out of respect for the church officials, he did.

On May 29, 1951, Jose Carlos Salinas Chavez was examining a particularly good photograph of the face of the Virgin and rediscovered what clearly appeared to be the image of a bearded man reflected in both the right and left eyes of Mother Mary. Since that time, more than 20 experts, including a number of ophthalmologists, have carefully inspected the eyes and the mysterious image.

On March 27, 1956, Dr. Javier Torroella Bueno, a prestigious ophthalmologist, certified the presence of the triple reflection (Samson-Purkinje effect) characteristic of all live human eyes and stated that the resulting images of the bearded man were located precisely where they should be according to such an effect. Bueno also pointed out that the distortion of the images agreed with the normal curvature of the cornea.

In that same year, another experienced ophthalmologist, Dr. Rafael Torrija Lavoignet, using an ophthalmoscope, studied the apparent human figure in the corneas of both eyes, with the location and distortion of a normal human eye, and found that the Virgin's eyes appeared "strangely alive" when he examined them.

While working at IBM in 1979, Dr. Jose Aste Tonsmann, a graduate of environmental systems engineering of Cornell University, scanned a photograph of the Virgin's face on the *tilma* and was astonished to discover what he believed to be other human figures reflected in the eyes. Aste Tonsmann has since theorized that Our Lady of Guadalupe not only left a miraculous image as proof of her apparition to Juan Diego, but may also have left some important messages hidden in her eyes that could not be revealed until new technologies would permit them to be discovered.

On December 12, many Mexicans celebrate the Virgin of Guadalupe Day by visiting the basilica. This painting is by Juan de Villegas. (ARTE PUBLICO PRESS)

Another mystery that had puzzled academic researchers into the phenomena surrounding the Virgin of Guadalupe was how the colored image of the apparition could have been impressed upon the simple *tilma* of a poor Aztec tribesman and how it could have lasted for centuries without falling apart. As early as the eighteenth century, scientists discovered that it was impossible to paint such an image in a fabric of such texture. The *ayate* fibers used by the Aztecs at that time deteriorated after 20 years. Richard Kuhn (1900–1967), a Nobel Prize winner in chemistry, stated in his report of the *tilma* that it had not been painted with natural, animal, or mineral colorings. Since there were no synthetic colorings in 1531, the possibility of a native artist accomplishing a hoax seems out of the question.

In January 2001, Dr. Jose Aste Tonsmann, now with the Mexican Center of Guadalupan Studies, revealed at a conference at the Pontifical Athenaeum Regina Apostolorum in Rome that advances in digital photography now revealed that the images in the Virgin's eyes were those assembled with Bishop Juan de Zumarraga when Juan Diego first unfurled his *tilma* and displayed the miraculous image. By magnifying the iris of the Virgin's eyes 2,500 times and, through mathematical and optical procedures, Aste Tonsmann feels that

he is able to identify all the people imprinted in the eyes. In other words, the Virgin's eyes bear a kind of instant photograph of what occurred the moment the image was unveiled before the bishop.

DELVING DEEPER

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Visions

A vision consists of something seen other than by ordinary sight. Throughout the centuries, mystics, prophets, and ordinary people from all religions have experienced visions from their deities or higher levels of consciousness that have informed them, warned them, or enlightened them. From Genesis to Revelation in the Bible, God uses visions and dreams as a principal means of communicating with his prophets and his people. In Numbers 12:6, God declares, "If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make Myself known to him in a vision and speak to him in a dream." And in Joel 2:28: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I shall pour out my spirit upon flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."

The great Jewish philosopher Maimonides (1135–1204) conceived of revelations received through visions as a continuous emanation from the Divine Being, which is transmitted to all those men and women who are endowed with a certain imaginative faculty and who have achieved a certain moral and mental standard. The revelatory transmission is filtered through the medium of the active intellect, first to the visionary's rational faculty, then to his or her imaginative faculty. In this way the distribution of prophetic **illumination** occurs in conformity with a natural law of emanation.

Roman Catholic scholarship holds that there are two kinds of visions. One is the imaginative vision, in which the object seen is but a mental concept of symbol, such as Jacob's Ladder leading up to heaven. St. Teresa of Avila (151–1582) had numerous visions, including images of Christ, which church authorities have judged were of this symbolic kind of vision. The other is the corporeal vision, in which the figure seen is externally present or in which a supernatural power has so modified the retina of the eye as to produce the effect of three-dimensional solidarity.

In 1976 an extensive survey conducted by the administrators of the Gallup Poll indicated that 31 percent of Americans had experienced an "otherworldly" feeling of union with a divine being. The survey was based on in-home interviews with adults in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation, and a further breakdown of the percentages revealed that 34 percent of the women polled and 27 percent of the men admitted that they had had a "religious experience."

To refute the often-heard suggestion that people with little formal education are more likely to undergo such experiences, the poll disclosed little difference in the educational level of the respondents: college background, 29 percent; high school, 31 percent; grade school, 30 percent. According to the pollsters, "Whether one regards these experiences as in the nature of self-delusion or wishful thinking, the important fact remains that, for the persons concerned, such experiences are very real and meaningful. Most important, perhaps, is the finding that these religious experiences are widespread and not limited to particular groups [or] one's circumstances in life…rich or poor, educated or uneducated, churched or unchurched."

According to a press release issued by the Gallup office in Princeton, New Jersey, these kinds of experiences "appear to have a profound effect on the outlook and direction of a person's life." A 29-year-old office worker in Lynnwood, Washington, told a Gallup interviewer that she had been reading the Bible one night and was unable to sleep. A vision appeared to her that rendered her frozen, motionless. "I saw an unusual light that wasn't there—but was," she said. "There was a

greater awareness of someone else being in that room with me. And ever since, it is as if someone else is walking with me."

A spokesperson for the Gallup Poll commented: "One of the most interesting aspects of these phenomena is that they happen to the nonchurched and the nonreligious as well as to persons who attend church regularly or who say religion plays an important role in their lives."

On January 23, 1994, *USA Today* published the results of an analysis of the most comprehensive data available at that time of private religious experience based on a national sociological survey conducted for the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, which reveals that more than two-thirds of Americans claim to have had at least one mystical experience. According to Jeffrey S. Levin, an associate professor at Eastern Virginia Medical School, Norfolk, Virginia, such experiences as visions and the feeling of being connected to a powerful spiritual force that elevates one's consciousness are reported *less* by those people who are active in church or synagogue. All types of mystical experiences have been around since "time immemorial," Levin acknowledges, but "some kind of stigma" may have prevented people from reporting them. However, while only 5 percent of the population has such experiences somewhat regularly, such occurrences are becoming "more common with each successive generation."

As these many polls and surveys demonstrate, visions come to the religious, the nonreligious, and the antireligious alike. To the psychologist, these experiences may be revelations of the personal unconscious of the individual and attempts at psychic integration or psychic wholeness. Dr. Robert E. L. Masters and Dr. Jean Houston were among the first researchers to have recognized that throughout history people have sought altered states of consciousness as gateways "to subjective realities." At their Foundation for Mind Research, which they established in 1966, they concluded on the basis of hundreds of experiments with normal, healthy persons that the "brain-mind system has a built-in contact point with what is experienced as God, fundamental reality, or the profoundly sacred." (*Time*, October 5, 1970).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, scientists have begun asking if the "brain-mind system," with its built-in contact point with God or a greater reality that produces such mystical experiences as visions, can be better explained in terms of neural networks, neurotransmitters, and brain chemistry. Philadelphia scientist Andrew Newberg, who wrote the book *Why God Won't Go Away* (2001), says that the human brain is set up in such a way as to have spiritual and religious experiences. Michael Persinger, a professor of neuroscience at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, conducts experiments with a helmet-like device that runs a weak electromagnetic signal around the skulls of volunteers. Persinger claims that four in five people report a mystical experience of some kind when they don this magnetic headpiece. Matthew Alper, author of *The "God" Part of the Brain* (1998), a book about the neuroscience of belief, goes so far as to declare that dogmatic religious beliefs that insist that particular faiths are unique, rather than the results of universal brain chemistry, are irrational and dangerous.

Daniel Batson, a University of Kansas psychologist who studies the effect of religion on people, states that the brain may be the hardware through which religion is experienced, but for certain neurotheologians to say that the brain produces religion "is like saying a piano produces music." In his book *The Faith of Biology and the Biology of Faith* (2000), Robert Pollack concedes that religious experience may seem irrational to a materialistic scientist, but he argues that irrational experiences are not necessarily unreal. In fact, he states, they can be just as real, just as much a part of being human, as those things which are known through reason.

Numerous believers in the possibility of experiencing visions and religious apparitions argue that if God created the universe, wouldn't it make sense that he would wire the human brain so it would be possible to have mystical experiences?

Huston Smith (1919–), author of *The World's Religions* (first published as *The Religions of Man* in 1958), was six weeks short of earning his Ph.D. in naturalistic theism—a philosophical system that emphasizes science over religion—when he happened to read philosopher Gerald Heard's (1889–1971) sympathetic treatment of the mystical experience in *Pain, Sex and Time* (1939). Smith said that he experienced an epiphany when he read Heard's argument that mysticism is the true experience of God. He completed his degree in naturalistic theism, but for the next 45 years he has sought out the mystic path in every religion he has encountered. In *Why Religion Matters: The Future of Faith in an Age of Disbelief* (2001), Smith seeks to explain the differences between science and religion. Where science attempts to define reality through numbers, formulas, and facts, religion strives to know it through spiritual practice and devotion. "Scientism," the belief that only science has all the answers, ultimately fails when it attempts to answer the questions that have troubled humans since the beginning of human existence—who are we…why are we here, and how should we behave while we are here?

Writer Eddie Ensley believes that the visionary dimension of spirituality has the ability to transform a person and reconnect humanity to its innate yearning for God. Ensley, of Native American descent, states in *Visions: The Soul's Path to the Sacred* (2000), that human beings are "fashioned to see God" and nurture a "deep desire for this mystery and an ability to be open to it and receive it." Ensley, who has a master's degree in pastoral ministry from Loyola University in New Orleans, also says that the Christian, Jewish, and Native American ancestors "understood the subtle interrelationships of flesh and spirit more accurately than we do. When they received visions, they knew what to do with them."

Because sociological, psychological, and religious research have all discovered that visions are much more common than scholars once believed, Ensley is of the opinion that such experiences should be treated differently by both the church and society at large. "People who have mystical experiences are not crazy," he said. "Some research suggests that they tend to be (mentally) healthier."

Numerous studies substantiate Ensley's high opinion regarding the mental health of visionaries. Among such studies is one conducted by psychologists at Carleton University of Ottawa, Canada, published in the November 1993 issue of the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, in which they reported that those individuals examined who had "seemingly bizarre experiences," such as mystical visions, missing time, and so forth, were just as intelligent and psychologically healthy as other people. Recognizing that their findings contradicted the previously held notion that such individuals had "wild imaginations" and could be "easily swayed into believing the unbelievable," the psychologists who had administered an extensive battery of psychological tests to the subjects found that they tended to be "white-collar, relatively well-educated representatives of the middle class."

Albacete, a Roman Catholic priest and a professor of theology at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, acknowledges that until recently psychiatric orthodoxy held the view that the more "sensational a person's religious experience (voices, visions…extraordinary missions), the more pathological the underlying conflict." Then, in 1994, the American Psychiatric Association softened its position and officially recognized the "religious or spiritual" as a normal dimension of life.

"As a believer and as a priest, as well as a former scientist," Albacete says that he finds himself "somewhat nervous about this blurring." He suggests that it is only right that psychiatrists and neurologists should find it difficult to incorporate the transcendent into scientific methodology and that they should look upon mystics and visionaries as if they were suffering mental disturbances. "If the religious experience is an authentic contact with a transcendent mystery, it not only will but should exceed the grasp of science," he reasons. "Otherwise what about it would be transcendent?"

Albacete quotes Monika Grygiel, who told him that as a psychiatrist, she experienced "great poverty before the mystery perceived in the religious experience." As a psychiatrist

who was also a person of faith, she said that her hope was that she would not "destroy the patient's extraordinary experience, but help him or her integrate it into the rest of life as harmoniously as possible."

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WEEPING STATUES AND ICONS

She was like thousands of other plaster Madonnas manufactured at a plant in Sicily and sold throughout the country for a few lira. This particular Madonna was sold as a wedding present from a friend who decided that such a statue would be an appropriate gift for Antionetta and Angelo Iannusco, who were married in Syracuse, Sicily, in the spring of 1953. Then, on the morning of August 29, 1953, as Antionetta prayed devoutly to the Blessed Mother to grant her surcease from the pains of her pregnancy, the statue began to weep.

At first her mother-in-law and sister-in-law were skeptical, but then they witnessed a virtual torrent of tears flowing from the eyes of the plaster Madonna. Angelo, who prided himself on his atheistic philosophy and communistic politics, became so moved by the apparent supernatural manifestation that he left the Communist Party and assisted the priest as he said mass over the weeping Madonna.

Doubting neighbors, cynical journalists, and rational, scientific investigators were baffled by the phenomenon of the weeping statue in the Iannusco household. When news of the miracle Madonna spread throughout Italy, thousands of people hurried to view it for themselves. The southeastern Sicilian community's hotels were quickly swamped with requests for accommodation.

Before the Iannusco's home could be crushed by the onslaught of curious pilgrims, the Syracuse Police Department agreed to remove the little Madonna to their headquarters for safekeeping. As the squad car moved through the streets, a patrolman carefully held the statue on his lap. Soon his jacket was drenched with tears. A skeptical detective caught several tears in a chemist's vial and, without identifying the liquid, sent the specimen to a police laboratory for analysis. The next morning the irritated director of the lab berated him for wasting his time analyzing such substances as human tears.

Hardly any time passed before the crippled, the lame, and the ill from all over Italy were soon gathering before the weeping Madonna. The tears were caught on a cloth and wiped on the bodies of the afflicted. A middle-aged man recovered the use of a crippled arm. A three-year-old girl stricken with polio was able to discard the stainless steel braces that had encased her twisted legs. An 18-year-old girl who had been struck dumb 11 years before began to speak. Hundreds of others claimed to have received a healing blessing from the tears of the little Madonna.

The Madonna's tears ceased to flow on the fourth day of the phenomenon, but exactly one month later, the statue was carried through the streets of Syracuse at the head of a procession of 30,000 people. Since that day, thousands of pilgrims have flocked to the shrine of the little Madonna, including more than a hundred bishops and archbishops and several cardinals. Her glassed-wall case, capped with a bronze cross, is surrounded by dozens of crutches and braces that have been left there as silent testimony of hundreds of miracle healings. Hopeful that their city would become known as the "Italian Lourdes," the citizens of Syracuse purchased a 12-acre site and constructed a lattice-type pagoda shrine for the Madonna. Large ramps lead up to the entrance and the 400-foot high walls.

TEARS OF BLOOD

A man named Fabio Gregori of Civitavecchia, near Rome, became extremely devout after surviving an automobile crash in 1993. To aid in his devotions, his priest Father Pablo gave him a 17-inch replica of the statue of the Madonna that now stands in Medjugorje, Bosnia. Father Pablo blessed the statuette with holy water and told Gregori that Mary would be his guardian. Reverently, Gregori placed the image in a niche in the backyard grotto that he had created for his family's prayers.

On February 2, 1995, Gregori and his wife were getting ready to attend church when their daughter ran into the house shouting that the statue was crying tears of blood. The statue of Mother Mary wept tears of blood for the next four days. Soon the grotto was overrun by thousands people. Many soaked handkerchiefs in the blood, and some claimed that they were healed of their afflictions after wiping the blood on their bodies.

When word of the miracle reached Bishop Girolamo Grillo, he requested that the statue be turned over to the church for scientific examination. Gregori willingly complied, and the commission assembled by Bishop Grillo conducted an extensive examination of the statue, which included X-rays and a CAT scan.

Bishop Grillo admitted his initial skepticism, but when the commission found no evidence of trickery and determined that the tears were composed of human blood, he had changed his mind.

After the examination, the tears of blood ceased. But thousands of pilgrims continued to seek healing and inspiration from the statuette, and it was placed in the St. Agostino church in Pantano, near Civitavecchia.

Bishop Grillo's conversion to the authenticity of the weeping Madonna did little to quiet the accusations of fraud that had begun to arise from skeptics. Amid the controversy, Fabio Gregori and his family were named often as the most likely instigators of the deception. In spite of his denials, skeptics continued their investigations of the weeping Madonna.

Later, a DNA examination of the bloodstains revealed that they were from a male, and researchers argued that if the tears were the Madonna's blood, they should have come from a female. Gregori was suspected of placing drops of his own blood upon the statuette. Bishop Grillo said it had bled when it was far away from Gregori; he stated that the male blood was Jesus', not Mother Mary's, which resulted in the critics accusing Bishop Grillo of perpetrating a "pious fraud."

Although it will perhaps remain a subject of controversy, each year the statuette attracts thousands of pilgrims and is said to be responsible for scores of miracles.

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Weeping Statues Archive. http://www.mcn.org/1/miracles/weeping.html. 24 October 2001.

Thirty-six small chapels surround the shrine and await the devout.

In a message to the Sicilians in 1958, Pope Pius XII (1876–1958) said: "So ardent are the people of Sicily in their devotion to Mary that who would marvel if she had chosen the illustrious city of Syracuse to give a sign of her grace?"

While the skeptical explain weeping statues and icons of the Madonna, Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), or other holy figures as bizarre moisture condensation at best and as outright fraud at the worst, throughout the world and all of Roman Catholic Christendom, the ordinary statues or paintings become highly venerated objects of faith. As the old saying goes, "For those who believe, no explanation is needed. For those who do not believe, no explanation is possible."

Just before Christmas in 1996, a painting of Jesus was seen by hundreds of eyewitnesses to be weeping red tears. This painting was no ordinary icon, for it hangs in the Bethlehem Church of the Nativity, above the spot where Christian tradition maintains Jesus was born. A Muslim cleaning lady was the first to see a light that came from the painting just prior to the tears flowing from the eyes of Jesus. Since her sighting, thousands of Christians of all denominations, along with many Jews and Muslims, have witnessed the tears.

Among other recent manifestations of weeping statues and icons are the following:

Rooty Hill, near Sydney, Australia: Since 1994, tears have streamed from the eyes of a statue of Our Lady of Fatima in a small, private home.

Grangecon, Ireland: Three weeks after a retired postmaster and her daughter noticed tears and drops of blood tricking from the eye of a statue of the Madonna one day in 1994, 3,000 visitors from all over the world had arrived to witness the phenomenon for themselves.

The phenomena associated with the madonnas and the icons of various saints and holy figures that appear to issue tears are worldwide. To the skeptical, such phenomena can be easily explained as moisture gathering in the eye hollows of the statues due to condensation, sudden changes in humidity, or outright fraud. The weeping of blood is dismissed as normal condensation colored by the reddish-hued paints so often used in the formation of religious statues. For the faithful, who point to dozens of dramatic healings, hundreds of mystical experiences, and thousands of religious conversions as their evidence that something supernatural is occurring around these icons, such phenomena as the weeping madonnas are likely to be interpreted as physical signs that the spiritual presence of the holy figure is with them.

Bleeding Rosa Mystica statue. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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The weeping statue of Rosa Mystica in Maamechelen, Belgium. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

demon possession When low-level disincarnate spirits invade and take over a human body.

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.

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.

guardian angel A holy, divine being that watches over, guides, and protects humans.

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.

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 portend good or evil or indicate how someone or something will fare in the future.

Qur'an (Koran) 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. 570C.E.–632 C.E.) by the archangel Gabriel.

shamanic exorcism When a shaman, or tribal medicine-holy person, performs a ceremonial ritual to expel the disincarnate spirits from a person.

Tanakh (Also known as Tanach.) 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.

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.

Chapter Exploration

Egyptian Mystery Schools
Akhenaten
Isis
Osiris

Greek Mystery Schools
Delphi
Dionysus
Eleusis

Christian Mystery Schools, Cults, Heresies
Black Madonna
Cathars
Gnosticism
Manichaeism

Tribal Mysteries
Ghost Dance
Macumba
Santeria

Satanic Cults

The Rise of Satanism in the Middle Ages
Black Mass
Catherine Montvoisin
Gilles de Rais

Anton LaVey's First Church of Satan

Temple of Set

UFO Cults
Aetherius Society
Heaven's Gate
The Raelians

Twentieth-Century Spiritual Expression
Branch Davidians
Eckanar
Falun Gong
Order of the Solar Temple
The People's Temple
Scientology

Chapter 4
Mystery Religions and Cults

Throughout the history of organized religion there have been congregants who became dissatisfied with the structure of orthodoxy. These people left to develop their own forms of worship. The new groups were considered heretical by the mainstream religions, and were branded as "cults." In other instances, those who practiced ancient forms of deity worship that were before the more recently established religions were identified as "devil-worshippers." In this chapter, a number of faith groups that have been called cults and heresies are examined.

INTRODUCTION

From the very beginnings of organized religion in Egypt, Sumer, and Babylonia (c. 3000 B.C.E.), certain members of the established or state religion have become dissatisfied with the structure of orthodox worship and have broken away from the larger group to create what they believe to be a more spiritually transcendent and personal form of religious expression. Sometimes these 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 revelator's teaching may seem unorthodox or heretical to the beliefs of the larger body of worshippers, its members are branded as cultists or heretics. In other instances, those practitioners of ancient wisdom who celebrate the rituals of a religion that existed long before the dominant faith had established itself are condemned as devil-worshippers. It has been observed that the god of the old religion often becomes the devil of the faith that has supplanted it.

Often, the members of cults are forced to meet in secret due to oppression by the established majority religion and the state or because of their own wishes to practice their faith in private. Because these groups often require their members to swear to maintain the strictest of silence and secrecy regarding the rites and rituals employed by their religion, the general term "mysteries" is often applied to them. 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 lips and to keep secret the rites of the cult.

In ancient times, the students who would be initiates of the mystery schools were well aware that they must undergo the rigors of disciplined study and the training of body, soul, and spirit. In order to attain the self-mastery demanded by the priests of the mysteries, the newcomers understood that they would undergo a complete restructuring of their physical, moral, and spiritual being. The priests, the hierophants, preached that only by developing one's faculties of will, intuition, and reason to an extraordinary degree could one ever gain access to the hidden forces in the universe. Only through complete mastery of body, soul, and spirit could one see beyond death and perceive the pathways to be taken in the afterlife. Many times these mysteries were taught in the form of a play and celebrated away from the cities in sacred groves or in secret temples.

In contemporary usage, the word "cult" generally carries with it very negative connotations and associations. Many men and women, who draw upon stereotypes created by sensationalism in the media, hear the word and immediately think of devil-worshippers sacrificing babies or black-swathed zealots, carrying bombs under their robes, intent on blowing up a church, synagogue, or mosque in order to appease their angry god of wrath. Too often, it seems, the word "cult" has become synonymous with "hate," and religious hatreds tend to have long memories.

Writing in the March 15, 1993, issue of *Time* magazine, Lance Morrow suggested that every cult is a kind of nationalism with citadels that "bristle with intolerant clarities and with high-caliber weapons." Scratch any aggressive tribalism or nationalism surface and one is likely to find "a religious core, some older binding energy of belief or superstition, previous to civic consciousness, previous almost to thought." Here, Morrow discovered, is the great paradox—God-love, the life-force, the deepest well of compassion "is capable of transforming itself into a death force, with the peculiar annihilating energies of belief."

A number of apocalyptic cults, such as AUM Supreme Truth, the **Branch Davidians,** and the **People's Temple,** have seen signs in contemporary society that they have interpreted as omens that the end-times are fast approaching. Because these groups want to isolate their members and prepare to defend themselves during **Armageddon,** they have frightened the general population by their stockpiling of arms and their occasional anti-social acts. The mass suicides carried out by members of **Heaven's Gate,** People's Temple, and **Order of the Solar Temple** have also presented negative and alarming images of what many believe to be typical cultist practice.

However, for every Heaven's Gate seeking to send its members to a "higher level" aboard a UFO, there is an **Aetherius Society,** wherein its members simply wish to convey the messages of hope and good will that they believe was given to them by the Space Brothers, extraterrestrial visitors in the skies. For every AUM Supreme Truth releasing poison gas in a crowded Japanese train station, there is a **Falun Gong** that trains its members to be emissaries of peace and champions of civil rights in China. Caution must be used in labeling any seemingly unorthodox group of religionists as a cult; what is regarded as antisocial or blasphemous expression by some may be hailed as sincere spiritual witness by others.

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Egyptian Mystery Schools

For more than 3,000 years, the mystery schools of Egypt have epitomized the ultimate in secret wisdom and knowledge. As in ancient times, certain contemporary scholars and researchers insist that the great teachers who presided over the Egyptian mystery schools had to have come from some extraordinary place. Perhaps, it has been theorized, they were wise masters who survived the destruction of the lost continent of **Atlantis** and made their way to the early civilization of Egypt, where they helped elevate it to a greatness far in advance of other cultures of that era. Some have even suggested that the entity known as the god **Osiris** was an extraterrestrial astronaut from the Pleiades, who first visited Egypt in prehistoric times when it was composed of barbaric tribes. Because he came from

Egyptian Gods and Goddesses

- *Amen:* A creation-deity
- *Anubis:* God of the dead
- *Bast:* Cat goddess
- *Bes:* God to guard against evil spirits and misfortune
- *Chons:* God of the moon
- *Dua:* Protector of the stomach of the dead
- *Geb:* God of the Earth
- *Hathor:* Cow goddess
- *Isis:* Mother goddess
- *Ka:* God for the vital force of life
- *Maat:* Goddess of truth and justice
- *Min:* Egyptian fertility god
- *Mut:* Wife of Amen, mother of Khons
- *Nephthys:* Goddess of the dead
- *Nut:* Goddess of the sky and of the heavens
- *Osiris:* God of the underworld and of vegetation
- *Qetesh:* Goddess of love and beauty
- *Ra:* God of the sun
- *Selket:* Goddess of childbirth
- *Set:* God of chaos
- *Shu:* God of the air
- *Sobek:* Crocodile god
- *Taweret:* Hippopotamus goddess and protective deity of childbirth
- *Wepwawet:* God of war and of funerals

Source:

"Social Science Data Lab: Egyptian Gods Theme." http://sobek.colorado.edu/LAB/GODS/index.html. 12 November 2002.

an advanced extraterrestrial culture, say the proponents of this theory, he was considered a god and became the founder of the mystery schools and raised the primitive Egyptians' standard of living to a remarkable degree.

Even many conservative scholars of the history of religion have a sense that the mystery schools of Egypt contain within their teachings a particular knowledge that came, if not from prehistoric times, from ancient times. The earliest human records legible, the **Pyramid Texts of Egypt** (c. 3000 B.C.E.), contain many prayers that are quoted from a far more ancient period, and it is apparent that the prayers were used in the texts as magical formulas and spells.

THE *earliest, legible human records, known as the* ***Pyramid Texts of Egypt*** *(c. 3000 B.C.E.), contained many prayers which were used as magical formulas and spells.*

The mysterious first initiator into these sacred doctrines was known as Toth and later to the Greeks by his more familiar name of Hermes. Hermes-Toth is a generic name that designates a man, a caste, and a god at the same time. As a man, Hermes-Toth is the originator of a powerful system of magic and its first initiator; as a caste, he represents the priesthood, the repository of ancient wisdom; as a god, Hermes becomes Mercury for the Greeks, the god who delivers messages to mortals from the Olympiad and the god who initiates mortals into transcendent mysteries. Later, the Greek disciples of this secret tradition would call him **Hermes Trismegistus** (three times great), and he would be credited for originating the material contained in 42 books of esoteric science.

In the time of the Ramses (c. 1300 B.C.E.), Egypt shone as a beacon light of civilization throughout the known world, and while the leaders of foreign nations sought to barter for the empire's rich produce in order to avert local famines and to make treaties with pharaoh in order to avert his military might, seekers of the divine sciences came from the distant shores of Asia Minor and Greece to study in the sanctuaries with magi and hierophants who they believed could give them the secrets of immortality. The students who would be initiates of the mystery schools were well aware that they must undertake the rigors of disciplined study and the training of body, soul, and spirit. They had heard from former initiates that in order to attain the mastery demanded by the priests of the mysteries that the newcomers would undergo a complete restructuring of their physical, moral, and spiritual being. According to the credo of the mysteries, only by developing one's faculties of will, intuition, and reason to an extraordinary degree could one ever gain access to the hidden forces in the universe. Only through complete mastery of body, soul, and spirit could one see beyond death and perceive the pathways to be taken in the afterlife. Only when one has conquered fate and acquired divine freedom could he or she, the initiate, become a seer, a magician, an initiator.

The Greek philosopher **Pythagoras** (c. 580–c. 500 B.C.E.) learned the secret doctrine of numbers, the heliocentric system of the universe, music, astrology, astronomy, mathematics, and geometry from the powerful Egyptian Magi. Before he established his own school of philosophy in southern Italy, Pythagoras spent 22 years in the temples of Egypt as an initiate in the ancient mysteries.

A particularly interesting aspect of the Egyptian mystery schools is that for centuries the pharaohs themselves were the pupils and instruments of the hierophants, the magicians, who presided over the temples and cults of **Isis** and **Osiris.** Each pharaoh received his initiation name from the temple, and the priests were honored with the roles of counselors and advisors to the throne. Some have even referred to the rule of ancient Egypt as government of the initiates.

Although the ancient Egyptians never appeared to produce a philosophical system in the manner of the Greeks or the Romans, the mysteries produced a remarkable number of

systematized theologies that dealt with the essential questions about the true nature of humankind and its relationship to the cosmos. The hierophants created theological constructs and formulated esoteric answers that brought initiates and aspirants to the great religious cities of Heliopolis, Memphis, Hermopolis magna, Abydos, and Thebes.

Pharoah Akhenaten.
(CORBIS CORPORATION)

Delving Deeper

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Akhenaten

Some scholars credit the pharaoh Amenhotep IV, who ruled Egypt (c. 1358–1340 B.C.E.), with being an astonishing visionary who conceived of monotheism in a time when multiple gods flourished. Amenhotep IV chose to call himself Akhenaten. Because of his revolutionary religious views, his contemporaries chose to call him "heretic," and he remains a controversial historical figure to this day.

During the so-called Old Kingdom period of Egyptian history (c. 2700–2185 B.C.E.), pharaohs were considered to be divine, representatives of the many gods of ancient Egypt, and the earthly incarnation of the "Great God," the sun god, Ra. During the Middle Kingdom (c. 2000–1785 B.C.E.) when the Egyptian power base shifted from Heliopolis, near the junction of Upper and Lower Egypt, to Thebes in Upper Egypt, the Theban god "Amun" became combined with Ra to become Amun-Ra. Although he was generally depicted in human form, Amun-Ra was still considered the Great God/Creator Being and still identified with the sun, and since Egypt under the Theban kings entered into a period of great power and posterity, he was esteemed as a mighty and benevolent god.

When Amenhotep IV became pharoah about the year 1367 B.C.E., he inherited his father's name, as well as his throne. Amenhotep means "Amun is content," but the young ruler neglected his responsibility to Amun and paid special attention to the "aten," the representation of the sun's disc and a symbol of the sun god Ra. While there is evidence that the pharoah's mother, Queen Tiye, may have been associated with a cult of the Aten and may have been influential in her son's growing belief in a single god; his spiritual path was established at an early age. Choosing to call himself Akhenaten (It is pleasing to the Aten), the pharoah declared that there was only one god, his father Aten. By his royal decree, the worship of Amun was to be suppressed and his very name was to be chiseled away from any statues, monuments, temples, or city walls throughout all of Egypt. Likewise, images of all of the ancient representations of the Egyptian gods—Osiris, Horus, Isis, and so forth—were to be destroyed. Even the centuries-old Osirian funerary rites were to be abandoned and the name of Osiris was to be replaced in the mortuary texts by prayers to the Aten. Aten also directed Akhenaten to disassociate himself with the city sacred to Amun, and to establish a new holy city, a new capital for Egypt, called Akhetaton or Amarna

(known today as Tell el-Amarna), 300 miles north of Thebes. The mystically enlightened Akhenaten stayed true to tradition only in that he, as pharoah, was the single most unique son of the sun god on Earth and only through his physical being could other mortals approach the Great God.

Akhenaten insisted upon naturalism in all of Egyptian life, including its artistic representation of the pharoah and his family. Such a command to portray only truth in art gave posterity a unique portrait of this religious reformer who so jarred history. While the portraits and the famous statue of his queen, Nefertiti, have allowed her to be recognized as one of the great beauties of the ages, the king himself appears to have been far from majestic in appearance. Narrow-shouldered and pear-shaped in body, his head is abnormally elongated with a drooping jaw. Only in his mysterious, pensive eyes does one glimpse a fleeting shadow of the soul that sought to persuade a kingdom to understand his belief in monotheism.

For the 17 or so years of his reign, Akhenaten was so absorbed in preaching his new faith that he sought to conquer no new territories—nor did he heed the reports of his military commanders and allies to shore up the defenses of Egypt's borders. To the dismay of those who had grown wealthy with the expansion of the Egyptian empire, Akhenaten was not the great warrior-pharoah that so many of his predecessors to the throne had been. Neither was he an effective missionary, for the angry, dispossessed priests of Amun and the outcast servants of the many other gods only bided their time to resume control of the spiritual needs of the Egyptian people. While some scholars maintain that Akhenaten's experiment in monotheism has had lasting effect upon the religions of today, the cult of Aten appeared to have had no real lasting effect upon the religious framework of Egypt.

Recent scholarship has suggested that about the twelfth year of his reign, Nefertiti and Akhenaten became estranged and that he may have taken another queen who might bear him a son. Others have argued he elevated his son-in-law Smenkhkare to share the throne with him in a kind of co-rulership capacity. Still other scholars have debated that Nefertiti herself ascended the throne after Akhenaten died a natural death or was killed by those who condemned him as a heretic. All that is certain is that the son-in-law who succeeded Akhenaten soon changed his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun, thereby indicating his allegiance to the Theban god of Amun, rather than Aten, the god of Akhenaten. It is also evident that the priests and followers of Amun achieved their revenge on the heretic pharoah by obliterating his name and the name of his god from all monuments, statues, temples, and city walls throughout Egypt.

In 1907, a mummy was found in a violated tomb in the Biban-el-Moluk that some Egyptologists theorized might well contain the remains of Akhenaten. While such claims have not yet been verified, perhaps modern pathology might one day solve another controversy that has been provoked by the mystical pharoah.

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ISIS

Around the year 2000 B.C.E. Egypt was invaded and partially conquered by bands of shepherd-kings from Asia called *Hyksos*, who occupied the areas of the Delta and Middle Egypt. The invaders brought with them a culture that was corrupt by Egyptian standards, and for a time it seemed as though the life and soul of Egypt was threatened. However, the priesthood that kept alive the ancient knowledge of Hermes withdrew to hidden sanctuaries and temples and practiced the secret mysteries. While they outwardly bowed to the foreign gods, they maintained their old traditions and believed in a time when the dynasties of Egypt would be restored in all their magnificence.

It was during this time that the priests began to propagate the legend of Isis, goddess of enchantment and magic, and her husband **Osiris,** father of the great war god Horus, finally conqueror of northern Upper Egypt. Osiris came into conflict with Set, who killed and dismembered him, scattering his body parts in the Nile. Death didn't eliminate Osiris, for Isis, incarnation of the divine mother goddess, used her magic to put him back together. Osiris and his doctrines were concerned with the problems of life, death, resurrection, and an afterlife.

The initiate who wished to attain mastery over the mysteries of life after death would be sent to knock at the door of the great temple of Thebes or of Memphis. Here, he had been told, the priests could teach what Isis and Osiris knew. If the newcomer were admitted, the priest of Osiris would question him about the place of his birth, his family lineage, and the temple where he had received his elementary instruction. In a brief but revealing interrogation, if the student was found unworthy of the mysteries, he would be sent quickly away. If the seeker appeared to be one who sincerely desired to learn the truth of the mysteries, he would be led through a corridor to an underground crypt where a large statue of Isis hid the doorway to an inner sanctuary. The goddess's face was veiled, with an inscription that advised all initiates that no mortal could ever lift her veil and look upon her true features until the moment of death.

Within the hidden sanctuary were two columns, one colored black, the other red. The priest explained to the novice that the red column represented the ascension of the spirit into the light of Osiris, while the black one signified the captivity of the spirit in physical matter. Whoever sought the mysteries risked madness or death, the initiate was warned. Once the door closed behind him, he would no longer be able to turn back.

Those novices who chose to go forward were assigned a week of menial tasks working with the temple servants and forced to observe a strict silence. When the evening of the ordeals arrived, two *neocoros*, assistants of the hierophant, led the candidate to the secret sanctuary, a dark room where statues of the ancient gods and goddesses, entities with human bodies and animal heads, appeared foreboding and threatening in the flickering torchlight. On the far side of the room, a hole in the wall, flanked by a human skeleton and a mummy, appeared just large enough for someone to enter on hands and knees. Here, the novice was given another opportunity to turn back. Or, if he had the courage, he was to crawl into the tunnel and continue on his way.

Isis. (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

With only a small lamp to drive back the shadows of the cramped corridor, the novice crawled on his hands and knees, hearing over and over a deep sepulchral voice warning that fools who coveted knowledge were certain to perish in the tunnel. As the initiate proceeded forward, he eventually found himself in a wider area where he began to descend an iron ladder. But as he reached the lowest rung, he saw below him only a gaping abyss. There seemed no choice left to him. He could not go back, and he could surely die if he stepped off the ladder into what might be a drop of thousands of feet into the blackness below him.

It was at this point that the fortunate initiate, if the oil in his small lamp had held out,

would notice a staircase carved into a crevice to his right. Stepping into the crevice and ascending the spiral staircase, he would find himself entering a great hall and being congratulated by a magician called a *pastophor*, a guardian of sacred symbols, for having passed the *first* test.

Before the next ordeal, the *pastophor* explained the sacred paintings and the 22 secret symbols on the walls of the great hall. These represented the 22 first mysteries and the alphabet of their secret science, the universal keys, the source of all wisdom and power. Each letter and each number given in the language of the mysteries had its repercussion in the worlds of the divine, the intellectual, and the physical.

The second test involved passing through a great furnace of flames. Those initiates who refused, protesting that to enter such a wall of fire could only result in death, never got close enough to see that it was all a clever optical illusion and that there was a safe pathway through the middle. Following the trial by fire was the trial by water, which offered no illusion, but only a walk through a chest-high dark and stagnant pool.

Two assistants helped pull the novice from the dank pool, escorted him to a room with a tub filled with warm and perfumed water, then left him to dry off and to dress in fine linens while awaiting the hierophant. Exhausted from his ordeals, the initiate could enjoy the bath, and later lie on a soft bed to relax while awaiting the priest.

Soon music sounded from an invisible group of musicians, and within a few moments, a lovely young woman, appearing much like the goddess Isis herself, entered the room where the initiate lay resting upon the bed. Heavy with perfumes, moving in rhythm to the sounds of harp, flute, and drum, the personification of Isis would do her best to tempt and seduce the novice.

If she succeeded, the initiate failed. He would be sent away from the temple with the admonishment that he had triumphed over death, fire, and water, but he had not learned to conquer himself. He had succumbed to the first temptation of the senses that he encountered after the tests, and he fallen into the abyss of matter.

If, however, the initiate had resisted the seductress, 12 *neocoros* would enter the room to lead him in triumph into the sanctuary of Isis, where the priests awaited him beneath a massive statue of the goddess. Beneath this representation of Isis, a gold rose at her breast, wearing a crown of seven rays, and holding her son Horus in her arms, the aspirant would take oaths of silence and submission as a disciple of Isis. From that day forward, he would be a recipient of the mysteries of Isis.

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OSIRIS

The god Osiris appears in the **Pyramid Texts** (c. 2400 B.C.E.), the earliest of Egyptian records, as the deity of the royal mortuary ritual. The ancient myths proclaim that Osiris first received renown as a good king, a peaceful leader of a higher culture in the eastern Delta, then as a powerful lord over all the Delta. Although Osiris was eventually slain by an evil being called Set, it was believed that the great king's power conquered the grave and enabled him to be resurrected. Henceforth, beginning with the pharoahs and later to all who could afford mummification, all those who paid homage to Osiris would gain eternal life.

Down through the centuries, Osiris was transformed into a veritable god of the Nile and its vegetation, growth, life, and culture. He was the husband of Isis, goddess of enchantment and magic; father of the great war god Horus; and conqueror of northern Upper Egypt with his principal city at Abydos.

The cult of Osiris was established at Abydos, where he became known as the Lord of the

Death or Lord of the West, referring to his mastery over all those who had traveled "west" into the sunset of death. An initiate into the cult would be led at dusk into the lower crypt of the temple by four priests carrying torches. In a corner of the crypt was an open marble sarcophagus supported by four pillars placed upon four **sphinxes.** The chief priest of the mystery would advise the aspirant that no man could ever escape death, but every soul who died was also destined to be resurrected and to receive life anew. Those who would be a priest of Osiris must enter the tomb alive and await his light. He must spend the night in the coffin and enter through the door of fear to achieve mastery.

The initiate would lie down in the open sarcophagus and be left alone in the crypt. The priests would leave him a small lamp which would soon use up its reservoir of oil. From somewhere outside the tomb, he would be able to hear priests chanting his funeral song. Then he would be alone in the darkness, feeling the cold of the grave close in upon him.

Perhaps the initiate would experience a life review or begin to see colors and lights appear around him. This illumination, he believed, was the light of Osiris come to bring him visions. Some aspirants might claim to have had conversations with Isis or Osiris. Others might visualize themselves in the land of the dead, walking and talking with departed spirits and receiving special teachings from Osiris.

Those who survived the night alone in the sarcophagus were awakened by the priests who proclaimed the initiate's resurrection and who brought him refreshing food and drink. Later, at an appropriate time in the temple of Osiris, the newly initiated member of the cult would be asked to describe any visions that he experienced or any prophetic messages that he received while on the journey of light with Osiris.

The theology of Osiris that promised resurrection soon overshadowed that of the sun god Ra (Re). Ra was a creator god, fundamentally solar, a king by nature, whose theology concerned itself with the world—its origin, creation, and the laws that governed it. Osiris and his doctrines were concerned with the problems of life, death, resurrection, and an after-

Osiris, god of the Underworld, is considered to be a symbol of resurrection. (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

life. The connection between the two deities was Horus, who was a sky god of the heavens and also the dutiful son and heir of Osiris.

Osiris became known as the Lord of the Death or Lord of the West, referring to his mastery over all those who had traveled "west" into the sunset of death.

The cosmology of Osiris may be divided into two periods. The earliest period extended to the time of the **Pyramid Texts** (c. 3000 B.C.E.). He was known as a peaceful political power, an administrator of a higher culture, the unifying factor in bringing the Delta and northern Upper Egypt into one realm, the ideal husband and father, and after his death, the god of resurrection. The second period extended from the time of the Pyramid Texts to the common era when he was primarily god of the dead and king of the underworld.

According to the scholar E. A. W. Budge, "[Osiris] was the god-man who suffered, and died, and rose again, and reigned eternally in heaven. They [the Egyptians] believed that they would inherit eternal life, just as he had done." When an ancient Egyptian died, the deceased expected to appear before Osiris, who would be sitting upon his throne, waiting to pass judgment on him or her. The deceased would be led into a room by the jackal-headed god Anubis, followed by the goddess Isis, the divine enchantress, representing life, and the goddess of the underworld Nephthys, representing death. There were 42 divine judges to assess the life of the one who stood before them, and the deceased would be allowed to deny 42 misdeeds. Once the deceased had presented his or her case, Osiris indicated a large pair of balances with the heart of the deceased and the feather of truth, one in each of the pans. The god Thoth read and recorded the decision.

THE gods of Ancient Greece possessed the same vices and virtues as the humans who prayed to them for guidance.

Standing in the shadows was a monstrous creature prepared to devour the deceased, should the feather of truth outweigh his or her heart. In those instances when the heart outweighed the feather—and few devout Egyptians could really believe that their beloved Osiris would condemn them—the deceased was permitted to proceed to the Fields of Aalu (or Iahru), the real world, where the gods lived. Because humans were the offspring of the gods, the Fields of Aalu (also known as Kherneter) offered an eternal association and loving companionship with the deities. The ancient Egyptians had no doubts about immortality. In their cosmology, an afterlife under the watchful eye of Osiris was a certainty.

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GREEK MYSTERY SCHOOLS

The origin and substance of the state religion of ancient Greece was a sophisticated kind of nature worship wherein natural elements and phenomena were transformed into divine beings who lived atop Mount Olympus. Like the humans who worshipped them, the Olympians lived in communities and had families, friends, and enemies and were controlled by the same emotions, lusts, and loves. The pantheon of the gods of ancient Greece were not cloaked in the mysterious, unfathomable qualities of the deities of the East, but possessed the same vices and virtues as the humans who sought their assistance. Although the Olympians could manifest as all-powerful entities, none of them were omnipotent. Although they were capable of exhibiting wisdom, none of them were omniscient. And they often found themselves just as subject to the whims of Fate as the humans who prayed to them for their guidance.

The Olympians were worshipped by the Greeks most often in small family groups. There existed no highly organized or formally educated priesthood, no strict doctrines, no theologians to interpret the meaning of ambiguous scriptural passages. The followers of the state religion could worship the god or gods of their choosing and believed that they could gain their favor by performing simple ritual acts and sacrifices.

In addition to the state religion into which every Greek belonged automatically at birth, there were the "mystery religions," which required elaborate processes of purification and initiation before a man or woman could qualify for membership. The mystery religions were concerned with the spiritual welfare of

the individual, and their proponents believed in an orderly universe and the unity of all life with God. The relationship of the *mystes*, the initiate, was not taken lightly, as in the official state religion, but was considered to be intimate and close. The aim and promise of the mystical rites was to enable the initiate to feel as though he or she had attained union with the divine. The purifications and processions, the fasting and the feasts, the blazing lights of torches, and the musical liturgies played during the performances of the sacred plays, all fueled the imagination and stirred deep emotions. The initiates left the celebration of the mystery knowing that they were now superior to the problems that the uninitiated faced concerning life, death, and immortality. Not only did the initiates know that their communion with the patron god or goddess would continue after death, but that they would eventually leave Hades to be born again in another life experience.

The early mystery schools of the Greeks centered around a kind of play or ritual reenactment of the life of such gods as **Osiris, Dionysus,** Demeter—divinities most often associated with the underworld, the realm of the dead, the powers of darkness, and the process of rebirth. Because of the importance of the regenerative process, the rites of the mysteries were usually built around a divine female as the agent of transformation and regeneration. While the initiates of the mystery cult enacted the life cycle of the gods who triumphed over death and who were reborn, they also asserted their own path of wisdom that would enable them to conquer death and accomplish resurrection in the afterlife, with rebirth in a new body in a new existence.

There is a general consensus that the most important mystery religions of Greece—the Eleusinian, the Dionysian, and the Orphic—were brought to that country from abroad sometime during the closing centuries of the Prehistoric Era (c. 2000 B.C.E.). The oldest of the mysteries, the Dionysian, was probably developed in Thrace, in the eastern Balkans, and introduced to the Greeks. Once the mysteries were accepted by the Greek initiates, the passion plays of Demeter and Dionysus became popular in the sixth century B.C.E. and again in the Hellenistic Age in the fourth century B.C.E. This was when individualism was encouraged and the old gods of Olympus fell into disregard. Perhaps the time of greatest popularity for the mysteries occurred during the closing centuries of pagan worship practices and the advent of the Christian Era. The early Christian Fathers regarded the rites in the sacred groves as strong rivals for their faith, and in the Middle Ages (500–1500 C.E.), the Christian clergy would declare such mysteries as satanic.

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Delphi

For centuries, the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in central Greece contained the most prestigious oracle in the Graeco-Roman world, a favorite of public officials and individuals alike. The oracle was said to relay prophetic messages and words of counsel from Python, the wise serpent son of the Mother-goddess Delphyne or from the Moon-goddess Artemis through their priestess daughters, the Pythonesses or Pythia. According to myth, the god Apollo murdered Delphyne and claimed the shrine and the Pythia for himself, imprisoning the serpent seer in the recesses of a cave beneath the temple.

The historian Plutarch (c. 46–120 C.E.), author of *Plutarch's Lives*, served for a time as high priest at the Delphic Oracle and explained why its oracles had remained popular while others had fallen into disrepute. In his opinion, the gods had declined to speak through the other oracles because their devotees had insulted them by asking too many blasphemous and trivial questions, such as advice concerning love affairs and disreputable business transactions.

Plutarch also described how the oracle worked. The priestess went into a small chamber called the adyton where she would inhale sweet-smelling fumes that issued from fissures in the rocks. The fumes, supposedly released by the serpent deep within the cave, would place the Pythia in a **trance** that would allow her to see the future and to make predictions. Plutarch asserted that such trance states occasionally deepened into delerium, even death.

While some researchers have touted the accuracy of the oracle at Delphi, other scholars have protested that the predictions of the Pythia were too often made in extremely ambiguous language, so that it could always be claimed that the petitioner had misinterpreted or misunderstood the true meaning of the prophecy. An oft-cited example of such ambiguity concerns the wealthy and powerful Croesus (d. 546 B.C.E.), king of Lydia, who sought counsel regarding his plans to attack Cyrus the Great (c. 600–529 B.C.E.), king of Persia. The oracle told Croesus that if he went to war with Cyrus, he would thereby destroy a mighty kingdom. Encouraged by such a prophecy, Croesus went to war and was soundly defeated by the Persians. The Greek king had fulfilled the prophecy by destroying his own kingdom. In response to his bitter complaint, the Pythia reminded him that their seership had been accurate. Croesus was told that he should have thought first to ask whose kingdom would be destroyed before he set about waging war against the Persians.

The Oracle at Delphi was a major religious site for 2,000 years until it was closed by the Christian emperor Theodosius I (346?–395). Later, Arcadius ordered the temple destroyed.

THE *Oracle at Delphi was a major religious site for 2,000 years.*

In the summer of 2001, Jelle de Boer of Wesleyan University in Connecticut and coworkers discovered a previously unknown geological fault passing through the sanctuary of the Temple of Apollo. According to de Boer, the fault crosses the previously known Delphi fault directly below the temple. This crossing makes the bitumen-rich limestone much more permeable to gases and groundwater. The researchers speculated that seismic activity on the faults could have heated such deposits, releasing light hydrocarbon gases, such as ethylene. Ethylene is a sweet-smelling gas that was once used in certain medical procedures as an anesthetic. Although fatal if inhaled in large quantities for too long a period of time, in small doses ethylene stimulates the central nervous system and produces a sensation of euphoria and a floating feeling—according to Jelle de Boer, just what oracles need to prompt visions.

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DIONYSUS

Next to the Eleusinian mysteries in importance and popularity was the Dionysian, which was centered around Dionysus (Bacchus), a god of life, vegetation, and the vine, who, because all things growing and green must one day decay and die, was also a divinity of the underworld. Those initiates who entered into communion with Dionysus drank heavily of the fruit of the vine and celebrated with feasts that encouraged them to dress themselves in leaves and flowers and even to take on the character of the god himself, thereby also achieving his power. Once the god had entered into union with the initiates, they would experience a new spiritual rebirth. This divine union with Dionysus marked the beginning of a new life for the initiates, who, thereafter, regarded themselves as superior

beings. And since Dionysus was the Lord of Death, as well as the Lord of Life, the initiates believed that their union with him would continue even after death and immortality was now within their grasp.

The earlier rites of Dionysus were conducted on a much lower level than those of Eleusis, and often featured the sacrifice of an animal—usually a goat— that was torn to pieces by the initiates, whose savagery was meant to symbolize the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the divinity. Although the cult was not looked upon with high regard by the sages and philosophers of the day, amulets and tablets with fragments of Dionysian hymns upon them have been found dating back to the third century B.C.E. These magical symbols were buried with the dead and meant to protect the soul from the dangers of the underworld.

Orpheus may have been an actual historic figure, a man capable of charming both man and beast with his music, but god or human, he modified the Dionysian rites by removing their orgiastic elements. According to some traditions, he was said to be the son of a priestess of Apollo, gifted with a melodious voice, golden hair, deep blue eyes, and a powerful magnetism that exerted a kind of magic upon all those with whom he came into contact. Then, so the legend goes, he disappeared, and many presumed him dead. In reality, he had traveled to Memphis, where he spent the next 20 years studying in the **Egyptian mystery schools.** When he returned to Greece, he was known only by the name that he had received in the initiation rites, Orpheus of Arpha, "the one who heals with light."

Orpheus next changed the cult of Bacchus/Dionysus and set about restructuring the spiritual soul of Greece, recreating the mysteries by blending the religion of Zeus with that of Dionysus. Orpheus taught that Dionysis Zagreus, the horned son of Zeus and Persephone, the great god of the Orphic mysteries, was devoured by the evil Titans while Zeus was otherwise distracted. Athena managed to save Dionysus Zagreus's heart while the enraged Zeus destroyed the Titans with his thunderbolts. Zeus gave the heart of his beloved son to the earth goddess Semele who dissolved it in a potion, drank thereof, and gave birth to Dionysus, the god of vegetation, whose cycle of birth, death, and rebirth reflects the cycle of growth, decay, and rebirth seen in nature.

Orpheus preached that humankind was created from the ashes of the Titans who devoured Dionysus Zagreus; therefore, the physical bodies of humans are formed from the evil of the Titans, but they also contain within them a tiny particle of the divine essence. Within this duality a constant war rages, so it is the duty of each human to repress the Titanic element and allow the Dionysian an opportunity to assert itself. The final release of the divine essence within, the redemption of the soul, is the utmost goal of the Orphic process. This process may best be obtained by the soul reincarnating in a number of physical bodies in different life experiences.

THE *gods Apollo and Dionysus were two representations or revelations of the same divinity.*

In Orphic thought, the gods Apollo and Dionysus were two representations or revelations of the same divinity. Dionysus represented the mysteries of life, the secrets of past and future incarnations, the true relationship between spirit and body—truths that could only be accessible to the initiates of the mystery school. Dionysus was the expression of the evolving soul in the universe. Apollo personified those same truths as they could be applied to humans in their earthly existence. Apollo gave inspiration to those who would be artists, poets, doctors, lawyers, and scientists through divination, such as that which issued from his priestesses at **Delphi.**

One of the essential aspects of the Orphic initiation was the process of the initiate absorbing the healing light of Orpheus and purifying the heart and spirit. Among the truths that Orpheus had learned in the Egyptian sanctuaries was that God is One, but the gods are many and diverse. Orpheus had

descended into hell, the underworld, and braved its challenges and subdued the demons of the pit. The disciples of the Orphic/Dionysus schools were promised the celestial fire of Zeus, the light retrieved by Orpheus, that enabled their souls to triumph over death. These things would all be enacted in the mystery play that depicted Orpheus descending into Hades and observing Persephone, the queen of the dead, being awakened by Dionysus and being reborn in his arms, thus perpetuating the cycle of rebirth and death, past and future, blending into a timeless immortality.

While other schools of reincarnation see the process of rebirth as an evolving of the soul ever higher with each incarnation, the Orphic concept introduces the aspect of the soul being gradually purged or purified through the sufferings incurred during each physical rebirth. As the soul inhabits the body, it is really doing penance for previous incarnations, a process that gradually purifies the soul. Between lifetimes, when the soul descends to Hades, it can enjoy a brief period of freedom that can be pleasant or unpleasant. Then it must return to the cycle of births and deaths. How many lifespans must the soul endure before the process of purification is completed and its final release is obtained? Plato envisioned three periods of a thousand years each as a possible answer.

According to Orphic teachings, the only way out of the "wheel of birth," the "Great Circle of Necessity," was through an act of divine grace that could possibly be obtained by the supplicant becoming immersed in the writing, ritual acts, and teachings of Orpheus and receiving initiation into the mysteries of the cult. Although there are no available texts clearly setting forth the process of initiation, it is likely that they included fasting, rites of purification, and the reciting of prayers and hymns. It also seems quite certain that the initiates would have enacted a play depicting the life, death, and resurrection of Dionysus Zagreus. In addition, records suggest that a horned bull was sacrificed and the initiates partook of a sacramental feast of its raw flesh as a holy act that brought them in closer union with the god. Once this had been accomplished, the initiates were given secret formulas that would enable them to avoid the snares awaiting the unwary soul as it descended to Hades and would ensure them a blissful stay while they awaited a sign that their participation in the Great Circle of Necessity had ended.

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ELEUSIS

The sacred Eleusinian mysteries of the Greeks date back to the fifth century and were the most popular and influential of the cults, and it has been said that nowhere did the ancient mysteries appear in such human, vital, and colorful form. The cult of Eleusis centered around the myth of Demeter (Ceres), the great mother of agriculture and vegetation, and her daughter Persephone, queen of the Greek underworld, the original name of the goddess of death and regeneration. The drama enacted for the initiates symbolized the odyssey of the human soul, its descent into matter, its earthly sufferings, its terror in the darkness of death, and its rebirth into divine existence. Some contemporary students of the mysteries have portrayed the myth as the story of the Fall of humankind and its Redemption as expressed in the religion of the Eleusinians. In the temples and in the groves where the mysteries were celebrated, the candidates were told that life was a series of tests and that after death would be revealed the hopes and joys of a glorious world beyond and the opportunity for rebirth.

The rites of the mysteries took place near Eleusis, a small community 14 miles west of Athens, but it was the ruler of Athens, together with a specially selected committee, who was in charge of the general management of the annual event. Although the Dionysian and Orphic rites could be celebrated at any

time, the Eleusinian rites were held at a fixed time in the early fall after the seeds had been entrusted to the fields and were conducted by a hereditary priesthood called the Eumolpedie, the "singers of gracious melodies."

Sometime in the month of September, the Eumolpedie removed the Eleusianian holy objects from Eleusis and carried them to the sacred city of Athens where they were placed in the Eleusinion. Three days after the holy relics had been transported, the initiates gathered to hear the exhortations of the priests, who solemnly warned all those who did not consider themselves worthy of initiation to leave at once. Women and even slaves were permitted to join the mysteries of Eleusis, providing they were either Greeks or Romans, but it was required that all those wishing to be considered as initiates had first undergone the lesser mysteries held in Agrae, a suburb of Athens, six months before in March. After the rites of purification had been observed, the initiates bathed in the sea and were sprinkled with the blood of pigs as they emerged. A sacrifice was offered to the gods, and a procession began the journey to Eleusis, where, upon the arrival of the priests, the initiates were received by the high priest of Eleusis, the *hieroceryx*, or sacred herald, who was dressed in a manner suggesting the god Hermes (Mercury), holding the caduceus, the entwined serpents, as a symbol of his authority. Once the aspirants had assembled, the sacred herald led them to a sanctuary of the goddess Persephone hidden in a quiet valley in the midst of a sacred grove. Here, the priestesses of Persephone, crowned with narcissus wreaths, began chanting, warning the newcomers of the mysteries that they were about to perceive. The initiates would learn that the present life that they held so dear was but a tapestry of illusion and confused dreams. After a stern admonition that the aspirants be careful not to desecrate the mysteries in any way lest the goddess Persephone pursue them forever, they were allowed to partake of food and drink.

For the next several days, the initiates fasted and participated in cleansing rituals and prayers. On the evening of the last day of the celebration of the mystery, the candidates gathered in the most secret area of the sacred grove to attend the *Rape of Persephone*. The Eleusinian drama reenacted the myth of the rape, abduction, and marriage of Persephone (Kore) by Hades, god of the underworld, and her separation from her mother, Demeter (Ceres), the goddess of grain and vegetation. When, in her despair, Demeter refuses to allow the earth to bear fruit and causes a time of blight and starvation that threatens to bring about the extinction of both humans and the gods, Zeus recalls Persephone from Hades. Filled with joy at the reunion with her daughter, Demeter once again allows the earth to bear fruit. Persephone, however, will now divide her time between her husband Hades in the underworld and her mother on Earth, ensuring a bountiful harvest.

Essentially, the rites imitated the agricultural cycles of planting the seed, nurturing its growth, and harvesting the grain, which, on the symbolical level, represented the birth of the soul, its journey through life, and its death. As the seed of the harvest is planted again and the agricultural cycle is perpetuated, so is the soul harvested by the gods to be resurrected. Membership in the mysteries of Eleusis was undertaken for the purpose of the initiates ensuring themselves a happy immortality. They returned to their customary occupations as mystics, ones who had been endowed with the ability to open their inner eyes to perceive a world of light beyond the darkness of their ordinary lives.

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Christian Mystery Schools, Cults, Heresies

The Christian Mystery Schools were largely condemned by the early Church Fathers because of the fear that their

practitioners were consciously or unconsciously continuing the old pagan ways. As it was, nearly all of the Christian holy days coincided with pagan holidays, from Christmas and the Roman feast of Saturnalia to Easter and the fertility rites of the goddess Eastre. The Church patriarchs were not at all willing to encourage any additional blendings of Christianity with the Old Religions.

NEARLY all of the Christian holy days coincided with pagan holidays.

Christianity was a young religion when compared to the worship of the Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and other Middle Eastern and Eastern deities. The mystery schools kept alive the practice of magic and the belief that secret rituals and sacred relics could command the presence of divinity. The ancient mystery rites dedicated to such gods as **Osiris, Isis,** and **Dionysus,** together with the magical formulas discovered by **Hermes Trimegistus** and other masters of the art of theurgy, compelled the gods to manifest and share their powers. The myths of the old gods and the holy scriptures of the Christians, the secret experiences of the ancients and the revelations of the apostles, the personal sense of God developed by the pagan cults, and the promise of the Church Fathers that one could know God through his son—all seemed to some individuals to be harmonious. The rich inheritance of the pagan world seemed too valuable to abandon when such mysteries could be so easily adapted and kept alive in the new rituals.

The Church Fathers disagreed sharply with the devotees of the Christian mystery schools who sought their approval. In their unanimous opinion, those who sought to blend the old pagan rituals with the new revelation of Christ were members of secret cults who were to be condemned as heretics. In response to the rejection of the church establishment, the heretical members of the Christian mystery schools simply became less open and more secretive in the expression of their religious practices.

Originally, the word "heresy" was an unemotional term that meant to engage in the act of choosing a course of action or a set of principles. In contemporary culture, to be called a heretic may be considered something of a compliment, suggesting that one is an independent or adventurous thinker. However, in the epistles of St. Paul, heretics were condemned as being those dangerous teachers who sought to distort or corrupt the teachings of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.). Ironically, it was in Antioch, the city where those who followed Jesus of Nazareth were first called Christians, that Bishop Ignatius (c. 40–107) became the first of the Church Fathers to use the term "heretic" to condemn those he believed were altering the true understanding of Christ.

It was rather easy to be labeled a heretic by the early Church Fathers. Originally composed of a small group of Jews who had followed the teachings of their rabbi until his death on the cross, the first members of that sect—or cult—were sharply divided in what it was that they believed. Was Jesus of Nazareth a great prophet or was he truly the long-awaited Messiah of the Jews? The early Christians had no established doctrines regarding the resurrection of their teacher from the dead or his alleged divinity. They were even uncertain if they should continue to follow the Jewish religious laws. When Gentiles were allowed to join the small Jewish sect, the arguments concerning the true revelation of Jesus the Christ only escalated. Eventually, as the Christians solidified their beliefs, established their doctrines, became recognized as a church, and held councils to establish more rigid creeds and ecclesiasticisms, it became much easier to identify those men and women who were heretics and who truly departed from the established beliefs of the church.

There is often confusion between the terms "cult" and "sect." Generally speaking, if a cult becomes accepted by the mainstream culture, some of its original enthusiasm will eventually cool and it will steadily become more organized and structured until it matures into a "religious organization." Later, as some

Mithras in the Roman Legions

Although Mithraism, the most popular religion among the soldiers in the Roman legions, became Christianity's greatest rival in the early centuries of the church, it was not, as is often incorrectly cited, a Christian heresy. While it is true that the worshippers of the Persian god Mithras spoke of the adoration of their deity by a group of shepherds at his miraculous birth, observed a baptismal ritual that must be observed by those who wished to follow him, participated in a communal meal of bread and water which resembled the Eucharist, and celebrated his birthday on December 25, Mithraism had been established throughout the Persian Empire at least 500 years before the birth of Jesus Christ in 6 B.C.E. Mithraism had been spread throughout the then-known world by a group of **magi,** who preached an **apocalyptic** scenario in which Mithras, greatly associated with solar symbolism, would return at the end of a 7,000-year cycle to renew the world and to reestablish his earthly reign.

In Rome, Mithras had appeal to both the foot soldier and his ranking officers. Mithraism was a macho religion for men only—no women allowed. After baptismal rites had been conducted, the rugged legionnaires passed through graded ranks, such as Crow, Soldier, Lion, Courtier of the Sun, and, ultimately, Father. Boys as young as seven could begin their initiation as Crow, and neither military rank nor class distinctions differentiated those who followed Mithras. Those who declared themselves to be practicing Mithraists were valued as disciplined and temperate soldiers who had formed an unbreakable bond with their fellow worshippers. And those men who faced death in battle were assured that the rites of Mithras would guide them securely into a peaceful afterlife.

The powerful effects of Emperor Constantine's (d. 337) conversion to Christianity in the fourth century had a great influence on vast numbers of the Roman legions, and thousands of soldiers followed his example and converted to the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) and the Christian Church. Mithraism gradually faded into obscurity by the end of the fourth century, retaining only small pockets of followers scattered throughout what had once been the Persian Empire.

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of the orgnization's members become dissatisfied with the religious routine and yearn for a more passionate expression of faith, they break off into a splinter group of the church and become a "sect." As the sect becomes more organized and is regarded more seriously by the mainstream culture, it becomes known as a "denomination."

The various Christian mystery schools, cults, and heresies that have influenced millions of individuals for two millennia. From the earliest days of Christianity, there were basically two opposing interpretations of Jesus:

1. Jesus, a rabbi of Nazareth, was a powerful teacher and prophet, a devout man divinely inspired by God.
2. Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Messiah, the true Son of God made flesh to serve as a sacrificial lamb for the sins of humankind.

From these two metaphysical expressions with their vast essential differences, there arose centuries of theological arguments and interpretations of the gospels. What was heresy to some was sacred belief to others. And so it continues to this day.

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BLACK MADONNA

Of the more than 400 images of the Black Madonna or Black Virgin known worldwide, the image of Our Lady in Czestochowa, Poland, has received the most recent recognition because of the personal devotion displayed toward this religious icon by Pope John Paul II (1920–). The pope, a native of Poland, prayed before the Madonna of Czestochowa in 1979, several months after his election to the Chair of Peter, and he is known to have made subsequent visits in 1983 and in 1991. The reports of miracles and healings attributed to Our Lady of Czestochowa (also known as Our Lady of Jasna Gora) through the centuries are numerous. They include Our Lady greatly enhancing the ability of a small group of Polish defenders to protect her sanctuary from an army of Swedish invaders in 1655 and her holy apparition appearing to disperse an invading army of Russians in 1920. Records of such spectacular acts of intervention and dramatic cures are kept in the archives of the Pauline Fathers at Jasna Gora, the monastery site in which the portrait was housed for six centuries.

The Black Madonna of Czestochowa is of such antiquity that its origins are unknown. Tradition has it that St. Luke, the "beloved physician," painted the portrait of Jesus's mother on the cedar wood table at which she took her meals. Two centuries later, during her visit to the Holy Land, St. Helena (c. 248–c. 328), the Queen-Mother of Emperor Constantine (d. 337), is said to have discovered the portrait and brought it to Constantinople in the fourth century. Five centuries later, determined to save the image of the Madonna from the repeated invasions of the Tartars, St. Ladislaus (1040–1095) took the portrait to Opala, Poland, the city of his birth, for safekeeping. Regretfully, not long after its move, a disrespectful Tartar arrow managed to find its way to the Madonna's throat, inflicting a scar that still remains visible. In 1430, Hussite thieves stole the portrait and broke it into three pieces.

Contemporary scholar Leonard Moss has argued against a vast antiquity for the Black Madonna of Czestochowa, claiming that the figure of the woman in the portrait was painted in a distinctly thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Byzantine style. Janusz Pasierb, another scholar who examined the portrait, counters such an assertion, stating that the image was "painted virtually new" in 1434 because of the extensive damage that the portrait had suffered at the hands of vandals.

Another aspect of the mystery of Our Lady of Czestochowa and all the other Black Madonnas that has puzzled many individuals is why they are portrayed with such dark skin tones. Some scholars answer this by stating that it wasn't until the onset of the Renaissance in the fourteenth century that Jesus, Mary, and Joseph began being portrayed with pale skin, blue eyes, and blond or reddish-blond hair. Prior to that period, the Holy Fam-

Pope John Paul II praying at the Black Madonna Shrine in Czestochowa, Poland, in 1999. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

ily and the apostles were most often depicted as semitic people whose dark skin tones reflected the hot arid climate in which they lived. If the Black Madonna of Czestochowa was truly a portrait of Mary that had been painted from life by the apostle Luke, he would surely have captured a woman with olive or dark brown skin and black or brown hair.

Other researchers into the mystique of the Black Madonna state that the reasons that the Roman Catholic Church in general has not warmly embraced such depictions of the Holy Mother or Virgin Mary are because they fear that such representations are actually paying tribute to the ancient goddesses and Earth mothers and that these images perpetuate

strains of pagan worship of the female principle. For example, church scholars point out that St. Germain de Pres, the oldest church in Paris (Par-isis, the Grove of Isis), was built in 542 on the site of a former temple dedicated to Isis. Isis had been the patron goddess of Paris until Christianity replaced her with St. Genevieve. Within the church of St. Germain de Pres, however, parishioners worshipped a black statue of Isis until it was destroyed in 1514.

Christianity warred against goddess worship from the days of the apostles when St. Paul (d. 62–68 C.E.) found to his great frustration that his message was being shouted down by the crowds at Ephesus who pledged their obeisance to Diana. Until they had been romanized and westernized, Diana/Artemis, together with the other two preeminent goddesses of the East, Isis and Cybele, were first represented as black madonnas. And before the people of the East bent their knees to Diana, Isis, and Cybele, they had worshipped the Great Mother as Inanna in Sumeria, as Ishtar in Babylonia, and as Astarte among the Hebrews. Most scholars agree that among the first images of the Black Madonna and her son were representations of Isis and Horus.

The Black Madonna may also refer to Mary Magdalene, who, in the traditions of many Christian sects, such as the **Gnostics,** was the wife of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) In this interpretation of the events that occurred after Jesus' death at the hands of the Romans, Mary brought the cup used at the Last Supper—the Holy Grail—from Palestine to southern France, where it would eventually be guarded by the **Knights Templar.**

There is also a belief that Mary arrived in France carrying within her womb a child fathered by Jesus of Nazareth, who then became the progenitor for the royal family of France. For those who hold such beliefs, the Holy Grail is but a metaphor for Mary Magdalene's womb, which carried the true blood of Jesus in the person of his unborn son. Therefore, many of the depictions of the Black Madonna and child throughout the regions of southern France and Spain may be regarded as images of Mary Magdalene carrying the infant son of Jesus rather than the Virgin Mary carrying the infant Jesus.

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CATHARS

In 1208, Pope Innocent III (c. 1161–1216) declared the Cathars, a sect of Christianity (also known as the Albigenses), to be heretical and condemned the citizens of Beziers, Perpignan, Narbonne, Toulouse, and Carcassone to death as "enemies of the Church." Simon de Montfort (c. 1165–1218), an accomplished military leader, was appointed to conduct a crusade against fellow Christians, cultured men and women of what is today southern France, who the pope had deemed a greater threat to Christianity than the Islamic warriors who had pummeled the Crusaders. Although it took him nearly 20 years of warfare against the beleaguered Albigenses, de Montfort managed to exterminate 100,000 men, women, and children, before he himself was killed during the siege of Toulouse in June 1218.

According to many contemporary scholars, the Cathars' or Albigenses' real offense, their "heresy," was their opposition to the sacramental materialism of the medieval church. The group had no fixed, religious doctrine, and was known by various names. They called themselves the True Church of God, and most of the few manuscripts that survived the flames of siege were all written in Proven-

Annie Besant and the Theosophical Society

Annie Besant was a social reformer and Theosophist who advocated for the independence and religious rights of women. Born to William and Emily Wood in 1847 England, Annie married a young clergyman, Frank Besant, at 19; they had two children. She questioned the extreme traditional religious views of her husband, and in response he ordered her out of the church, home, and family.

Besant preached a different kind of religion: free thought. She began working with Charles Bradlaugh (1833–1891), leader of the secular movement in Britain and editor of the radical paper *National Reformer.* They coauthored a book, *The Fruits of Philosophy,* which advocated the use of birth control, buttressed by such arguments as financial distress and overcrowding. Their writings caused them to be arrested in 1877 on charges of immorality, for which they served six months before the sentence was appealed and overturned. Not intimidated, Besant wrote another book advocating the use of birth control, *The Laws of Population.*

During the 1880s Besant attacked unhealthy working conditions and low wages for women factory workers, leading the Match Girls' Strike in 1888. A popular speaker on women's rights, Besant was elected to the London School Board and earned a science degree from London University. She continued to urge the legalization of birth control, and produced other writings defending free thought and atheism while criticizing Christianity. An 1887 pamphlet, "Why I Do Not Believe in God," coauthored with Bradlaugh, added to her notoriety.

In 1887, Besant met Spiritualist Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), who in 1885 had founded the Theosophical Society. Besant embraced Blavatsky's beliefs, which seemed to ignite a religious awakening within her. The Theosophical Society split into two branches after Blavatsky's death in 1891, with Annie Besant as president of one of them.

Besant emigrated to India, where she founded the Central Hindu College in 1898. She established the Indian Home Rule League in 1916 and became its president; in 1917, she became president of the Indian National Congress, but would break ties with Ghandi. Besant remained in India until her death in 1933, but returned to England in 1926–1927 with her protege, Jiddu Krishnamurti, whom she announced as the new Messiah.

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Carcassonne in Cathar country. (F. C. TAYLOR/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

cal, the old language of southern France, with even fewer written in Latin. Albi was the town in the province of Languedoc in which an ecclesiastical church council condemned them as heretics, hence the Albigenses designation. The cultural life of the Albigenses far out-shone that of any other locality in the Europe of their day. In manners, morals, and learning, objective historians state the Albigenses deserved respect to a greater extent than the orthodox bishops and clergy. It is now generally conceded among researchers that the court of Toulouse before the ravages of Simon de Montfort's siege was the center of a higher type of civilization than existed anywhere else in Europe at that time.

Most experts on this historical period agree that the nearly 40 years of warfare against the Cathars ruined the most civilized nation in thirteenth-century Europe. The pitiless cruelty and brutal licentiousness, which was habitual among the Crusaders, achieved new depths of inhumanity against the Albigenses. No man was spared in their wrath. No woman was spared their violence. It has been observed that no Roman, Hunnish, Muslim, or Mongol conqueror ever annihilated a Christian community with greater savagery.

Since most of the Albigensian communities were first sacked, then burned, their records and their libraries were destroyed. Because the testimony of exactly what the Cathars really believed was wrung out under extreme pain from those who survived the massacres and endless sieges long enough to be tortured and burned at the stake, it has been difficult to gain access to their true belief structure until recent times. Research now indicates that far from the devil-worshipping heretics that Pope Innocent III decreed warranted extermination, the Albigenses were devout, chaste, tolerant Christian humanists, who loathed the material excesses of the medieval church. They were metaphysicians, spiritual alchemists, herbalists, healers, and social activists with a pragmatic turn of mind. Similiar expressions of their belief concepts may be found in the Gnostic Gospels, in the Essenic teachings discovered at Qumran, and in the **Egyptian mystery schools.**

It would appear that the greatest heresy to the Christian Church lay in the Cathars' denial that Christ ever lived as a man, but was a being of spirit, much like an angel. They also believed that it was Satan who created the material world after his expulsion from heaven when God the Father, taking pity on his once bright star Lucifer, allowed him seven days to see what he might create. The bodies of Adam and Eve were animated by fallen angels and directed by Satan to beget children who would follow the ways of the serpent. To counter the lust of the flesh inspired by the devil, the Cathars preached abstinence before marriage, chastity, vegetarianism, and nonviolence. They believed in a progressive doctrine of reincarnation with the spirits of animals evolving into humans. In their view, it was a dualistic universe, with good and evil having equal strength, and they considered their time in the world as a struggle to resist Satan's power.

In 1244 Montsegur, the last center of Albigensian resistance, fell, and hundreds of Cathars were burned at the stake. The headquarters of the Inquisition was now established in the once highly cultured Albigensian city of Toulouse, and the few Cathars who had managed to escape death during the bloody decades of the crusade that had been launched against them were now at the mercy of the relentless witch and heretic hunters.

Monument memorial in Field of the Burned in Montsegur, Cathar country, France. (F. C. TAYLOR/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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Gnosticism

Several cults with widely differing beliefs all bearing the label of "Gnostic" arose in the first century, strongly competing with the advent of Christianity. The term Gnostic is derived from the Greek "gnosis," meaning "to know," and the adherents of Gnosticism unabashedly declared that members of their form of religious expression "knew" from firsthand experience the truths that other beliefs had to accept on faith.

THE Gnostics sought direct experience with the divine by uttering secret words of wisdom.

Many of the Gnostic sects blended elements of Christianity with the **Eleusianian mysteries,** combining them with Indian, Egyptian, and Babylonian magic, and also bringing in aspects of the Jewish Kabbalah as well. Whatever the expression of the various Gnostic belief structures, they all emphasized a detachment from the material world and an elaborate series of spiritual hierarchies through which those initiates who had achieved personal knowledge of divinity could arise. The Christian Church Fathers branded the Gnos-

Simon Magus: The earliest known Gnostic. Magnus construed that the Garden of Eden, the exodus from Egypt, and the Red Sea crossings were symbols.

Marcion (85–160 C.E.): Organizer of Gnostic congregations. These eastern Mediterranean congregations lasted into the third century C.E. Christian leaders from Rome excommunicated Marcion for writing a book called *Antitheses*. He believed the death of Christ was a hallucination, because Jesus did not have a physical body.

Valentinus: Founder of the largest Gnosticism school which lasted into the fourth century C.E. He taught that groups of Aeons made up the fullness of the High God. The groups were divided into three parts: the Ogoad—Depth, Silence, Mind, Truth, Word, Life, Man and Church; the Decad (10) and Dodecad (12); and the Docecad—Wisdom, also called Sophia.

Carpocrates (c.140 C.E.): Teacher of reincarnation. He believed an individual had to live many lives and adsorb a full range of experiences before being able to return to God.

Main Leaders of Gnosticism

SOURCE:

"Gnosticism: Ancient and Modern." [Online]. http://www.religioustolerance.org/gnostic.htm.

tics as heretics just as soon as they had developed enough power within the Roman Empire to do so, and the cult continued to be anathema to the Church down through its variations in the **Cathars,** the Albigensis, and the **Knights Templar.**

The first Gnostic of importance would seem to be Simon Magus (fl. c. 67 C.E.), a Samarian sorcerer, a contemporary of the apostles, who was converted to Christianity, then strongly rebuked by Peter when he sought to purchase the wonder-working power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:9–24). Those Gnostic Christians influenced by such charismatic individuals as Simon Magus believed that there was a secret oral tradition that had been passed down from Jesus that had much greater power and authority than the scriptures and epistles offered by the orthodox teachers of Christianity. The Gnostics, like the initiates of the Greek and Egyptian mysteries, sought direct experience with the divine and they believed that this communion could be achieved by uttering secret words of wisdom that God had granted to specially enlightened teachers. The Gnostics considered themselves much more spiritually advanced than the larger community of Christians, whom they regarded as ignorant plodders and easily led sheep.

Nearly everything that was known about the Christian Gnostics prior to the discovery of the Nag Hammadi library in 1945 was taken from the highly prejudiced writings of such Church Fathers as Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius, who condemned the Gnostics as heretics and devil-worshippers. The library that was found in Upper Egypt consists

of 12 books, plus eight leaves removed from a thirteenth book and tucked inside the front cover of the sixth. These eight leaves make up the complete text of a work that has been taken out of a volume of collected works. Each of the books, except the tenth, consists of a collection of brief works, such as "The Prayer of the Apostle Paul," "The Gospel of Thomas," "The Sophia of Jesus Christ," "The Gospel of the Egyptians," and so on. Although the Nag Hammadi library is written in Coptic, the texts were originally composed in Greek and contain many references to Egyptian sites and beliefs. And although the work is ascribed to Christian Gnostics, there are many essays within the library that do not seem to reflect much of the Christian tradition. While there are references to a Gnostic Savior, his presentation does not seem to be based on the Jesus found in the New Testament. On those occasions when Jesus does appear in the texts, he often appears to be criticizing those orthodox Christians who have confused his words and his teachings. By following the true way and thus achieving transcendence, Jesus says in "The Apocalypse of Peter," every believer's "resurrection" becomes a spiritual reality.

Throughout the Nag Hammadi library there are admonitions to resist the lures and traps of trying to be content in a world that has been corrupted by evil. The world created by God is good. The evil that has permeated the world, although alien to its original design, has risen to the status where it has become the ruler of Earth. Rather than perceiving existence as a battle between God and the devil, the Gnostics envisioned a struggle between the true, most high, unknowable God and the lesser god of this Earth, the "Demiurge," that they associated with the angry, jealous, rule-giving deity of the ancient Hebrews. They believe that all humans have the ability to awaken to the realization that they have within themselves a spark of the divine. By attuning to the mystical awareness within them, they may transcend all earthly entrapments and regain their true spiritual home. Jesus had been sent by God as a guide to teach humans how to free themselves from the control of the Demiurge and to understand that the kingdom of God was within, a transcendental state of consciousness, rather than a future reward.

Illustrations of Gnostic gems from *Mensa Isaica* (1669) by Lorenzo Pignoria. FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

As if the theology of the Gnostics was not enough to have them branded as heretics by the orthodox Christian establishment, their doctrines and their scriptural texts often utilized feminine imagery and symbology. Even more offensive to the patriarchal Church Fathers was the Gnostic assertion that Jesus had close women disciples as well as men. In *The Gospel of Phillip* it is written that the Lord loved Mary Magdalene above all the other apostles, and he sharply reprimanded those of his followers who objected to his open displays of affection toward her.

Gnosticism ceased to be a threat to the Christian Church by the fourteenth century.

Gnosticism ceased to be a threat to the organized Christian Church by the fourteenth century, but many of its tenets of belief have never faded completely from the thoughts and

writings of many scholars and intellectuals down through the centuries. Elements of the Gnostic creeds surfaced again in the New Age movement of the late twentieth century. An impetus to study the writings of the Gnostic texts was provided by psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), who perceived value in the writings of Valentinus, a prominent Gnostic teacher. In Jung's opinion, Gnosticism's depiction of the struggle between God and the false god represented the turmoil that existed among various aspects of the human psyche. God, in the psychologist's interpretation, was the personal unconscious; the Demiurge was the ego, the organizing principle of consciousness; and Christ was the unified self, the complete human.

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MANICHAEISM

Mani (c. 216–277), a self-proclaimed "apostle of Christ" who spoke in Syrian, a version of the Aramaic language in which Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) taught, proclaimed that his church would preach a universal religion that would be for all people, regardless of nationality or tongue. The well-educated child, born to a Persian family that lived near Babylon and who worshipped with the Elkesaites, fell under the influence of Gnostic teaching and began to devise a philosophy that saw life on Earth as a constant struggle between good and evil. When he was only 12, Mani experienced his first religious vision and perceived an angelic being who declared itself his heavenly twin and who promised always to be Mani's helper and protector. When he was 24, the twin appeared again, and he instructed the young visionary that it was now time to leave the Elkesaite community and to begin his public ministry.

Mani believed that his visions qualified him to preach a new gospel that combined the words and works of Jesus with other great messianic teachers. He sought to pattern his life after that of St. Paul (d. 62–68 C.E.), and he called himself an apostle through the will of Christ before he set out on his extensive missionary travels. However, unlike Paul, Mani believed, as did so many Christian heretics, that as the Son of God Jesus could not have been born of a woman and he would never have subjected himself to a death upon a cross. In true apostle fashion, however, Mani did heal the sick and the lame, and he did perform miracles. In addition, he wrote seven holy texts, ranging from a collection of his letters to his "Living Gospel" and his own version of the "Acts of the Apostles."

According to Mani's theology, in the beginning of the universe the powers of good and evil, light and dark, were placed in two different spheres. The Father of Greatness personified the principle of goodness and light, the divine and the spiritual. The Prince of Darkness represented the principle of evil and the material. Over time, the world became a place of constant struggle and turmoil between an evil kingdom of darkness and the particles of light and goodness that had eventually become ensnared in matter. To assist him in the great battle, the Father of Greatness created the Mother of Life, who produced Primordial Man as an instrument of light to combat the powers of darkness. With the assistance of the Living Spirit, a second divine personage fashioned by the Father of Greatness, Primordial Man fought the forces of the Prince of Darkness. In the process of the great struggle, the physical Earth was created as a kind of by-product of the raging cosmic energies. Although Primordial Man was defeated by the Prince of Darkness and his children devoured by the monster, enough of their light leaked out to enable the Third Messenger, another creation of the Father of Greatness, to rescue them. Humans were later produced by the mating of demons who had inadvertently swallowed particles of light, and it would be Jesus who would at last awaken human beings to the spiritual realization that they each contained a spark of the divine light within them.

Mani taught that continued spiritual warfare was an unpleasant fact of life on Earth,

Alice Bailey

Born on June 16, 1880, in Manchester, England, Alice Ann La Trobe Bateman was a devoted missionary worker and Sunday school teacher. She later became known as a writer of the occult. Many refer to her as the mother of the modern form of the New Age Movement.

One Sunday, Alice was alone in her room reading, when the door opened and a stranger entered. Terrified, she listened as the man dressed in European clothing with a large turban on his head informed her that there was a plan for her to do some work in the world, if she chose to; however, her disposition would have to change. If she could learn to exercise self-control and become a more pleasant, trustworthy person, she would travel throughout the world and do the "master's work." Promising to check on her in several-year intervals, he paused, looked at her one last time, and walked out.

Thinking the stranger to be Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) and deeply affected by his message, she worked to become a nice person, so much so that her family was concerned that she was ill. In 1915, nearly five years later, when several English women introduced Alice to **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** (1831–1891) and Theosophy, her studies of Blavatsky's Secret Doctrines revealed that the man was the Master Koot Hoomi. In 1919, another "teacher" appeared to Alice, identifying himself as Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul.

Alice Bailey wrote a series of Ageless Wisdom books of teachings from Djwhal Khul that became lauded as classics in occult teaching. In an unfinished autobiography, Bailey expressed her love and compassion for her teachers, declaring them hard-working disciples of the world and of the Christ.

In 1923, she established *The World Goodwill Centers,* to assist those in need, and *The Arcane School* for the education and development of spiritual disciplines and techniques, such as meditation. In order to offer the school activities and courses free of charge, Bailey established *The Lucis Trust,* a publishing company and funding organization, which in 1924 published Bailey's popular Great Invocation Prayer, and would eventually publish 24 other works in 50 languages. Baily's writings continue to be a main influence of "New Agers" or those interested in the occult or deeper spiritual mysteries.

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and it was being conducted daily in the hearts and minds of all human beings. By responding to Mani's Gospel of Light, a person could awaken to the persistent earthly dualism of good and evil and activate the particles of goodness trapped within his or her own fleshly bodies. Once these elements of light had been released, the newly awakened individuals could hope to progress to a higher existence in the afterlife. While they remained in their bodies on Earth, however, they must accept their state of sin and acknowledge that they would never be able to conquer the state of wickedness that encompassed the physical world. Those whom Mani deemed "the Elect" would rise directly to the kingdom of light when they died; those "hearers," individuals who had merely heard the Gospel of Light being preached, would have the opportunity of experiencing additional incarnations before achieving such elevation. All disbelievers, those who rejected Mani's gospel, were destined to hell when Jesus returned to bring about the end of the world.

In the Middle Ages, the term "Manichaean" was used interchangeably with "heretic."

Manichaeans were taught that the particles of light and goodness remained trapped in evil matter and that all living things, including plant life, were sentient beings to be respected. Hunting and meat-eating were forbidden, and Manichaeans were strict vegetarians. Later, when Mani had a vision of vegetables screaming as they were about to be pulled from the ground, gardening and farming were also discouraged. To solve the dilemma of what food his followers might partake for nourishment, he advised the eating of melons, fleshless vegetables of concentrated goodness and light, that separated themselves from the parent vine when they were mature.

Mani first traveled to India with his new Gospel of Light, then turned back to Persia at the summons of Emperor Shapur I (d. 272), who became a strong adherent of the young man's universal religion, gave Mani permission to preach throughout his kingdom. In spite of the support of Shapur I, the Magi, the official Zoroastrian clergy who had unrivaled supremacy in Persia for many centuries, detested Mani and believed his "new" religion to be nothing more than an amalgamation of Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Buddhism, and a wide assortment of other doctrines. At the instigation of the Magi, Persia's next ruler, Bahram I, who ruled from 273–276, ordered Mani arrested, interrogated, then executed, his head impaled on the city gates and his body thrown to the dogs.

Mani's death did little to thwart the zeal of the ever-growing number of new Manichaean missionaries, and his religion came to be preached in eleven languages and spread from North Africa to China; there it continued to thrive as a living faith from the T'ang dynasty (618–907) to the 1930s. In Europe, Manichaeism remained quite strong in Sicily, Spain, and southern France until the sixth century. Although the sect posed little threat to the Christian Church in the Middle Ages, the term "Manichaean" was used interchangeably with "heretic." Elements of Manichaeism have survived in minor ways in various secret societies, most frequently in its symbolism.

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TRIBAL MYSTERIES

The tribal cults that have emerged in the past 500 years offer a blend of Christianity—the majority religion of the conqueror and the slave owner—and the aboriginal belief structures of the Native American or African tribes that were subjugated or

enslaved. While the early Christian missionaries, ministers, and priests were sincere in preaching what they considered to be the authentic word of God to the tribes of North and South America and Africa, they regarded their culture, customs, and religion as innately superior. Thus, a deeper understanding and respect between the missionaries and the tribal peoples was difficult to achieve.

"Lost in the dark the heathen doth languish," bemoans a familiar missionary hymn, soundly implying that there is but a single source of illumination. When the Christian clergy set forth on their spiritual journeys to convert the tribal peoples, they established themselves in the parental role and widened the gap of understanding between religious traditions.

On the North American continent, the Christian missionaries were intrigued to discover that tribe after tribe across the length and width of the continent had legends and myths which closely paralleled so many of the accounts found in Genesis and in other books of the Old Testament. The Delaware, to cite only one example, told the story of the Creation and the Great Deluge in pictographs. Some missionaries dealt with the mystery in the same manner that the early Spanish priests who accompanied the conquistadores had dealt with the Aztec myths that told stories similiar to those found in the Bible—they declared that the native people had been told these stories by Satan.

In a study of the aboriginal peoples of the United States written by a theologian in the late 1800s, Dr. John Tanner fulminated against such accounts related by the tribal priests and declared: "If the Great Spirit had communications to make, he would make them through a *white* man, not an Indian!"

Other Christian scholars and missionaries were not so certain, and, in an effort to explain the similarity between so many of the tribal legends and rites to the Judeo-Christian traditions, a theory was formulated that argued that the aboriginal peoples of the New World were the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel. To add an intriguing credence to this theory was the enigma of the Mandan tribe—blue-eyed, fair-complexioned native people of the central plains. Christian clergymen set out with renewed vigor to reclaim the scattered Israelite tribes, lost to the fold for so long, denied the opportunity to accept Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) as the Messiah, condemned to wander a strange and pagan land with their holy traditions but dim memories.

In recent decades, the term "cult" has become negative, quickly applied to religious expressions that may seem different from the order of service in more conventional church bodies. In the twenty-first century, one should always be mindful that what seems to be a strange cult to one person is likely to be a sincere and serious form of worship to another; just because this "strange religious practice" may be an eclectic blend of several traditions does not make it any less serious to its practitioners.

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Ghost Dance

In 1890 Jack "Wovoka" Wilson (1856–1932), a Paiute who worked as a ranch hand for a white rancher, came down with an illness accompanied by a terrible fever. For three days, the Native American lay as if dead. When he returned to consciousness and to the arms of his wife Mary, he told the Paiute who had assembled around his "dead" body that his spirit had left his body and had walked with God, the Old Man, for those three days. As if that were not wonder enough, the Old Man had given him a powerful vision to share with the Paiute people.

Wovoka's vision had revealed that Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) moved again upon the Earth Mother and that the dead of many tribes were alive in the spirit world, just waiting to be reborn. If the native people wished the buffalo to return, the grasses to grow tall, the rivers to

"Arapaho Ghost Dance" (1900) painting by Mary Irvin Wright. (NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION)

run clean, they must not injure anyone; they must not do harm to any living thing; they must not make war. On the other hand, they must lead lives of purity, cease gambling, put away the alcohol, and guard themselves against all lusts and weaknesses of the flesh.

To perform the Ghost Dance was to insure that God's blessings would be bestowed upon the Paiute tribe.

The most important part of the vision that God gave to Wovoka was how to perform the Ghost Dance. The Paiute prophet told his people that the dance had never been performed anywhere on Earth. It was the dance of the spirit people of the Other World. To perform this dance was to insure that God's blessings would be bestowed upon the tribe, and many ghosts would materialize during the dance to join with the living in celebration of the return of the old ways. Wovoka said that the Old Man had spoken to him as if he were his son, and God had assured him that many miracles would be worked through him. In his heart and in his life, Wovoka, also known in his tribe as "the Cutter," became Jesus; Mason Valley, Nevada became Galilee; and the Native American people received a messiah.

Wovoka's father had been the respected holy man Tavibo and his grandfather had been the esteemed prophet Wodziwob. And now he, too, had spent his time in imitation of death, lying in a trance-like state for three days, receiving his spiritual initiation in the Other World. Wovoka had emerged as a holy man and a prophet, and history would forever know him as the Paiute Messiah.

Soon, many representatives from various tribes visited the Paiute and saw them dance Wovoka's vision. They saw the truth of the Ghost Dance, and they began calling Wovoka,

Jesus. His fame spread so far that newspaper reporters from St. Louis, New York, and Chicago came to see the Ghost Dance Messiah and record his words. Whites were pleased that Wovoka did not speak of war, only of the importance of all people living together in harmony.

Chief Big Foot (1825?–1890) of the Sioux traveled from the camp in South Dakota to Nevada to see the Ghost Dance, and he returned to tell Sitting Bull (c. 1831–1890) about Wovoka's promise that the dead from many tribes would soon be joining the living in a restored world that would once again be filled with plentiful game, herds of buffalo, and the tall grasses of the prairie. All those whites who interfered with this would be swallowed up by the earth, and only those who practiced the ways of peace would be spared.

Sitting Bull, the great Sioux prophet and holy man, was impressed by Big Foot's report, but rather noncommittal toward the teachings of the Paiute Messiah. While he did not wholeheartedly endorse the Ghost Dance, neither did he prevent those Sioux who wished to join in the ritual from doing so.

Sometime during the fall of 1890, the Ghost Dance spread through the Sioux villages of the Dakota reservations with the addition of the Ghost Shirts, special shirts that could resist the bullets of the bluecoats, the soldiers who might attempt to stop the rebirth of the old ways. As the Sioux danced, sometimes through the night, believing they were hastening the return of the buffalo and their many relatives who had been killed in combat with the pony soldiers, the settlers and townsfolk in the Dakota territory became anxious. And when the Sioux at Sitting Bull's Grand River camp began to dance with rifles, it becme apparent to the white soldiers that the Ghost Dance was really a war dance after all.

After a nervous Indian agent at Pine Ridge wired his superiors in Washington that the Sioux were dancing in the snow and were acting crazy, it was decided that Sitting Bull and other Sioux leaders should be removed from the general population and confined in a military post until the fanatical interest in the Ghost Dance religion had subsided. Sitting Bull was killed by Sioux reservation police on December 15, 1890, and Big Foot and 350 of his people were brought to the edge of Wounded Knee to camp.

On December 28, Sioux police, Fouchet's Cavalry, and Drum's Infantry moved against the Sioux camp at Grand River. The aggressors also brought with them Hotchkiss multiple-firing guns and mountain howitzers. A shot rang out. The Sioux scattered to retrieve rifles that had been discarded or hidden. From all around the camp, fire from the automatic rifles, violent eruptions from the exploding shells, and volleys of bullets destroyed the village. As they were being slaughtered by two battalions of soldiers, the Sioux sang Ghost Dance songs, blended with their own death chants. Within a short period of time, approximately 300 Sioux had been killed, Big Foot among them, and 25 soldiers had lost their lives. The massacre at Wounded Knee ended the Native American tribes' widespread practice of the Ghost Dance religion and ended the Indian Wars.

It was said that Wovoka wept bitterly when he learned the fate of the Sioux at Wounded Knee. Jack Wilson, the Cutter, the Paiute Messiah, died in 1932.

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Macumba

The Macumba religion (also known as Spiritism, Candomble, and Umbanda) is practiced by a large number of Brazilians who cherish the ages-old relationship between a **shaman** and his or her people. In its outward appearances and in some of its practices, Macumba resembles **voodoo** ceremonies. Trance states among the practitioners are encouraged by dancing and drumming, and the evening ceremony is climaxed with an animal sacrifice.

Macumba was born in the 1550s from a compromise between the African spirit worship of the slaves who had been brought to Brazil and the Roman Catholicism of the slaveholders. Although they were forced to honor an

array of Christian saints and the God of their masters, the native priests soon realized how complementary the two faiths could be—especially since, unlike the slaveowners in the United States, the Brazilians allowed the slaves to keep their drums. The Africans summoned their gods, the Orishas, with the sound of their drums and the rhythm of their dancing. From the melding of the two religious faiths, the Africans created the samba, the rhythm of the saints. The African god, Exu, became St. Anthony; Iemanja became Our Lady of the Glory; Oba became St. Joan of Arc; Oxala became Jesus Christ; Oxum became Our Lady of the Conception, and so on.

During this same period, Roman Catholic missionaries were attempting to convince the Native American tribes in Brazil to forsake their old religion and embrace Christianity. In many instances, Macumba provided the same kind of bridge between faiths for the indigenous people as it had for the Africans imported to the country by the slave trade. While they paid homage to the religious practices of the Europeans, they also could worship their nature spirits in the guise of paying homage to the Christian saints.

The ancient role of the shaman remains central to Macumba. He (it is most often a male) or she enters into a **trance** state and talks to the spirits in order to gain advice or aid for the supplicants. Before anyone can participate in a Macumba ceremony, he or she must undergo an initiation. The aspirants must enter a trance during the dancing and the drumming and allow a god to possess them. Once the possession has taken place, the shaman must determine which gods are in which initiate so the correct rituals may be performed. The process is assisted by the sacrifice of an animal and the shaman smearing blood over the initiates. Once the initiates have been blooded, they take an oath of loyalty to the cult. Later, when the trance state and the possessing spirit has left them, the aspirants, now members of the Macumba cult, usually have no memory of the ritual proceedings.

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SANTERIA

In April 1989, the religion of Santeria was dealt a negative blow to its image that has been difficult to overcome in the public consciousness. Police officials digging on the grounds of Rancho Santa Elena outside of Matamoros, Mexico, brought up a dozen human corpses that had all suffered ritual mutilations. And when it was learned that Adolfo de Jesus Constanzo, the leader of the drug ring responsible for the murders, had a mother who was a practitioner of Santeria, a media frenzy swept across both Mexico and the United States. Santeria was most often defined in the media as an obscure cult that was a mixture of **Satanism, voodoo, witchcraft,** and demon-worship, rather than a religious amalgamation that evolved from a blending of African slaves' spirit worship with their Spanish Catholic masters' hierarchy of intercessory saints.

Constanzo, a drug smuggler, had created his own cruel concept of a cult and declared himself its high priest. He was joined by Sara Maria Aldrete, an attractive young woman, who led a bizarre double life as a high priestess and as an honor student at Texas Southmost College in Brownsville. Although, on the one hand, it seemed that the cruel executions were used as a disciplinary tool by the drug boss, as in all instances of ritual sacrifice it was learned from surviving gang members that Constanzo had promised his followers that they would be able to absorb the spiritual essence of the victims.

While Santeria's rites are controversial in that they may include the sacrifice of small animals, it is essentially a benign religion. Once a serious investigation was made of Constanzo's grotesque and gory version of a cult of human sacrifice, it was learned that he had combined aspects of Santeria, voodoo, and an ancient

Aztec ritual known as *santismo* with elements of his own personal bloody cosmology. Mexican police officials had discovered the grisly handiwork of the drug ring by following one of its members to a large black cauldron in which a human brain, a turtle shell, a horseshoe, a human spinal column, and an assortment of human bones had been boiled in blood.

Subsequent investigation revealed that Constanzo's drug ring was actually composed of individuals who belonged to a number of religious groups common to the area, including Roman Catholicism, Santeria, and Palo Mayombe. Many members of the gang insisted that the true inspiration for the human sacrifices came from Constanzo's demand that each of them watch the motion picture *The Believers* (1987) 14 times. This thriller, starring Martin Sheen, Jimmy Smits, and Robert Loggia, took certain elements of Santeria, added numerous concepts foreign to the faith—including a malevolent high priest with incredible supernatural powers—then climaxed these powerful ingredients with human sacrifice.

In spite of such public relations low points as the murders at Matamoros and negative depictions in motion picture and television presentations, Santeria continues to grow among Hispanics in Florida, New York City, and Los Angeles. Some estimates state that there are more than 300,000 practitioners of Santeria in New York alone. Although it was suppressed in Cuba during the 1960s, lessening of restrictions upon religious practices in the 1990s saw the practitioners of Santeria in that country increase in great numbers. While the rites remain secret and hidden from outsiders, a few churches have emerged that provide their members an opportunity to practice Santeria freely. The Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye was formed in southern Florida in the early 1970s and won a landmark decision by the Supreme Court to be allowed to practice animal sacrifice. The African Theological Archministry, founded by Walter Eugene King in South Carolina, now reports approximately 10,000 members. The Church of Seven African Powers, also located in Florida, instructs its members how to use spells in their daily lives.

Santeria originated in Cuba around 1517 among the slaves who combined elements of the Western African Yoruba and Bantu religions with aspects of Spanish Catholicism. When they were forced to accept the religious practices of their masters, the African slaves were at first greatly distressed that they could no longer pay homage to their worship of the Orishas, their spiritual guardians. Since they were in no position to protest for the freedom to practice their native religion, their resourceful priests quickly noticed a number of parallels between the Yoruba religion and Catholicism. While paying respect and homage to various Christian saints, the Africans found that they could simply envision that they were praying to one of their own spirit beings. A secret religion was born—Regla de Ocha, "The Rule of the Orisha," or the common and most popular name, Santeria, "the way of the saints."

SANTERIA *originated in Cuba around 1517.*

In Santeria, the principal God, the supreme deity, is referred to as *Olorun* or *Olodumare*, "the one who owns heaven." The lesser guardians, the Orisha, were the entities who were each associated with a different saint: Babalz Ayi became St. Lazaurus; Oggzn became St. Peter; Oshzn became Our Lady of Charity; Elegba became St. Anthony; Obatala became the Resurrected Christ, and so forth. Priests of the faith are called Santeros or Babalochas; priestesses are called Santeras or Iyalochas. The term Olorisha may be applied to either a priest or a priestess.

Although little is known of the rites of Santeria, from what can be ascertained each celebration usually begins with an innovation of Olorun, the supreme deity. Dancing to the strong African rhythms continues until individuals are possessed by a particular Orisha and allow the spirits to speak through them. The ritual is climaxed with the blood sacrifice, usually a chicken.

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SATANIC CULTS

The scriptures of all religions acknowledge the existence of demonic beings. Some, including Christianity, Islam, and Zoroastrianism, regard the power of evil entities to be real and perceive them as rivals to the dominion of God. Others, such as Buddhism, consider them to be manifestations of ignorance and illusion. Those religions that testify to demonic powers also recognize that these negative beings are subject to the commands of a leader, known by various names: Satan, Lucifer, Beelzebub, Iblis, Mara, and Angra Mainyu, among others.

THE Qur'an warns that "whoever follows the steps of Satan will assuredly be bid to indecency and dishonor."

While rationalists in the present age of science and technology find it difficult to accept the concept of demons tempting men and women to commit acts of wickedness under the direction of a central embodiment of evil, such as Satan, other serious-minded philosophers and theologians call attention to the diverse horrors of the twentieth century and the seemingly endless capabilities of humans to inflict evil upon their fellow beings in the beginning of the twenty-first century and argue that such perversities transcend the bounds of reason. The Qur'an warns that "whoever follows the steps of Satan will assuredly be bid to indecency and dishonor." The prophet Zoroaster (c. 628 B.C.E.–c. 551 B.C.E.) blamed the Evil One for spoiling the plan of life and depriving humans of the "exalted goal of Good Thought." Hinduism envisions the gods and the demons as cosmic rivals for humankind. The demons are self-centered and interested in their own gain while the gods are generous and willing to share their bounty with others. The epistle writer Paul (d. 62–68 C.E.) informs Christians in Ephesians 6:12 that they are not fighting against creatures of flesh and blood, "but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."

While it is one thing to recognize the human capacity for inflicting acts of incredible evil upon their fellow men and women, it is quite another to fear rumors of organized cults of thousands of Satan worshippers who allegedly plot horrid deeds against the members of other religions in the name of their cloven-hoofed and horned god. Contrary to the beliefs of certain conservative Christians, Satanism as an actual religion is composed of a few small groups, which according to census figures in the United States and Canada probably number less than 10,000 members. Such religious cults as **Santeria, Wicca, voodoo,** and various neopagan groups are regularly and incorrectly identified as satanic, and it has been suggested by some that the statistics often quoted by certain Christian evangelists, warning of millions of Satan worshippers, quite likely consider all non-Christian religions as satanic, including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

In the 1980s and 1990s, a widespread fear swept across the United States that there were dozens of secret satanic cults involved in satanic ritual abuse and sacrificing hundreds of babies, children, and adults. Television and radio talk shows featured people who claimed to be former members of such demonic cults and those who had allegedly recovered memories of satanic abuse. For a time, certain communities developed a near-hysteria and a fear of Satanists that recalled the time of the **Salem witchcraft trials.** Even at its most alarming peak of irrational belief in such murderous cults, however, few accused such religious Satanists as Anton LaVey (1930–1997) and

his **Church of Satan** in San Francisco as condoning ritual human sacrifices. After exhaustive police investigations on both local and national levels failed to produce any hard evidence to support such frightening accounts, allegations of satanic ritual abuse faded to the status of a kind of Christian **urban legend.**

There are many kinds of free-form Satanism, ranging from that which is merely symptomatic of sexual unrest and moral rebellion among young people to those mentally unbalanced serial killers who murder and sacrifice their victims to their own perverse concept of satanic evil. Teenagers and young adults may be mistaken for Satanists, because they dress in dark gothic clothes, read occult literature, or play with a **ouija board** with friends—but most of them are merely role-playing and quietly protesting the conformity they wish to resist. Other young people are drawn into a transient attraction toward Satanism by a number of heavy-metal bands who merely pretend to be practicing Satanists to shock parents and to provoke publicity in the highly competitive field of contemporary music.

Each year, hundreds of homicides are thought to have been satanically or ritually inspired. However, federal, state, and local law enforcement has never proven the existence of an organized satanic movement that has been responsible for these deaths, or that those murderers who were apprehended for the homicides were members of any satanic religious group. Some serial killers have claimed to be Satanists, but in each of these cases, police investigations have revealed that the murderers were not actually members of any of the satanic religious groups. Even such a high-profile "devil-worshipper" as Richard Ramirez (1960–), the infamous "Night Stalker" of Los Angeles, who committed a series of brutal night-time killings, robberies, and sexual attacks, was never found to be a member of any formal satanic group. Although Ramirez scrawled an inverted pentagram (a symbol traditionally associated with satanic rituals) in the homes of some of his victims and shouted, "Hail, Satan!" as he was being arraigned on charges of having murdered 14 people, he was strictly a lone-wolf worshipper of evil.

Individuals, primarily teenagers and young adults, may for a time dabble in the occult, ceremonial magick, and other freelance rituals and declare themselves as Satanists. Their numbers are difficult to assess with any degree of accuracy, for they are essentially faddists, generally inspired by a current motion picture or television series that popularizes Satanism or witchcraft, and their interest in Satanism is short-lived. Some of these satanic dabblers may go so far as to sacrifice a small animal and spray-paint satanic symbols on houses and sidewalks, but their commitment to a lifestyle dominated by dedication to Satan soon dissipates.

Although Satanism and **witchcraft** have become synonymous in the popular mind for many centuries, they constitute two vastly divergent philosophies and metaphysical systems. Generally speaking, witchcraft, the Old Religion, has its origins in primitive nature worship and has no devil or Satan in its cosmology. While some traditional witches seek to control the forces of nature and elemental forces in both the seen and unseen worlds, others are contented to work with herbs and healing. In essence, what many have described as the "power" of witchcraft throughout the ages may be the effective exercise of mind over matter, those abilities in the transcendent level of mind that today we term psychic or mental phenomena. True Satanism—although manifesting in a multitude of forms and expressions and having also originated in an ancient worship of a pre-Judeo-Christian god—is today essentially a corruption of both the nature worship of witchcraft and the formal Christian church service, especially the rites of the Roman Catholic Church.

Some scholars argue that in a real sense, the Christian Church itself "created" the kind of Satanism it fears most through the excesses of the **Inquisition,** which made an industry out of hunting, persecuting, torturing, and killing those men and women accused of being doctrinal heretics and those practitioners of the Old Religion who were condemned for worshipping the devil through the practice of witchcraft. Then, in the sixteenth century, a jaded and decadent aristocracy, weary of the severity of conventional morality legislated by the church, perversely began to convert the

primitive belief structures of serf and peasant into an obscene rendering of the rites of traditional paganism with the ritualistic aspects of Christian worship.

In contemporary times, many of those who openly claim to be Satanists and to belong to organized satanic groups insist that they do not worship the image of the devil condemned by Christian and other religions because the word "Satan" does not specify a being, but rather a movement or a state of mind. What Satanists do worship, these individuals explain, is a spirit being commonly known as Sathan in English and Sathanas in Latin. They do not believe Satan to be the Supreme God, but they believe him to be the messenger of God in that he brought to Eve the knowledge of God. Satanists believe that there is a God above and beyond the "god" that created the cosmos. The most high God takes no part in the affairs of the world; thus Satanists believe their faith to be the only true religion, insofar as revealed religion to mortals can be understood.

ANTON *Szandor LaVey started the rebirth of Contemporary Satanism on Walpurgisnacht (May 1), 1966 with the Church of Satan.*

Satanism, according to certain of its exponents, is the oldest of all world religions, and it is the only one that by doctrine lays claim to having its origin in the Garden of Eden. Adam's firstborn son, Cain, is thought to have celebrated the first Satanic Mass, and today, any lone Satanist can celebrate a valid Mass if the occasion arises. In the case of established covens, an ordained priest performs the office of the liturgy. Satanism, they maintain, is also the oldest form of worship according to discoveries made by archaeologists, who have discovered drawings of the Horned God (Sathan) in caves of Europe dating to prehistoric times.

The following signs and symbols are among the most common expressions of Satanism, both among individual Satanists and those self-proclaimed "high-priests and priestesses" who have established small covens of 13 or fewer members:

The Pentagram: The traditional five-pointed star, most often shown within a circle.

Goat's Head within a Pentagram: *The sigil of Baphomet, the symbol for Anton LaVey's Church of Satan.*

Number 666: The number of the beast in the Book of Revelation, considered by many Christians to represent Satan.

Upside-Down Cross: A mockery of Jesus' death on the cross. Sometimes the cross is shown with broken "arms."

Upside-Down Cross Incorporating an Inverted Question Mark: The cross of confusion, questioning the authority and power of Jesus.

Quarter Moon and Star: Represents the Moon Goddess Diana and Lucifer, the "Morning Star." When the moon is reversed, it is usually satanic.

Classic Peace Symbol of the 1960s: The sign of peace carried by protestors of the Vietnam War in the 1960s has allegedly been appropriated by Satanists who now use it to denote an upside-down cross with broken arms, thus signifying the defeat of Christianity.

Inverted Swastika: The swastika is another once-honorable symbol that simply represented the perpetual progression of the four seasons, the four winds, the four elements, and so forth. Already perverted when the Nazis claimed it as their symbol, Satanists are said to invert it to show the elements of nature turned against themselves and out of harmony with God's divine plan of balance.

Ritual Calendar: Satanism adopted the traditional calendar of witchcraft and celebrates eight major festivals, known as *Sabbats:*

- February 1 Candelmas
- March 21 Spring Equinox
- April 30 Walpurgisnacht
- May 1 Beltane
- June 21 Summer Solstice
- August 1 Lammas
- September 23 Fall Euinox
- October 31 Samhain

*• December 21 Winter Solstice

Contemporary Satanism is said to have experienced its rebirth on Walpurgisnacht (May 1), 1966, when Anton Szandor LaVey brought into being San Francisco's Church of Satan. The kinds of Satanism in vogue at various times in the centuries before LaVey's revival expressed itself in many ways—some reflected the Dark Gods of antiquity, but most mirrored the dark side of the human imagination. Generally speaking, the kind of Satanism championed by LaVey and others preaches indulgence in personal pleasure, and it has never pretended to be other than a counterculture alternative to the civil and religious establishments and a relentless foe of conventional morality. But none of the satanic cults, such as the **Church of Satan** or the **Temple of Set,** have many points in common with the conservative Christian concept of Satan. They do not worship a Satan that commands demons and seduces human souls into hell. To most of the satanic cultists, Satan represents a force of nature that inspires their own individual expressions of virility and sexuality.

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The Rise of Satanism in the Middle Ages

For the common folk of Europe, the Middle Ages (c. 500–c. 1500) were a time of fear, oppression, and despair, thus providing fertile soil for the seeds of the old pagan practices to take root and flourish anew. The ancient rituals and nature rites that were practiced with joy and abandon by the peasants came to be feared by the Medieval Church as demonic witchcraft that worshipped Satan and sought to destroy Christendom, which was at that time the official religion of all European countries. According to a number of scholars, the Church itself may have been greatly responsible for the revival of the Old Religion by its having increasingly exercised extremely repressive regulations upon the private lives of the common people. Then, once excessive doctrines and dogmas had provoked a rebirth of paganism, the Church saw the nature-worshipping rituals of the common people as a threat to its authority and condemned these men and women as being practitioners of an organized satanic religion that never really existed.

An analysis of the Medieval Church's sexual code reveals that its basic law was that the act of sexual intercourse was to be performed as seldom as possible. Stern-faced Church authorities encouraged their flocks to avoid cohabitation completely, even if married. In the eyes of the Church there was no love, only desire. To have feelings toward a member of the opposite sex, even though no actual physical intimacy took place, was inherently sinful. And the holy state of matrimony provided no sanctuary for love. To love, or desire, one's lawful marriage partner was considered sinful. One of the Church's defenders stated that if a man loved his wife too passionately, he had committed a sin worse than adultery.

In his *Sex in History* (1954), G. Rattray Taylor summarized the strict system of Church morality as it was set forward in a series of penitential books. Every imaginable misdeed and every conceivable misdemeanor is discussed and analyzed at great length and appropriate penalties are set forth for each sexual misstep. Taylor explains that the basic code of the Church was composed of three main propositions:

1. All who could were urged to accept the ideal of complete celibacy;
2. An absolute ban was placed on all forms of sexual expression other than intercourse between married persons, and prohibitions were drawn up to thwart an exhaustive list of sexual activity, the violation of which resulted in terrible penitential acts;
3. The days per year upon which even married couples might consummate the sex act were decreased in number.

The frustrated populace were left with the equivalent of about two months of the year

during which they might, for the purpose of procreation alone and without invoking any sensations of pleasure, engage in sexual connection. If a child had been born to them and had been delivered at a particular time of the year which would fit in a certain manner in the Church calendar, the anxious parents might be prevented by their faith from having intercourse for a year or more.

The penitential books developed the mystical concept that all virgins were the brides of Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.). Therefore, any man who seduced a virgin was not only committing fornication, but, at the same time, the more serious sexual crime of adultery. Christ was cast into the role of the indignant and outraged husband, and Mother Church, as his earthly representative, was thereby empowered to exact the terrible penance which the angered deity demanded. The maiden, unless she had been forcibly raped, was also held to be in mortal sin, for she had committed adultery against her husband, Christ.

FOR the common folk of Europe, the Middle Ages were a time of fear, oppression, and despair.

Chastity was honored as the Church's sexual ideal and the virtuous wife was the one who would deny herself to her husband. It was not only the sexual act for which the penitentials prescribed prohibitions and penance. Kissing and fondling also brought down severe penalties.

It was, according to Taylor, in a spirit of desperation to save the souls of weaker brethren that the Church passed such ruthless codes of personal behavior and repeatedly distorted and falsified the pronouncement of biblical texts in order to obtain justification for its laws. Such an extreme asceticism was certainly not preached by Christ, and such a sexual code is supported by neither the Old nor New Testaments.

The Middle Ages had become a time of intolerable sexual frustration and sexual obsession. In its attempt to eradicate sin by means of enforced sexual repression, the Church inadvertently created fertile ground for the rebirth of the dormant Old Religion. With the sanctioned state of Holy Matrimony open to only a few, the stories of the old ways, the old customs, and the old mysteries with their emphasis on fertility and communal sex rites became appealing to the common folk.

In the early days of Christianity, the Church Fathers permitted women to preach, cure, exorcise, and baptize. By the Middle Ages, women had lost all vestiges of any legal rights whatsoever, and the Church regarded them as responsible for all sexual guilt. It was woman who had precipitated the Fall by tempting man, who would otherwise have surely remained pure. Women were considered a necessary evil. In the Old Religion, she would once again be elevated to the status of priestess, healer, and a respected symbol of fertility.

The loss of civil rights, the tyranny of the feudal lords, and the imposition of sexual repression by the Church provided the fresh fuel for the smoldering sparks of the Old Religion among the common people. But the Church and the feudal establishment would soon move to combat the "evil" influence of the resurrected Pan, god of fertility, nature, and freedom. Church scholars would soon consult the ancient manuscripts to determine how best to deal with the formidable adversary who had returned from the past. The feudal lords would soon lose all patience with the rebellious serfs and set about to slay them as methodically as a farmer sets out to remove noxious weeds from his fields of grain, and the Church would ignite a flame which would eventually destroy thousands of innocents in the Inquisition. Pan, the horned and goat-hoofed god of the ancient mystery rites, had been transformed into Satan, the enemy of the Church, Christ, and all good.

In *The History of Magic*, (1948), Kurt Seligmann offered what seems to be an astute analysis of the situation: "...the ancient survivals, the amusements of serfs, the most innocent stories, were henceforth Satanic, and the women who knew about the old legends and magic traditions were transformed

into witches....the traditional gatherings, the Druid's Festival on the eve of May Day, the Bacchanals, the Diana feasts, became the witches' sabbath...the broom, symbol of the sacred hearth...became an evil tool. The sexual rites of old, destined to stimulate the fertility of nature, were now the manifestations of a forbidden carnal lust. Mating at random, a survival of communal customs...now [were] an infringement of the most sacred laws."

To the Church, the devils solidified into one—Satan, enemy of Christ's work here on Earth. To the people, who could not really care about the philosophical dualism of an evil adversary for the Christ of the Feudal Lords and the Church, the Old Religion offered release from oppression and unrelenting drudgery.

According to Seligmann, the peasants of the Middle Ages did not view their Old Religion as a perversion, but as "...primitive and innocent customs. At the sabbat [the peasant] was free to do as he pleased. He was feared also; and in his lifelong oppression, this gave him some dignity, some sense of freedom."

It was in his enjoyment of the excitement and vigor of the Old Religion that the peasant could allow himself the luxury of experiencing pleasure without the interference of Mother Church, which sought to control and repress even human emotions. But it was in rebellion against church and state that provoked the feudal and church establishments to denounce the Old Religion as satanic and to declare its practitioners witches, Satan's willing servants. And it was in that same time of unrest, despair, and fear of demons that "woman" and "witch" became largely synonymous. St. Augustine (d. 604) had declared that humankind had been sent to destruction through one woman (Eve) and had had salvation restored to it through another woman (Mary). But, as many writers have since commented, woman had, to the medieval and Renaissance man, become almost completely dualistic.

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Black Mass

In 1966, when Anton Szandor LaVey (1930–1997), high priest of the **Satanic Church of America,** joined socialite Judith Case and freelance writer John Raymond in the bonds of matrimony, he performed the rites over the naked body of Lois Murgenstrumm, who served as the living altar. Later, when LaVey explained the ritual significance of the living altar to reporters, he remarked that an altar shouldn't be a cold, unyielding slab of sterile stone or wood. It should be a symbol of unrestrained lust and indulgence.

All in all, it was quite a wedding for the first public marriage ceremony ever held in the United States by a devil-worshipping cult. The bride shunned the traditional white gown to appear in a bright red dress. The groom wore a black turtleneck sweater and coat. The satanic high priest stole the show, however, in a black cape lined with scarlet silk and a close-fitting blood-red hood from which two white horns protruded.

The cynical might point out that LaVey's San Francisco-based church headquarters was once a brothel; the purists among the Satanists might grumble about how LaVey's showbiz approach has demeaned the esoteric allure of their secret rituals; but it is difficult to be dogmatic about the precise rites and liturgies of the Black Mass.

EARLY Sabbats were held well away from the cities and villages on large areas of flat ground.

Most authorities agree that the early Sabbats were held well away from the cities and villages on large areas of flat ground. Many covens preferred hilly ground, even mountain-

sides; but wherever the rituals were held, it was essential that one end of the worship area be wooded. This grove, according to tradition, served as the choir and sanctuary. The open area served as the equivalent of the nave in an orthodox church. At the far end of the wooded grove, the worshippers erected an altar of stones. Upon the altar was placed a large, wooden image of Satan, which many contemporary scholars agree was quite likely intended to be a representation of the nature god Pan, rather than the Prince of Darkness.

Even in its most polished form, this effigy did not resemble the sleek, mustachioed popular conception of a long-tailed devil in red tights. The idol's torso was human, but its bottom half was that of a goat. Its head, too, was more often goat-like than that of a clearly discernible human physiognomy. The entire image was stained black, and in some locales, bore a small torch between its horns. The central feature of all such idols was said to be a prominent penis of exaggerated proportions, emphasizing the rites of fertility in which the ancient rituals originated.

A COVEN *is traditionally comprised of no more than 12 members.*

The tortures of the Inquisition brought forth all manner of obscene versions of the Black Sabbat, and perhaps the great majority of such testimony is suspect. It must be pointed out that descriptions of the Black Mass were derived from confessions achieved by torture, as well as from accounts of medieval Christians who observed pagan celebrations of the solstices, midsummer, and so forth and who collectively designated the participants as "satan-worshippers." However, numerous scholars of witchcraft, sorcery, and Satanism generally agree on the following order of service for the observance.

The Sabbat began with the ceremonial entrance of the participants, led by the high priest or high priestess of the coven. (A coven is traditionally comprised of no more than 12 members.) Christian observers of the Sabbat were quick to compare this ceremonial entrance to the orthodox introit, but there is no evidence that the witches referred to the procession by this name or even intended a comparison to the Christian order of service. According to contemporary reports of Sabbat gatherings in the Middle Ages (c. 500–c. 1500), several hundred, and in some cases, several thousand, people attended the ritual observances.

The chief officiant was called "The Ancient One," a purely symbolic title, as in many Sabbats, the priestess might be an adolescent girl. At the priestess' signal, the celebrants touched their torches to the flame burning between the dark image's horns and received the transference of Lucifer's light. The office was opened with the priestess chanting: "I will come to the altar. Save me my Holy Lord Satan from the treacherous and the violent." The ceremonial procession and opening prayer completed, the priestess next delivered the ceremonial kiss to the hindquarters of the image.

The only real steadfast rule of the Sabbat was that there must be an equal number of both sexes. Each participant must have a mate. Under torture, many witches told their confessors that Satan would conjure up demons to take the place of either sex if human company should run short.

Each initiate and each member in attendance was required to bring food and drink for the banquet. In the state of poverty and deprivation in which so many peasants lived, it is easy to see why they looked forward to these smorgasbords during the Sabbats. Wine, beer, and cider were all known by the twelfth century, and attendees were encouraged to drink as well as eat their fill.

It seems, in the opinion of many scholars, that the celebrants may have sprinkled liberal dosages of trance-inducing herbs into the communal brew. Undoubtedly, such an action was designed to break down the last vestiges of inhibitions that some newcomers might maintain. It was most important that everyone be congenial by the hour when it was time for the Sabbat Dance, or, as it is commonly known, the Witches' Round.

The round was performed with the dancers in a back-to-back position with their hands clasped and their heads turned so that they might see each other. A lively dance such as this, which was essentially circular in movement, would need little help from drugged drinks to bring about a condition of vertigo in the most hearty of dancers. In his *The Satanic Mass* (1965), H. T. F. Rhodes writes: "The result of the dance was an ecstatic condition wherein, as the movement progressed, officiants and congregation were united as if in one body."

In the sixteenth century, Florin de Raemond described the rites of the Sabbat then extant (translation from Rhodes, *The Satanic Mass*): "The presiding deity is a black goat with two horns. A man dressed as a priest is attended by two women servers. A young initiate is presented to the goat who makes the sign of the cross with the left hand and commands those present to salute him with…the kiss upon the hind-quarters. Between his horns the creature carries a black lighted candle from which the worshippers' tapers are lighted. As each one adores the goat, money is dropped into a silver dish." De Raemond goes on to state that the new witch is initiated by giving Satan a lock of her hair, and by "going apart with him into a wood." Then, according to de Raemond, "The Sabbat dance follows in the familiar back-to-back positions and the Mass proper then begins. A plain black cape is worn by the celebrant. A segment of turnip, dyed black, is used in place of the Host for the elevation. On seeing it above the priest's head, the congregation cry, 'Master, save us!' Water replaces wine in the chalice. Offensive material is used as a substitute for holy water."

The simplest ring dance practiced by witches is that of a plain circle with men and women alternating with joined hands. Sometimes the men face in and the women face out. In certain cases, upright poles may be placed on the perimeter of the dance circle so that the dancers might weave their way through the staves. As the witches become more accomplished, the dance patterns may become more sophisticated, but most authorities feel that nearly all of the dances may be traced from ancient designs, such as the **swastika,** which represents the horns of four beasts turning a mill or a wheel.

Perhaps the climax of the traditional Witches Round came with the priestess becoming the living altar and lying there, naked, to receive the material offerings of the group. Token gifts of wheat, fruit, and in some cases, small animals, may have been offered on the human altar. This part of the Sabbat seems to have been a most important facet of the fertility rites, which, in primitive times, was probably the primary motivation for the observance.

By the time of the Middle Ages with its grim repression of pleasure and sex, it appears to be a point of general agreement that a mass sexual communion was followed by wild and ecstatic dancing. Such accounts must always be evaluated by considering the source: women and men under torture and death at the stake. It seems certain from the perspective in the twenty-first century, that the old mystery religions took on a completely different interpretation when observed by Christian witnesses.

It was during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the mold became set for the ritual patterns which many today commonly think of as Satanism. It was then that the practitioners of the Old Religion went completely underground with their worship ceremonies while the decadent aristocracy seized upon the Black Mass as a kind of hedonistic parlor game in which one might express his sexual fantasies on living altars and cavort about in the nude. Unrestrained immorality was the order of the day as Parisians followed the example of their Sun King, Louis XIV (1638–1715). Satanism was perhaps developed to its highest estate, as the jaded aristocrats began to adapt the witchcraft rituals to suit their own sexual fantasies. The enlightened sophisticate's mockery of the primitive customs had been converted to a serious interest by the tension and insecurity of the times. Although the Inquisition still consumed its quota of witches, the France of King Louis XIV was a high-living, low-principled era, and lords and ladies began to pray in earnest to Satan to grant them high office and wealth. Whether or

not their wishes for elevation in the society of their day was granted, it would seem that the majority of these high-born Satanists paid cursory homage to the Horned God only as a means of indulging their baser passions.

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CATHERINE MONTVOISIN

At her trial in Paris in 1680, Catherine Deshayes, "La Voisin" (c. 1640–1680), boastfully stated that she had sacrificed more than 2,500 children who had their throats slit at her Black Sabbats. She also claimed that her poisonous potions brought about the deaths of many more jealous husbands, unfaithful wives, and unwanted parents than all the other professional poisoners of Paris combined.

LA Voisin convinced a learned tribunal that her approach to astrology was completely acceptable to the Church.

In 1647, the little girl who would become one of history's most infamous Satanists was just another barefooted beggar who had been sent out into the streets to tell fortunes for a few coins from the passersby. By coincidence, many of the waif's "predictions" came true, and she cultivated a clientele who swore by her "God-given powers." But the appealing little prophetess with the smudged nose soon discovered that Satan's wages were much higher than the ones offered by the angry wives who suspected their husbands of infidelity or the frustrated young women who wanted to know when they would get a husband.

When she was 20, Catherine married Antoine Montvoisin, who, as far as can be determined, never contributed any money toward her well-being. Innately resourceful, she had soon established herself as a midwife, a beautician, and an herbalist, and was supporting both Antoine and his daughter by a former marriage in handsome style.

It was when the enterprising La Voisin included palmistry, prophecy, and astrology among her stock-in-trade that she incurred the wrath of the established Church. Instead of being flayed alive by a grand inquisitor, the young woman convinced a learned tribunal composed of the vicars general and several doctors of theology from the Sorbonne that her approach to astrology was completely acceptable to the Church.

The effect that her release had upon her already flourishing trade as an herbalist and her ever-increasing reputation as a seer was remarkable. People reasoned that La Voisin had secured the Church's blessing on her magic. She was soon surrounded by many wealthy clients.

La Voisin received her supplicants in a darkened chamber wherein she appeared in an ermine-lined robe emblazoned with two hundred eagles embroidered in gold thread on purple velvet. For the right price, the high priestess would officiate at a special Black Mass for a troubled seeker of satanic solace. If the supplicant were female, then the client herself, regardless of how high-born she might be, would serve as the Black Mass's living altar.

The high priestess kept a secret list of more than 50 Roman Catholic priests who would celebrate the Black Mass at her bidding. Her great favorite was Abbe Guilborg (d. 1680), who, in spite of the fact that he held a number of public and private ecclesiastical offices, was always in need of extra money to maintain his mistresses he kept closeted about Paris. His skill as a chemist was also put to good use by La Voisin for her clients who wished effective poisons, and Guilborg managed to cut down on housekeeping expenses with his mistresses by selling his many illegitimate children to La Voisin for use as satanic sacrifices during her Black Masses.

Babies for sacrifice cost the high priestess a good deal of money, but she had learned to economize in the Paris streets. She established a home for unwed mothers, which saw the girls through their pregnancies and relieved them of the responsibility of caring for an unwanted child. Girls without financial means were provided for at no charge. The bills presented to the women of the aristocracy were large enough to cover the operating expenses for the entire home. The young pampered aristocrats, who inconveniently found themselves in a family way, were, however, offered the bonus of having a punitive potion secretly administered to the rogue who had been so careless in his seduction. With moral laxity the order of the day in Louis XIV's (1638–1715) France, the shrewd La Voisin's home for unwed mothers always managed to provide her with a stockpile of sacrificial infants.

The Black Mass was held deep in the bowels of La Voisin's high-walled house in the region lying south of St. Denis, which, in seventeenth-century Paris, was called Villeneuve. The supplicant approached the altar in complete nudity and lay upon its black surface. A black-robed acolyte stepped forward to place a flickering black candle in each of her upturned palms. At this point, Abbe Guilborg (d. 1680) appeared and positioned himself at the living altar. He wore vestments of an orthodox shape made of white linen. The chasuble (outer vestment worn by celebrant at Mass) and the alb were embroidered with black pine cones, the ancient Greek symbol of fertility. The priest placed the chalice upon the supplicant's stomach, kissed her body, and officiated the ceremony. The prayer book was bound in human skin; the holy water was urine; and the host was usually a toad, a turnip, or on occasion, true host stolen from a church and desecrated with filth.

The rituals completed, it was time for the offering. Abbe Guilborg stretched out his arms to receive the infant delivered there by the black-robed acolyte, intoning the dark entities Astaroth and Asmodeus to accept the sacrifice of the child so the supplicants at the Black Mass might receive the things that they asked.

The child was raised aloft and the priest deftly slashed its throat.

Marguerite, La Voisin's stepdaughter, often assisted at the Black Mass in the capacity of clerk to the celebrating priest. When Marguerite happened to find herself with child as the result of a flirtation with a married neighbor, she became alarmed when she found her stepmother casting appraising eyes at the bulge of her pregnancy. When the child was born, Marguerite, in spite of herself, found that a maternal instinct existed within her. Since she was quite aware that La Voisin had no interest in becoming a grandmother, Marguerite had sent her child away to be brought up in the country.

While she was becoming wealthy from her performance of the satanic rites, La Voisin was unaware that a police official named Desgrez, a detective who had arrested Madame de Brinvilliers (1630–1676), an aristocratic Satanist who specialized in poisons, was closing in on her Black Sabbats. When his men reported the number of the high-ranking and the high-born who were frequenting the Satanist's subterranean chambers, Desgrez found himself faced with quite a decision. It would not benefit him to anger so many important people by suggesting that the activities in which they were engaging were wrong. If he arrested La Voisin, he would, at least indirectly, be criticizing the members of the aristocracy who regularly attended her Sabbats and who relied upon her talents as a seeress and a priestess.

As Desgrez struggled with this dilemma, one of his officers came to him trembling with fear. He had recognized the crest on one of the coaches waiting before La Voisin's walls as belonging to none other than Madame de Montespan (1641–1707), the mistress of King Louis XIV. The officer told him that the royal mistress had served as the naked, living altar at one of La Voisin's Sabbats.

Desgrez brought his evidence and the list of names to his superior, La Reynie, head of the Chambre Ardente. King Louis had pledged himself to support the Chambre, but the rank of the names on the list, including that of his own mistress, placed him in a politically explosive situation. His advisors cautioned him that a hasty exposure of the decadence of court life

would lead to a revolution or encourage England to launch an invasion against a morally corrupt and internally torn France.

After the arrest of La Voisin, several planted rumors caused some of the court favorites involved to flee the country on extended trips abroad. After they were safely out of the country, the king saw to it that evidence against highborn court figures, including his indiscreet mistress, was suppressed. La Voisin herself was treated to a rather pleasant stay in jail, until King Louis had seen to it that all those of high position had been protected. Then La Voisin was delivered to the grand inquisitor.

Catherine Montvoisin endured four six-hour ordeals in the torture chamber before she was brought to the stake on February 23, 1680. By the king's order, only testimony concerning those Satanists who had already been condemned was allowed to be recorded. The former fortuneteller from the streets of Paris went to her death singing offensive songs and cursing the priests who sought her final confession.

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GILLES DE RAIS (1404–1440)

In 1415, as a boy of 11, Gilles de Rais became heir to the greatest fortune in France. At 16, he increased his net worth by marrying the extremely wealthy Catherine de Thouars. Although he was known as a devout Christian with a mystical turn of mind, and is described by his contemporaries as a man of rare elegance and almost angelic beauty, he was far from an ascetic. He was highly skilled in the arts of warfare, and when he had barely turned 20 he rode by the side of Joan of Arc (c. 1412–1441) and served as her chief lieutenant, fighting with such fierce merit that King Charles VII (1403–1431) later awarded de Rais the title of Marshal of France.

Gilles de Rais was a man so noted for his devotion to duty and his personal piety that he came to be regarded as a latter-day Lancelot. But, like Lancelot, de Rais entered into an ill-fated love affair that destroyed him. Although it was undoubtedly an affair that was conducted entirely on a spiritual plane, de Rais became the platonic lover of Joan of Arc, the strange young mystic whose "voices" dictated that she save France. He became her guardian and protector, but when Joan was captured and burned at the stake, de Rais felt as though his years of serving God and the good had been for naught. After the maid of Orleans was betrayed by the Church, he became transformed into a satanic fiend of such hellish and unholy proportions that his like may be unequaled in the annals of perverse crimes against society. Many scholars who have examined the life of this pietist turned monster in depth have agreed that de Rais's crimes and acts of sacrilege were quite likely inspired by what he considered God's betrayal of God's good and faithful servant, Joan of Arc.

Although she had given him a child, Gilles de Rais left his wife, vowed never to have sexual intercourse with another woman, and secreted himself in his castle at Tiffauges. The young man who had once surrounded himself with priests and supported dozens of chapels throughout France, now welcomed profligates, broken-down courtiers, sycophants, and wastrels to his castle, and his family gold supported several rounds of lavish orgies. At last, even the vast wealth of the de Rais was depleted, and Gilles decided to try his hand at alchemy, the dream of transmuting base metals into gold, as a means of replenishing his fortune.

Within a short time, he had converted an entire wing of his castle into a series of extensive alchemical laboratories. Alchemists and sorcerers from all over Europe flocked to Tiffauges. Some came to freeload on the feasts and to fleece the young nobleman out of a few bags of gold. Others came to seek final answers and resolution to the persistent, haunting quest of the alchemist. Although de Rais himself joined the alchemists and magicians in work sessions that went nearly around the clock, all of their experiments counted for naught.

It was the Italian alchemist/sorcerer Antonio Francisco Prelati, a former priest, who told him that a mortal cannot hope to achieve the transmutation of base metals into gold without the help of Satan. And the only way that an alchemist or a sorcerer could hope to arouse Satan's interest in his work was by dedicating the most abominable crimes to his name.

Under Prelati's direction, de Rais set about to commit his first abominable crime. He lured a young peasant boy into the castle and into the chambers that he provided for Prelati. Under the alchemist's instruction, de Rais brutally killed the boy and used his blood for writing of evocations and formulas. Satan did not appear and no base metals were transmuted into gold, but Gilles de Rais no longer cared. He had discovered an enterprise far more satisfying than the alchemist's quest. He had discovered sadistic satisfaction and pleasure in the torture and murder of children.

On September 13, 1440, Jean the Bishop of Nantes signed the legal citation which would bring the Baron Gilles de Rais to trial. Among the charges levied on him were the killing, strangling, and massacring of innocent children. In addition to such horrors, he was also charged with evoking demons, making pacts with them, and sacrificing children to them.

Etienne Corillaut, one of de Raises's personal servants, later testified at his master's trial when the Marshal of France was accused of having slain as many as 800 children.

Rather than be put to the question by the court, de Rais chose to confess every sordid and gory deed. Such a confession would spare him the ordeals by torture awaiting those who protested their innocence. Because of his high position in the court of France, Gilles de Rais was granted the mercy of being strangled before being burned. The tribunal conveniently looked the other way after his execution, however, and the de Rais family was permitted to remove his corpse after it had been given only a cursory singeing. The mass murderer of hundreds of innocent children was interred in a Catholic ceremony in a Carmelite churchyard. Antonio Francisco Prelati and the other professing Satanists were given, at most, a few months in prison for their part in the murders.

"It is thought likely by some historians that this was their reward for testifying against their master," Masters and Lea reflect, "and that both ecclesiastical and civil authorities were far more interested in obtaining Gilles' money and properties, which were still considerable, than in punishing him for his crimes."

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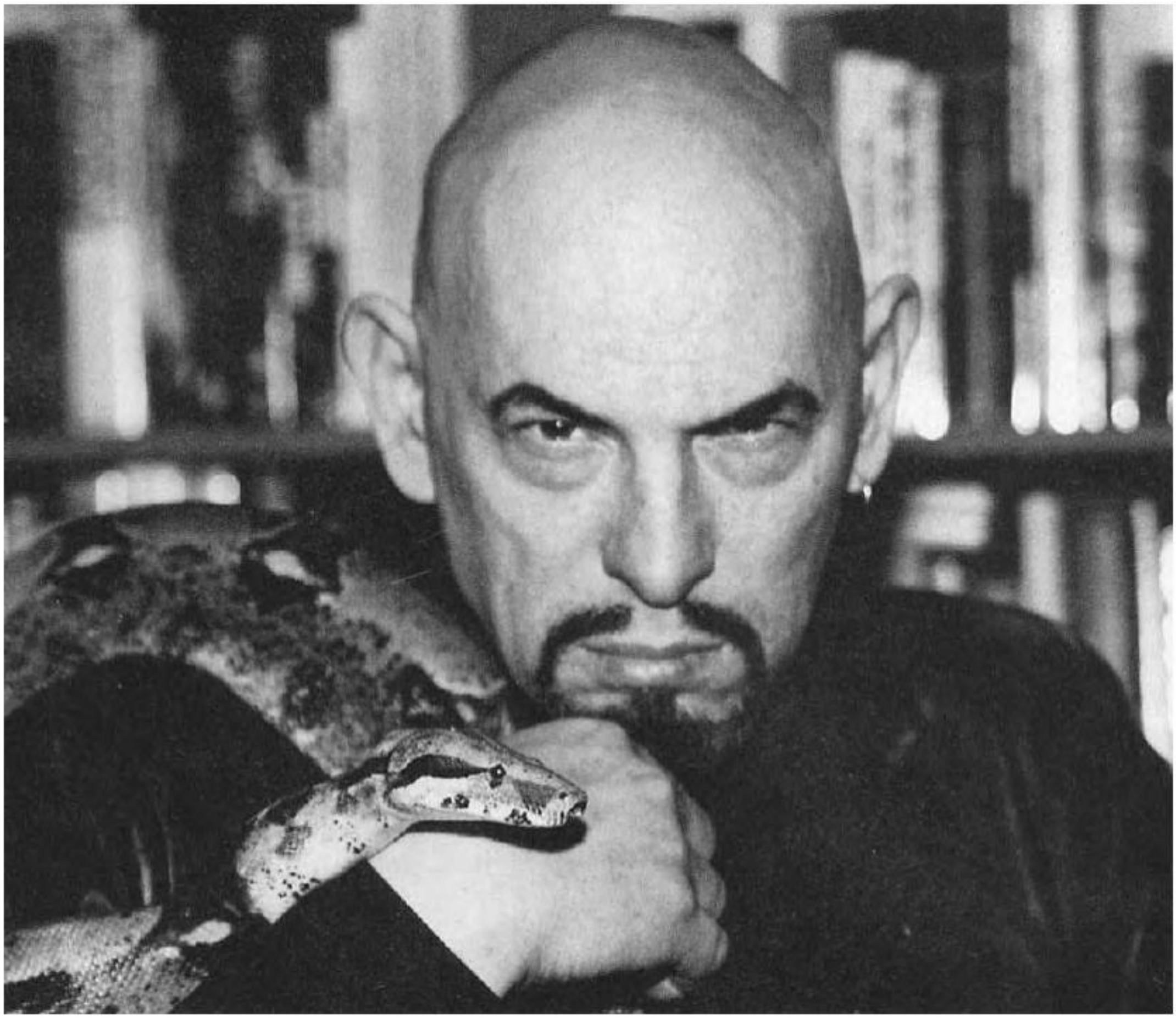
Anton LaVey's First Church of Satan

On Walpurgisnacht, April 30, 1966, Anton Szandor LaVey (1930–1997) of San Francisco shaved his head, donned clerical clothing, complete with white collar, and proclaimed himself Satan's high priest. Concurrently, LaVey announced the establishment of the First Church of Satan in America. A short time later, LaVey published *The Satanic Bible* (1969), affirming in bold language the teachings of the Church of Satan and proclaiming that Satan ruled the earth. This was the dawn of the Age of Satan, he announced—the morning of magic and undefiled wisdom.

Worship of the Prince of Darkness is at least as old as the Judeo-Christian tradition, and there was nothing new about a belief in magical powers. What was new was LaVey's use of the term "church" as part of his organization's title. While some accused him of blasphemy, he pointed out that the word itself came from the Greek and applied to any group that feels it has been "called out" of society's rank-and-file for a special purpose. And there seemed little question that LaVey seriously considered his church to be quite special. In addition to ceremonies and rituals devoted to the Prince of Darkness, there were weddings, funerals, and children baptized in the name of Satan.



Church of Satan founder Anton Szandor La Vey (1930–1997). (CHURCH OF SATAN ARCHIVES)

LaVey's *The Satanic Bible* listed nine declarations that defined Satanism for a new age:

1. indulgence, instead of abstinence;
2. vital existence, instead of spiritual pipe dreams;
3. undefiled wisdom, instead of hypocritical self-deceit;
4. kindness to those who deserve it, instead of love wasted on ingrates;
5. vengeance, instead of turning the other cheek;
6. responsibility to the responsible, instead of concern for psychic vampires;
7. man as just another animal...more often worse than those that walk on all fours, who because of his divine spiritual and intellectual development, has become the most vicious animal of all;
8. all of the so-called sins, as they lead to physical, mental, or emotional gratification;
9. Satan is the best friend the Church has ever had, as he has kept it in business all these years.

In *The Satanic Bible*, LaVey revealed and explained the credos of Satanism as proclaimed by the Church of Satan. In his introduction to the work, he described Satanism as being "dedicated to the dark, hidden force in nature responsible for the workings of earthly affairs for which science and religion had no

explanation." He explained that he was moved to establish the Church of Satan when he saw the need for a church that would "recapture man's body and carnal desires as objects of celebration." The Church of Satan preaches a religious system that endeavors to overcome the repressions and inhibitions of human instinctual behavior it believes has been fostered by the Judeo-Christian tradition.

The First Church of Satan does not recognize the existence of Satan as an actual being, but as a symbol representing materialism. The church emphasizes that the figure of Satan stands for an inner attitude, and it is never to be regarded as an object onto which human powers are projected in order to worship what is only human in an externalized form. In *The Satanic Bible*, Satanists are charged to Asay unto thine own heart, 'I am my own redeemer.'" (Book IV, line 3.)

The Satanic Bible is divided into four sections, or books, each corresponding to one of the four hermetic elements of fire, air, earth, and water. The first section is entitled *The Book of Satan*, and its introduction advises the reader that the "ponderous rule books of hypocrisy are no longer needed," it is time to relearn the Law of the Jungle. The second section, *The Book of Lucifer*, explains how the Roman god Lucifer, the light bearer, the spirit of enlightenment, was made synonymous with evil through Christian teachings. *The Book of Belial*, the third section, is a basic text on materialistic magic, a book of ritual and ceremonial magic expressed in satanic terms. The fourth section, *The Book of Leviathan*, stresses the importance to successful magic of the spoken word.

The Satanist doctrine celebrates man the animal. It exalts sexual lust above spiritual love, claiming that the latter is but a sham and a cover-up. Satanism declares that violence must be met with violence and that to love one's neighbor is a utopian unreality. "Hate your enemies with a whole heart," *The Satanic Bible* advises. "And if a man smite you on one cheek, smash him on the other! Smite him hip and thigh, for self-preservation is the highest law!" (Section III, paragraph 7).

Satanists condemn prayer and confession as vain, futile gestures, believing that the way to achieve what one wants is through magic and aggressive effort—and that the best method of ridding oneself of guilt is not to assume it in the first place. If Satanists make a mistake, they recognize sincerely that to err is human; and instead of involving themselves in efforts to cleanse themselves, they examine the situation in order to determine exactly what happened and how to prevent its happening again.

Satanists regard the Christian preoccupations with otherworldliness as subterfuge, with self-denial as depravity, and with piety as a sign of weakness. To Satanists, the Christian way of life is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless encounter with stagnation and boredom. Worshippers of Satan believe that the way to greater levels of personal perfection and an exploration of the deeper mysteries of life is through study and the performance of rituals emphasizing the sensual nature of humankind and directing this power toward the release of psychic or emotional energy.

Anton *LaVey's* The Satanic Bible *was published in 1969.*

Because Christian churches, especially the Roman Catholic, are considered anathema to the Prince of Darkness, Satanists use parodied versions of their rituals and symbols in their ceremonies. The cross is used, but it is worn or displayed with the long beam pointing downward. Satanists may on occasion use the pentagram or five-pointed star, traditionally used by the practitioners of Wicca or witchcraft, but as with the cross, it is inverted, resting upon a single point, rather than two. Satanists insist that their parodying and inversion of other religions' rites and symbols are not done strictly for purposes of blasphemy. It is their belief, they maintain, that such use appropriates the power inherent in the rite or symbol and inverts it for Satan's purposes.

Satanists believe their doctrine and belief system is of the here and now. Acting on that premise, they look for their rewards in their

Since Anton La Vey's death in 1997, Peter H. Gilmore is currently the Church of Satan's High Priest. (CHURCH OF SATAN ARCHIVES)

present life and in this world. "Life is the great indulgence—death the great abstinence. Therefore, make the most of life here and now!" (Book IV, line 1.)

As a supplement to *The Satanic Bible*, LaVey published *The Satanic Rituals* (1972), in which he explained the Church of Satan's rituals and ceremonies in greater detail. *Rituals* includes the actual text of the **Black Mass** and the ritual for the satanic baptism of adults and children.

Anton LaVey, the founder of the First Church of Satan in San Francisco, ran away from home at the age of 17 to work as a cage boy for the circus lion tamer Clyde Beatty. Later, LaVey became a carnival mentalist and hypnotist, then an organ player for the dancers and strippers in the sideshows. On Sunday mornings he had an extra job playing the organ for an evangelist who conducted revival meetings in a large tent on the neighboring lot.

In the 1950s, LaVey became a San Francisco Police Department crime scene photographer, but he maintained the same fascination for magic that had driven him to perform as a stage mentalist, hypnotist, and magician in the carnivals and circuses of his youth, and he soon included a widening circle of devotees in his Magic Circle discussion group. In the late 1960s, when he founded the First Church of Satan, LaVey became immediately popular in the media, often allowing reporters to attend certain rituals that he conducted over the living altar of a woman's naked body in his church, the famous "Black House," said to have been a brothel. Then in a sudden rush came the books, the attention from movie stars, the position as technical advisor to such motion pictures as *Rosemary's Baby,* (1968), and the hostility of millions of devout Christians, who saw LaVey as a kind of **antichrist.** By the 1970s, the death threats and the harassment had become oppressive, and LaVey went underground, ceased all public ceremonies, and recast his church as a secret society.

In February 23, 1986, *The Washington Post Magazine* carried Walt Harrington's account of a visit with LaVey in which the journalist noted that the satanic high priest, like anyone else, loved his friends, wife, and children, but there was a venom that went beyond his claim that Satanism was a parody of Christianity: "Anton LaVey is not a cartoon Satan," Harrington wrote. "He's far less frightening than you would imagine, because he is admittedly a carnival hustler. Yet he is still terrifying, because he touches, if not the mystical darkness, then the psychological darkness—the hate and fear—in us all."

In 1991, LaVey lost ownership of the "Black House" when a judge ordered him to

sell the satanic temple, along with such mementos as a shrunken head and a stuffed wolf, and split the proceeds with his estranged wife, Diane Hagerty.

Anton Szandor LaVey died on October 30, 1997, the day before Halloween, and soon after his death, what remained of his estate became the object of a legal struggle between his oldest daughter Karla and Blanche Barton, his longtime consort and the mother of his son Xerxes. At the same time, LaVey's younger daughter Zeena, who renounced the Church of Satan in 1990 and became a priest in the *Temple of Set*, began proclaiming what she claimed was the truth about the Church of Satan, listing, among other charges, that it had never been intended to be a spiritual movement, but was created solely as a money-making venture. Such denouncements are unlikely to damage severely the reputation of the First Church of Satan, which continues today under the direction of the High Priestess Blanche Barton and the Magister Peter H. Gilmore.

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Temple of Set

The ancient Egyptians were perhaps the first to personify evil as a distinct force in the universe, but they retained a concept of unity by representing the evil god Set as a brother of Horus, prince of light and goodness. Although Set was actually the younger brother of **Osiris**—who, with **Isis,** his wife, and Horus, his son, comprised the Egyptian trinity—he was represented as Horus's brother, because Set stood for the opposing forces of evil and darkness. Set was jealous of Osiris's power and sought to seize the throne from him. In ensuing struggle, Osiris was dismembered, leaving Horus to oppose his evil brother/uncle. In the war between the two that ensued, Horus and the forces of good prevailed. In the story of Set's insurrection can be seen a parallel with the Hebrew tradition of Lucifer's rebellion, his defeat by Michael and the angels, and his subsequent expulsion from heaven. Set, therefore, is clearly an early forerunner of Christianity's and Islam's irreconcilably and absolutely evil Satan.

The Temple of Set maintains, however, that regardless of how evil Set may be portrayed, his "essential function" of "expanding the borders of existence and then returning that Chaotic energy to the center" has continued to the present day. In the temple's cosmology, Set stands separate and apart from the forces of the natural universe.

In 1975, Michael Aquino (1946–), one of **Anton LaVey**'s followers, left the Church of Satan after a disagreement and organized the Temple of Set in San Francisco. Aquino had been the editor of the Church of Satan newsletter, and when it appeared to him that LaVey was merely "selling" priesthoods, he lodged a firm protest with the Black Pope. In Aquino's view, priesthoods in satanic orders should be conferred solely on the basis of magical achievement. Unimpressed with Aquino's argument, LaVey dismissed the matter by explaining that he considered the degrees he issued as merely symbolic of the member's status in the outside world. In protest, Aquino resigned his priesthood in the Church of Satan and with Lilith Sinclair, head of the New York Lilith Grotto, formed the Temple of Set.

Aquino, a former lieutenant in Army Intelligence, specializing in psychological warfare, had joined the Church of Satan together with his first wife in 1968. An enthusiastic member of the church, he was ordained a satanic priest after he had returned from serving in Vietnam in 1970; and he envisioned his mission in life as one of destroying the influence of conventional religion in human affairs. Filled with missionary zeal, Aquino made it clear that he did not wish to convert everyone to Satanism, but he did wish to remove the shadow of fear

and superstition that he believed had been perpetuated by organized religion.

On the eve of the summer solstice on June 21, 1975, after his split with LaVey, Aquino performed a magical ritual and sought to summon Satan to appear to him to advise him how best to proceed in his earthly mission. According to Aquino, the Prince of Darkness appeared to him in the image of Set and declared to his disciple the dawning of the Aeon of Set. It was revealed that Set appeared to **Aleister Crowley** (1875–1947) in Cairo in 1904 in the image of Crowley's guardian angel, Aiwass. At this time, Crowley was declared the herald for the advent of the Aeon of Horus and assumed the title of "The Beast." In 1966, Anton LaVey had ushered in the Aeon of Satan, an intermediary stage that was designed to prepare the way for the Aeon of Set, an age that would bring forth enlightenment. Aquino was delighted and honored to assume the mantle of "The Second Beast," and he even had "**666,**" the number of the Beast in the book of Revelation tattooed on his scalp. At the same time, he also assumed Crowley's Golden Dawn degree of Ipsissimus as his own.

In Aquino's view, the Temple of Set offers its followers an opportunity to raise their consciousness and to apprehend what exists in each individual to make him or her unique. Such awareness, according to the precepts of the Temple of Set, will permit its members to use this gift of expanded consciousness to make themselves stronger in all facets of their being. To accomplish this, they state, they "perserve and improve the tradition of spiritual distinction from the natural universe, which in the Judeo/Christian West has been called Satanism," but they choose to call "the Left-Hand Path." To follow such a path, they promise, is to enter a process that will create "an individual, powerful essence that exists above and beyond animal life. It is thus the true vehicle for personal immortality."

The Temple of Set emphasizes the employment of black magic of a sort that focuses on "self-determined goals." While this form of magic may be utilized to accomplish everything from healing one's ill friends or relatives to obtaining a better paying position, the temple stresses that the practitioner must first learn to develop a system of ethics and discernment before putting such power to use. Using magic for "impulsive, trivial, or egoistic desires" is not considered to be Setian. Black magic is the means by which Setian initiates "experience being gods, rather than praying to imaginary images of gods."

The Temple of Set does not tolerate congregations of docile Setians. Those who attend must be considered "cooperative philosophers and magicians." According to their general information distributed to those who inquire about the temple, executive authority is held by the Council of Nine, which is responsible for appointing both the high priest and the executive director. There are six degrees of initiates: Setian 1, Adept II, Priest/Priestess of Set III, Magister/ Magistra Templi IV, Magus/Maga V, and Ipsissimus/Ipissima VI. To be recognized as an Adept II, one must demonstrate that he or she has successfully mastered and applied the essential principles of black magic. Reading materials available to the initiates include the newsletter *Scroll of Set* and the encyclopedias entitled the *Jeweled Tablets of Set*.

The Temple of Set emphasizes that the black arts may be as dangerous to the newcomer as volatile chemicals may become to the inexperienced lab technician. It cautions that the practice of magic is not for unstable, immature, or emotionally weak-minded individuals. And it also stresses that the process offers to those who seek their "evolutionary product of human experience" is the kind of activity that no enlightened, mature intellect would regard as "undignified, sadistic, criminal, or depraved."

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UFO CULTS

On November 20, 1952, George Adamski (1891–1965) walked into the night near Desert Center, Califor-

nia, and when he returned, he claimed to have communicated with the pilot of a Venusian spaceship through telepathic transfer. The entity was benign and seemed extremely concerned with the spiritual growth of humankind. He was what George Adamski called a "space brother." Just as the prophets of old had retreated into the desert wilderness to receive their inspiration from a higher source, so had Adamski, by some prearranged cosmic signal, gone to meet his space brother in the desert.

Adamski was the first of a long line of UFO contactees who would claim to have communicated with extraterrestrial intelligences. Many, like Adamski, became New Age UFO prophets, sharing the cosmic sermonettes that they said were given to them by wise beings from the stars. These men and women said they were not at all frightened by the extraterrestrial entities with whom they had come into contact. On the contrary, such a contact with the space brothers and sisters had enabled them to undergo a kind of **cosmic consciousness** experience. Throughout his career as a UFO prophet, Adamski's believers steadfastly declared him to be one of the most saintly of men, completely devoted to the teachings of universal laws.

After Adamski's contact experience in 1952, there were individuals like George Van Tassel (1910–1978), George Hunt Williamson, Truman Bethurum, Daniel Fry (1908–1992), Cedric Allingham, Orfeo Angelucci, Franklin Thomas, Buck Nelson, Gloria Lee (d. 1962), and Howard Menger, who claimed to have touched souls and, in some cases, bodies with space beings. Their accounts were circulated most often in privately printed books, which became scrolls of wisdom for thousands of questing seekers. The contactee literature ranges from reports of fanciful adventures in other worlds, in which the UFO contactee appears as some modern-day Gulliver being escorted through awesome alien cultures by a benevolent extraterrestrial guide, to works which concern themselves with more philosophical, religious, and moral information.

George Van Tassel (1910–1978) published his first booklet in 1952 and introduced the world to "Ashtar, commandant of station Schare." Those who visited Van Tassel's headquarters at Giant Rock, California, soon became aware that "Schare" was one of several flying saucer stations in Blaau, the fourth sector of Bela, into which our solar system is moving. "Shan" was the name that Van Tassel's space brother had given for Earth. Commandant Ashtar also decreed the universe to be ruled by the Council of Seven Lights, which had divided the cosmos into sector systems and sectors. Van Tassel found the Ministry of Universal Wisdom based on his revelations from the space brothers. This ministry teaches the universal law that operates in seven states: *gender*, male and female; the Creator as *cause*; *polarity of negative and positive*; *vibration*; *rhythm*; *relativity*; and *mentality*.

Daniel Fry (1908–1992) established Understanding Incorporated in 1955 as a means of better spreading the teachings of space brother A-Lan, whom Fry claimed to have met on his first trip in a UFO. In that same year, George King (1919–1997) claimed to have been named the "Primary Terrestrial Mental Channel" by Master Aetherius of Venus. King was later declared an agent for the Great White Brotherhood and a channel for both Aetherius and Master Jesus. Members of the **Aetherius Society** are earnestly engaged in the war being waged by the brotherhood against the black magicians, a group they feel seeks to enslave the human race.

By the 1960s, few people were claiming the direct kind of physical contact that Adamski had alleged he had experienced out in the California desert, and the psychic-channeling flying saucer groups were becoming increasingly popular among the faithful followers of the UFO prophets. Gloria Lee (d. 1962), a former flight attendant and the wife of aircraft designer William H. Byrd, sighted a UFO in the 1950s. In 1953, she began to receive telepathic communications from an entity on the planet Jupiter who revealed himself only as "JW." As she came to place more confidence in her space being, she became a well-known figure among UFO cultist groups as a lecturer and a channel.

JW revealed that on Jupiter vocal cords had gone out of use, so he began to channel a book

through Gloria Lee. He also prompted her to found the Cosmon Research Foundation, dedicated to the spreading of his teachings and the bringing about of humankind's spiritual development in preparation for the New Age. Through JW's direction and the persistence of Gloria Lee on the lecture circuit, the foundation became a thriving organization.

Then, tragically, Lee starved herself to death after a 66-day fast instituted upon the instructions of her mentor from Jupiter. The fast was carried out in the name of peace, in a Gandhi-like effort to make the United States government officially investigate and study plans for a spacecraft that she had brought with her to Washington. On September 23, 1962, Lee secured herself in a hotel room. On December 2, with still no word from any government official—or from her extraterrestrial advisor—the 37-year-old UFO prophet died.

Shortly after her passing, the Mark-Age Metacenter in Miami, Florida, announced that they were receiving messages from the spirit of Gloria Lee. Her etheric form told the group that she was now able to discover how the method of interdimensional communication actually worked. As the Metacenter took notes for a booklet Gloria Lee's publisher would later issue to the faithful and the curious, Gloria's spirit spoke through the channel Nada Yolanda, explaining how her conscious intelligence had been transferred to another frequency and another body of higher vibrational rate.

The death of George Adamski on April 12, 1965, by no means stilled the heated controversy which had always swirled around the prolific and articulate founder of the Flying Saucer Movement, for his followers quickly resurrected him. In the book *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 extraterrestrial body already housed the spirit of George Adamski.

Often those men and women who join UFO cults are, by their own admission, individuals who have become disillusioned with existing religious institutions and dissatisfied by the manner in which the political establishment is dealing with social and economic injustices. As in the accounts of the prophets and seekers of old, the contemporary UFO cultists are looking for a more intimate relationship with a source of strength and inspiration outside of themselves. And they cannot seek much farther outside of themselves than outer space.

When such world-weary pilgrims encounter a charismatic man or woman who tells a marvelous story of having received direct spiritual enlightenment from beings from beyond the stars, the potential cultists feel that they have found a teacher who can now truly answer their questions. Their quest has come to an end. They, too, will now willingly become messengers for a new gospel from outer space, for the UFO prophet has not only made contact with a godlike being from another world, but he or she is offering a blend of science and religion that offers a theology that seems more applicable to the problems of modern humankind.

There is a New Age coming, the UFO prophets tell their followers. It will be an age wherein humankind will attain a new consciousness, a new awareness, and a higher state—or frequency—of physical vibration. The UFO beings themselves come from higher dimensions all around us which function on different vibratory levels, just as there are various radio frequencies operating simultaneously in our environment. The space brothers and sisters have come to Earth to reach and to teach those humans who will respond to the promise of a larger universe.

According to the UFO prophets, the space beings have advanced information which they wish to impart to their weaker cousins on Earth. They want humankind to join an intergalactic spiritual federation. They are here to teach, to help awaken the human spirit, to help humankind rise to higher levels of vibration so that the people of Earth will be ready to enter new dimensions. Such a goal, according to the UFO prophets, was precisely what Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), the Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.), the prophets in the Bible, and the other leaders of the great religions sought to teach humanity. In fact, Jesus, known to Mark-Age and others in the Flying

Saucer Movement as "Sananda," has been in orbit around the planet since 1885 and will take on material form as Earth's transition to a higher consciousness is made.

Humankind stands now in the transitional period before the dawn of a New Age, according to the UFO prophets. If earthlings do not raise their vibrational rate within a set period of time, severe earth changes and major cataclysms will take place. Such disasters will not end the world, but shall serve to eliminate the unreceptive members of the human species. However, those who die in such dreadful purgings of the planet will be allowed to reincarnate on higher levels of development so that their salvation will be more readily accomplished through higher teachings on a higher vibratory level.

For thousands of men and women throughout the world, the UFO has become a symbol of religious awakening and spiritual transformation. Some envision the UFO as their deliverer from a world fouled by its own inhabitants, and the presence of UFOs proves to them that humans are not alone in the universe. Because humans are not alone, then life does have meaning, for humans are therefore part of a larger community of intelligences. All humans have become evolving members in a hierarchy of cosmic citizenship.

Although certain UFO cults such as **Heaven's Gate** and **Order of the Solar Temple** acquired a dark side that eventually led to the mass suicide of many of its members, the great majority of these groups are benign; and as many scholars of contemporary religious movements have noted, may be the heralds of a New Age religion, a blending of technology and traditional religious concepts. Dr. Gordon Melton, director of the Institute for the Study of American Religion, has commented that such groups are best understood as "an emerging religious movement with an impetus and a life of their own."

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Aetherius Society

In 1954 while he was in a deep meditative trance, George King (1919–1997) claimed that he received a message from an outer space being who told him to prepare himself to become the human voice of the Interplanetary Parliament. While such a command might have startled one unqualified to receive such communication, the 35-year-old Englishman had been immersed in spiritual studies since he was young. Beginning with an intense study of orthodox Christianity, King became interested in exploring psychic phenomena and spiritual healing. When he was to be the primary mental channel for the cosmic masters, King intensified his practice of yoga, which included the yogic sciences of raja, gnani, and kundalini. This permitted him to attain the state of samadhi—the union of spirit with the superconscious, which allowed communication with the masters in other energy spheres. Soon, King was to discover that the voice that had contacted him belonged to the master Aetherius, a 3,500-year-old Venusian whose name, loosely translated, meant "one who comes from outer space."

By 1955, King had received a number of teachings from the cosmic masters that he felt compelled to share with others. With a number of men and women who had been drawn to his **channeling** of the messages from outer space, King formed the Aetherius Society in London, England, in 1956, relinquishing all of his other spiritual research and his materialistic enterprises to focus his life completely on the transmissions from the cosmic masters.

According to what King had learned from his contact, Aetherius and the other cosmic mentors came from a world or a dimension that was far more technologically advanced than Earth. While they arrive in crafts

referred to as UFOs, their advanced technology allows them to remain invisible to Earth's radar and other scientific detection devices until they permit themselves to be seen just often enough to provoke controversial sightings and signs to the people of the planet. In spite of their superior scientific knowledge, the outer space beings choose to visit Earth because they are benevolent entities who wish to guide humankind in its spiritual evolution. Essentially, the masters are the planet's **spirit guides,** and they can appear to earthlings from time to time in physical bodies simply by lowering their vibratory rate.

As well as seeking to guide earthlings spiritually, the cosmic masters have also protected Earth on numerous occasions from both external and internal forces, King claimed. They have intervened and prevented ecological disasters from occurring. Their spacecraft have, from time to time, blocked the invasion of the planet from hostile interplanetary imperialists who wish to colonize Earth. The outer space masters have even gone so far as to erect an invisible barrier around the planet to protect it from invasion by the "black magicians," evil aliens who wish to enslave the people of Earth.

As with a number of UFO contactees, King linked the masters from extraterrestrial worlds with the ancient metaphysical legend of the Great White Brotherhood, the light beings who are said to belong to a multidimensional, intergalactic organization that dedicates itself to serving the divine cosmic plan in the universe. Among the ascended masters who have been historical figures on Earth, the contactees include Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), **St. Germain,** Krishna, and Lord Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.). By benefit of his crucial role in the relaying of transmissions from Aetherius, George King, in the view of the members of the Aetherius Society, had been elected by the brotherhood to become the next great spiritual prophet.

To further assist his fellow brothers and sisters of Earth to welcome the wisdom and knowledge of the outer space beings, King began to publish *The Cosmic Voice*, a transcript of the communications that he had received from the cosmic masters. He also began giving public demonstrations of his channeling of the extraterrestrial teachers and presenting lectures to audiences of the curious and the true believers in the spiritual teachings from wise mentors from outer space. On May 21, 1959, King went into samadhic trance while being interviewed on the BBC, and thousands of radio listeners in the United Kingdom were able to hear for themselves the warnings and the counsel of the cosmic masters. In recognition of his devotion to his extraterrestrial assignment as the principal terrestrial contact for the masters, King's followers bestowed upon him the titles of Sir George King, O.S.P., Ph.D., Th.D., D.D., Metropolitan Archbishop of the Aetherius Churches, Prince Grand Master of the Mystical Order of St. Peter, and HRH Prince De George King De Santori.

By 1960, King and his Aetherius Society had spread their Cosmic Gospel throughout the British Isles, as well as to the United States, and an American headquarters was established in Hollywood, California. Soon there would be branches in Detroit, Michigan; Australia; and West Africa.

The Aetherius Society warned that matters were serious in the view of the cosmic masters. Two previous terrestrial civilizations, **Atlantis** and **Lemuria,** had destroyed themselves in a nuclear war in prehistory, and the Intergalactic Council was concerned that such a catastrophe could take place once again. The members of humankind were regarded as the problem children of the solar system, and various masters and adepts were forced to give Earth special attention. To this end, a grand master plan would see the arrival of a cosmic master in a spacecraft in a time in the near future. When this event occurs, the people of Earth will be given the choice of following the laws of the Most High God and entering a new era of peace and enlightenment, or rejecting the divine laws and pass through the gateway of death to be placed on a planet where they will have the opportunity to relearn the lessons of the universe.

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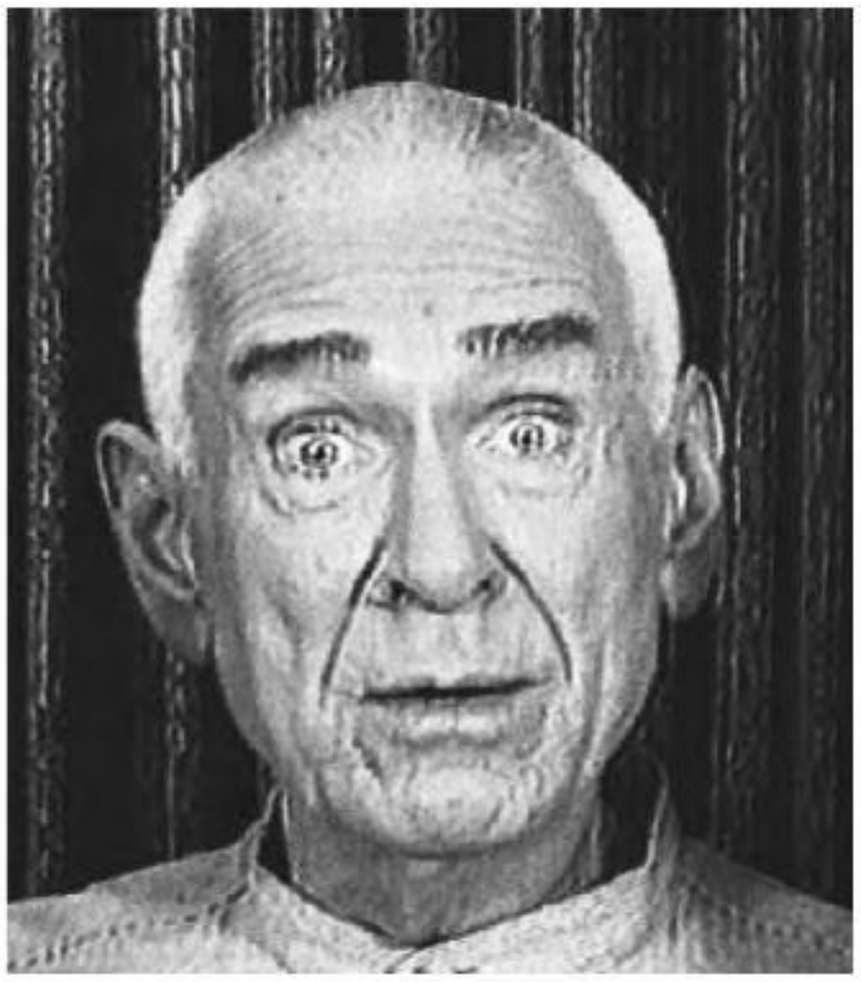
Heaven's Gate

When the bodies of the 39 men and women were found in rooms throughout the spacious Rancho Santa Fe mansion outside of San Diego, California, on March 26, 1997, their deaths by suicide enabled the media to transform them from members in a UFO cult previously known as Human Individual Metamorphosis to the Heaven's Gate suicide cult. According to what could be learned about the deceased in letters and videotapes that they had left behind, they had interpreted the arrival of the Hale-Bopp comet as the sign for which they had been waiting. When the comet passed overhead, they would hasten their "graduation from the human evolutionary level" through self-administered poison and hitch a ride to their "Father's Kingdom" on the extraterrestrial spacecraft that they believed followed in the wake of the comet's tail.

The cosmology of what has come to be known as the Heaven's Gate cult was born in the minds of Marshall Herff Applewhite (1931–1997) and Bonnie Lu Trousdale Nettles (1927–1985) sometime around 1972 when they formed the Christian Arts Center in Houston for the declared purpose of helping to make humans more aware of their spiritual potential by sponsoring lectures in comparative religion, mysticism, meditation, and astrology. Applewhite, the son of a Presbyterian minister, had served with the Army Signal Corps in Salzburg, Austria; studied sacred music at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia; directed musicals for the Houston Music Theatre; and from 1966 to 1971 taught music at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. Nettles, an astrology enthusiast, was a graduate of the Hermann Hospital School of Professional Nursing in 1948 and worked as a nurse in the Houston



Marshall Herff Applewhite, Jr. (1931–1997), leader of the Heaven's Gate cult, convinced his followers to commit a mass suicide, because he believed a spaceship following the Hale Bopp Comet would take them to their "new world destination." (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

area. Although they had each been previously married to others, in 1974, when Applewhite and Nettles were creating their philosophical blend of apocalyptic Christianity and UFOlogy, they said that they were not married, but were living together "by spiritual guidance." Espousing the highest principles, the couple stated that they had renounced sex in preparation for their journey to the Father's Kingdom.

Marshall Herff Applewhite and Bonnie Lu Trousdale Nettles were also known as "Bo and Peep."

Applewhite and Nettles began to call themselves "Bo" and "Peep," and they proclaimed that they had awakened to their true extraterrestrial origins and earthly mission. They had come to the planet to acquaint humankind with the basic methods by which a human might leave his or her humanity and make the graduation to an entirely different consciousness. As benevolent aliens, they had come to Earth to demonstrate, if need be, by their own deaths and resurrection in three and a half days, how the human body could undergo a dramatic metamorphosis, just as the chrysalis changed from caterpillar to butterfly.

Bo and Peep claimed to have originated from the same level as Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), asserting that they were the two witnesses referred to in the Book of Revelation who would be the harbingers of a great harvest time for humanity: [Revelation: 11:3–13] "And I will give power to two witnesses, and they shall prophesy....And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall...overcome them and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city...three days and a half....And after three days and a half the spirit of life from God entered them and they stood upon their feet...And they heard a great voice from heaven saying to them, Come up hither. And they ascended to heaven in a cloud...and the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God in heaven."

It has long been one of the major tenets of Christianity that if one aspires to a higher level beyond death, one will achieve such a state in spirit form, not in the physical body. However, Bo and Peep insisted that spiritual seekers must begin their butterfly-like apprenticeship by leaving the ways of their human caterpillar family and friends behind and attain the higher level in an actual physical body. The kingdom of heaven and all those who occupy it, according to the two, were literally physical in form. No spirits were permitted in their father's kingdom. If one stays at the human level, Bo and Peep warned, whether incarnate or discarnate, one still has all ties with this garden Earth.

Bo and Peep achieved national media attention after a UFO lecture in Waldport, Oregon, on September 14, 1975, when they were said to have mysteriously whisked away 20 members of the audience aboard a flying saucer. Concerned family members of the vanishing Oregonians were not convinced that extraterrestrials had kidnapped their relatives. They feared that it was more likely that their missing kin had been murdered. Law enforcement officials tried their best to squelch rumors that satanic sacrifice was involved in the mysterious disappearances. However, it would soon be revealed that a good number of the UFO enthusiasts who had attended the lecture had chosen of their own free will to join Bo and Peep on their spiritual pilgrimage.

The two did not promise an easy path to higher awareness. They instructed their followers that they must walk out the door of their human lives and take with them only what would be necessary while they were still on the planet. Newcomers were advised that the process worked best if they had a partner and that they would be paired with another for a time. However, the only bond that was to exist between them would be a mutual desire to raise their vibrational levels so they might ascend to the next realm. Bo and Peep admitted they didn't know where their father would lead them or when their assassinations and subsequent demonstration overcoming death might occur. But those who felt they must accompany them, they were to bring with them a car, a tent, a warm sleeping bag, utensils, and whatever money they could carry with them. Those who joined the Human Individual Metamorphosis (HIM) group would be camping out a lot in order to take the word to others who might be seeking it.

In spite of painting such a bleak picture of a nomadic existence, traveling from city to city as Bo and Peep spread the word, within a few months a remarkable number of highly educated professionals left high-salaried jobs, expensive homes, and loving spouses and children to follow the two on a journey of faith that would have them living hand-to-mouth and sleeping under the stars. Bo and Peep stated firmly that they found no need to defend themselves against any charges of kidnapping or of brainwashing their followers into any kind of organized cult activity. The only kind of conversion experience that the two were interested in was that of the physical—the biological and chemical changeover from human-level creatures to creatures on the next evolutionary level. Just as a caterpillar has to cease all of its caterpillar activities in order to achieve its chrysalis, they instructed their followers, so must the same thing happen to a human who wished to make the transition. All human desires and activities must be left behind so one could emerge as an individual capable of entering a realm that is altogether different from the human.

Applewhite and Nettles warned their followers and the members of their lecture audiences that Earth was fast approaching "that season" when humans could enter the process that would enable them to graduate to a higher level. They insisted that they were not speaking of anything "etheric." They were talking about actually leaving the Earth's atmosphere. Those who took the trip would no longer be associated with the human kingdom, but with the next level of existence. They will have graduated from Earth.

Many members of the HIM inferred from various pronouncements by Bo and Peep that it was quite likely that they would be assassinated sometime around June 1976. They told a number of their followers that they would lie in state for three-and-a-half days, then rise to the next level in full view of the media, thereby proving that they were the two spoken of in the Book of Revelation.

When such a convincing demonstration of their true identity was delayed because of the two's dissatisfaction with certain media representations of their mission, a large number of disillusioned followers dropped out of the group, leaving Bo and Peep and their most faithful members to resume their nomadic lifestyle and to go underground with their ministry. In 1985 Bonnie Nettles, who at that time called herself "Ti," died of cancer, and, in the words of an ardent follower, "returned to the next level." Applewhite, now "Do," carried on their mission of informing humans that salvation hovered overhead in a spaceship. Sometime in 1993, there were signs that the group was active under the new name of the Total Overcomers, and still under the leadership of Applewhite, who now warned earthlings that their planet was at the mercy of alien star gods, the "Luciferians," who had fallen away from the Father's Kingdom many thousands of years ago.

In 1995, renaming the group Heaven's Gate, Applewhite and his most devoted disciples moved to San Diego and established a computer business, Higher Source, which specialized in designing computer websites. In October 1996, the group, which had seemingly chosen to live quietly and avoid extensive media exposure, moved into the mansion at Rancho Santa Fe.

Five months later, on March 26, 1997, news media around the world carried the startling announcement of the mass suicide. Apparently Applewhite had become convinced that he had at last found the narrow window of opportunity for graduation to the higher level provided by a spacecraft bound for heaven, the father's kingdom. Tragically, he took 38 loyal followers with him.

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The Raelians

On December 13, 1973, Claude Vorilhon (1946–), a French sports journalist and former race car driver, claimed to have been contacted by an extraterrestrial being while climbing the Puy de Lassolas volcanic crater near Clermond-Ferrand, France. Vorilhon was astonished when he spotted a metallic-looking object in the shape of a flattened bell about 30 feet in diameter descend from the sky. A door opened in the side of the craft, and what appeared to be a humanlike being about four feet in height approached in a peaceful manner. Vorilhon soon believed that the being was a member of the Elohim—the "gods" who made humans in their own image. The primitive ancestors of modern humankind had interpreted the extraterrestrial visitors from the stars as gods, because to them any beings arriving from the heavens could only be divine. It was the extraterrestrials, the Elohim, who created *Homo sapiens* in their image in their laboratories, utilizing deoxyribonucleic

acid (DNA), just as contemporary Earth scientists are at the point of creating "synthetic" humans in the same manner.

Then, Vorilhon said, the extraterrestrial being explained that in a manner similar to the Greek legend of Pygmalion who created a statue so beautiful that he fell in love with it, so did certain of the Elohim find the products of their laboratory artistry compellingly irresistible. The results, Vorilhon said, were recorded in Genesis 6:4: "...When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men...they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

The extraterrestrial told Vorilhon that the Elohim had sent great prophets, such as Moses (c. 14th–13th century B.C.E.), Ezekial (sixth century B.C.E.), the Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.), and Muhammad (c. 570–632 C.E) to guide humankind. Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.), the fruit of a union between the Elohim and Mary, a daughter of man, was given the mission of making the Elohim's messages of guidance known throughout the world in anticipation of the Age of Apocalypse—which in the original Greek meant the "age of revelation," not the "end of the world." It is in this epoch, which the people of Earth entered in 1945, that humankind will at last be able to understand scientifically that which the Elohim accomplished aeons ago in the Genesis story.

Claude Vorilhon said that the Elohim renamed him "Rael," which means "the man who brings light." Shortly after his encounter with the extraterrestrial, he created the Raelian Movement, which soon acquired more than a thousand members in France. In 2001, according to figures produced by the Raelians, their membership included 55,000 individuals in 85 different countries.

Rael claimed that on October 7, 1975, the Elohim physically contacted him again, and this time he was invited aboard a spacecraft and taken to their home planet. During this extraterrestrial contact experience, Rael learned that after the nuclear explosions in 1945, the Elohim believed that humans had entered the Age of Apocalypse. However, they cannot return in large numbers until the inhabitants of Earth begin to display a greater ability to live together in peace, love, and brother/sisterhood. And the Elohim are awaiting some evidence that the planet can be governed with intelligence and spirit before they fully reveal themselves to Earth at large.

Because the Elohim feel that many members of humankind are now able to understand their extraterrestrial creators without mystifying or worshipping them, they asked Rael to establish an embassy wherein they will be able to meet with Earth's leaders. Although the Elohim feel strongly that a mass landing would bring about disastrous political, religious, social, and economic consequences throughout the world, the neutrality provided by such an embassy would enable them to demonstrate the love and respect that they hold for humankind.

Rael maintains that he has established the Raelian Movement according to the instructions given to him by the Elohim. Its aims are to inform humankind of the reality of the Elohim "without convincing," to establish the embassy where the Elohim would be welcome, and to help prepare a human society adapted to the future. In the years since his first contact experience, he has written a number of books that may be obtained directly from the Raelians. The titles include *The Message Given by Extraterrestrials*, (detailing his first messages from the Elohim, said to have sold one million copies and to be printed in 22 languages), and *Let's Welcome Our Fathers from Space*.

In July 2001, the Raelian Movement made headlines around the world when one of its members, Brigitte Boisselier, a 44-year-old scientist with doctorates from universities in Dijon and Houston, announced that Clonaid, her team of four doctors and a technician, would soon produce the first human clone. Defying opposition from President George W. Bush, the U.S. Congress, Secretary of Health Tommy Thompson, and the Food and Drug Administration, Boisselier refused to disclose the location of Clonaid's two laboratories, other than to state that one was in the United States and the other abroad. Clonaid, established by Rael in 1997, is funded in part by $500,000 from an anonymous couple who want a child cloned from the DNA of their deceased 10-month-old son.

In Rael's opinion, such cloning will demonstrate the methods employed by the Elohim in their creation of the human species. As it was told to him, many centuries ago on a distant planet, scientific teams set out to create life on more primitive worlds. On one such planet, Earth, their laboratories created the life forms that became human beings.

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Twentieth-Century Spiritual Expression

Although millennial thought dates back to the ancient Persian philosophers and was sustained through the centuries by Christian, Jewish, and Muslim teachers, Americans especially seem always to have been fascinated by the horror of a certain apocalyptic vision that includes plagues, earthquakes, and cataclysmic volcanic eruptions. Christopher Columbus was a devout student of biblical prophecies who believed that the world would end in 1650. He perceived that his personal mission was to find a new continent that would be a special refuge for those who survived the purging of Armageddon, the final battle between the armies of Christ and Satan, that he believed would occur during the mid-seventeenth century.

Scores of American preachers and mystics from colonial times through the Civil War and up to the present day have continued the precedent set by Columbus and occupied themselves with predicting the exact time of Christ's return and the subsequent final battle between Good and Evil.

Of course such obsessions with apocalyptic teachings and personal quests for spiritual fulfillment are by no means limited to Americans. By the twentieth century, many formerly loyal followers of organized religious bodies throughout the world were beginning to become impatient with doctrinal rules of order and began to blend the new discoveries of science with the faith of their forefathers. In the West, many spiritual seekers chose to combine the teachings of Eastern religions with those aspects of western science which they felt supported their spiritual beliefs, including meditation, biofeedback, and extrasensory perception as means of attaining higher awareness.

These amalgamations of science, conventional Christianity, and such eastern religions as Hinduism and Buddhism offended many individuals who deemed themselves to be the true followers of the revelations disclosed in the Bible; and these apocalyptic groups, such as the Branch Davidians set themselves apart to prepare for the time of judgment that they believed was imminent.

While members of organized church bodies, as well as the general public, were quick to brand these various splinter groups as cults, in contemporary language usage such a term is considered negative and judgmental. Although the beliefs practiced by some of these groups may seem strange to certain of the more conventionally religious, the sincerity of the members of such evolving spiritual bodies cannot be so readily discounted by those who have not carefully examined what may be a blending of several traditions and a serious attempt to achieve enlightenment.

It may be that many of the spiritual experiments of the twentieth century will be assessed by more conventional students of theology as modern expressions of the Christian Mystery Schools that combined elements of the occult within their dogma. Unfortunately, far too many of these newly emergent groups began with visions of peace and love and ended with the mass suicides and deaths of their followers. In the United States, The Peoples' Temple began with Pastor James Jones expanding the teachings of a liberal Protestant denomination into a doomsday cult and later revealing himself to group as being the reincarnation of Jesus and the Bud-

The Restoration of the Ten Commandments

The cult of the Restoration of the Ten Commandments appears to have had its origins in the late 1970s when a group of schoolchildren claimed to have received visions of the Virgin Mary on a soccer field in the town of Kibeho, Rwanda. A cult of the Virgin, combining Roman Catholicism with aboriginal religious traditions, formed and spread to southwest Uganda. It was here that Credonia Mwerinde, a store proprietor and brewer of banana beer, said that the Virgin Mary appeared to her in 1984.

In 1989, Mwerinde met Joseph Kibwetere, a school administrator and politician, and informed him the Virgin required his aid in spreading a message: people must restore value to the Ten Commandments and strictly follow their admonitions if they were to escape damnation at the end of the world. And the end was near: According to Mwerinde's visions, the world would end on December 31, 1999/January 1, 2000.

The convictions of Mwerinde and the newly inspired Kibwetere proved to be convincing, and membership in Uganda swelled to 5,000. The rules for the program dictated by the Virgin Mary through Mwerinde were extremely strict. Cult members were forbidden to communicate other than through sign language. They were to labor in the fields to grow their own food, and had to fast regularly. On Mondays and Fridays they were allowed only one meal. Soap, a sinful indulgence, was forbidden.

The continued existence of the world after January 1, 2000, caused dissension to grow in the ranks of the cult. Many members, having followed the command to sell their property and belongings and give all proceeds to the cult, wanted their money back.

On March 15, 2000, the cult held a great party in the town of Kanungu, roasting three bulls and providing 70 crates of "soft drinks" for their members. Although facts remain unclear, apparently more than 1,000 were poisoned or otherwise murdered, doused with sulphuric acid, and set on fire. The bodies of Credonia Mwerinde and Joseph Kibwetere were not found among the charred remains of their faithful members. A witness in Kanungu told police that he had caught sight of the two leaving the festivities with suitcases in hand and wondered at the time why they would leave before their party had ended.

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dha. In Jonestown, Guyana, on November 14, 1978, Jones joined 638 of his adult followers and 276 of their children in a mass suicide. In Rwanda, Credonia Mwerinde combined a cult of the Virgin Mary and Roman Catholicism with aboriginal religious traditions and allowed the heavenly messages to end the lives of over 1,000 members by mass murder on March 15, 2000. In Switzerland, The Order of the Solar Temple sought to prepare humankind for the return of Christ through the wisdom of occult and extraterrestrial masters, but when the illusion of immortality faded, a series of mass suicides of cult members took place in Switzerland, France, and Quebec, from October 1994 to March 1997.

Many of the new spiritual groups combine aspects of Christianity with the "new gospels' that they claim to have obtained from extraterrestrial Masters. Members of some of these UFO groups call Jesus by what they believe to be his true name of Sananda and recognize him as an extraterrestrial who is circling Earth in a spaceship, awaiting the proper time for his Second Coming. While UFO cults such as Heaven's Gate, the Raelians, and the Order of the Solar Temple developed sensational or negative images, there are many UFO groups who seek to develop a new religion that will blend science and more traditional religious concepts.

Falun Gong, although branded an evil cult by the Chinese government in 1999, claims to have 100 million members worldwide. Li Hongzhi, the founder of the movement who lives in the United States, insists that his group is not a religion, but a series of five daily exercises by which individuals may activate the higher abilities of mind, body, and spirit.

The Church of Scientology is classified as a cult by its detractors, but its members assert that Scientology is a new religion that was founded by L. Ron Hubbard in the twentieth century and has its roots in the deep beliefs and ancient wisdom that go back more than 50,000 years. By combining with the physical sciences, Scientology offers an application of scientific methodology to spiritual questions and allows individuals to approach their lives with more confidence.

As the world continues to shrink and millions of pulpits on the Internet become available to new mystics and visionaries, it remains for the individual reader to judge which groups contain the precepts, the truths, and the moral values to survive into the twenty-first century and beyond.

Branch Davidians

The Branch Davidian religious group had its origins when Victor Houteff (1885–1929) separated from the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in 1929 to form the Shepherds Rod, Branch Seventh-Day Adventist. In 1935, with 11 of his followers, Houteff founded the Mount Carmel Center near Waco, Texas. In 1942 he changed the name of his group to the Davidian Seventh-Day Adventist Association.

Houteff died in 1955, and his wife, Florence Houteff, focused the group with her vision that Judgment Day would occur on April 22, 1959. Her prophecy having failed, she sold Mount Carmel in 1965 to Benjamin Roden, who named his faction the Branch Davidian Seventh-Day Adventist Association. After Roden's death in 1978, his wife, Lois Roden, declared herself the Sixth Angel in Revelation and a prophet speaking through the feminine aspect of the Holy Spirit.

A young man named Vernon Howell joined the Branch Davidians in 1981 and almost immediately caught Lois Roden's eye as the group's next prophet. Howell assumed control of the Davidians in 1988 and changed his name to David Koresh in 1990. He pronounced himself the Lamb of Revelation, who would open the seven seals of the scroll and interpret the secrets that would immediately bring about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Koresh believed that the final struggle between good and evil would begin in the United States, rather than Israel, so the community of believers stockpiled food, water, and weapons. In 1992, Koresh renamed the Mount Carmel commune "Ranch Apocalypse."

Rumors began to circulate that the Branch Davidians were abusing children and storing large amounts of illegal firearms and explosives. On February 28, 1993, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) agents

David Koresh, founder of the Branch Davidian. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

raided Ranch Apocalypse, resulting in ten deaths and 25 wounded. The FBI took over, and the ensuing siege lasted 51 days. On April 14, Koresh had a vision that instructed him to write his translation of the seven seals in Revelation and then surrender. But the encircling forces had grown tired of his biblical babblings and apocalyptic pronouncements. On April 19, the FBI attacked and ended the stand-off at Ranch Apocalypse.

Koresh and 75 of his followers, including 21 children, died in the fire that swept through the entire compound. Prior to the siege at Ranch Apocalypse, there were about 130 members of the Branch Davidians. After the destruction of the compound, there were estimates of 30 to 50 members who had managed to leave the commune before the final days or who had escaped the inferno. Accusations circulated that the FBI was responsible for starting the fire with incendiary tear gas cartridges.

DELVING DEEPER

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ECKANKAR

Those who follow the alternative religion of Eckankar say that theirs is the religion of the Light and Sound of God. The Light of God is the ECK, known to many saints and mystics as the Holy Spirit. The Sound of God is the rushing wind that the disciples of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) heard on that first Pentecost.

Eckists believe that they follow ancient wisdom teachings that were revived in 1965 for modern men and women by the Living ECK Master Paul Twitchell (1910?–1971). According to Twitchell and such masters from higher planes as Rebazar Tarzs, whose teachings he relayed, the soul is on a journey of self- and god-realization. To assist the individual soul to achieve contact with the ECK, the Divine Spirit, the Mahanta, the Living ECK Master, provides spiritual exercises and guidance available to all sincere seekers.

Because the Mahantas emphasize that Eckankar is a living faith that changes constantly, Eckists must pay close attention to the teachings and revelations of the Living Master, who comes from a long line of masters from the Vairagi Order, whose spiritual essences reside in the Golden Temple of Wisdom on higher dimensions of being. The Living Master is never worshipped, but he is highly revered by all Eckists. According to official Eckankar records, there are approximately 50,000 members in more than 100 countries.

Shortly before Twitchell's death in 1971, critics accused him of fabricating the religious origins of Eckankar, borrowing concepts from other spiritual groups, and plagiarizing ideas

from previously published works. A firm denial by Twitchell did little to quench the controversy, and Twitchell's successor, Darwin Gross, became involved in an internal struggle that resulted in his expulsion from Eckankar and his founding of the Ancient Teachings of the Masters, which he claimed perpetuated the true teachings of Twitchell.

The present Living ECK Master, Harold Klemp, who claims to be the 973rd initiated Mahanta, became the spiritual leader of Eckankar in 1981. At the present time, the spiritual home of Eckankar is the Temple of ECK in Chanhassen, Minnesota.

Twitchell from Eckankar standing before the Stardust Hotel podium in Las Vegas. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

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Falun Gong

For 13 hours on April 25, 1999, 15,000 members of the Falun Gong *qigong* sect, five or six rows deep, stretching for more than a mile along the Avenue of Everlasting Peace in central Beijing, China, protested their negative treatment in the state media and demanded official recognition for their sect and the freedom to publish their texts. The protest managed to get the State Council of China to agree to negotiate with the Falun Gong. However, in July 1999, Chinese officials branded the Falun Gong an evil cult, claiming that it had caused the deaths of 1,500 of its members. The Chinese government banned the practice of the cult and sent more than 50,000 adherents to prisons, labor camps, and mental hospitals.

Falun Gong means the "Practice of the Wheel of the Dharma." (Dharma is a complex Hindu and Buddhist concept that translates in a broad sense to "law," especially to the natural order of personal ethics and principles of conduct, equivalent to what is commonly referred to as "religion.") The founder of the movement, Li Hongzhi, a former Chinese government grain clerk now residing in the United States, claims to have been born on May 13, 1951, the supposed birthday of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.), but government records list his birthday as July 7, 1952. Hongzhi also claims that Falun Gong has 100 million members worldwide, 80 million of whom are in China. The Chinese government says the number in their country is closer to two million.

Founded in 1992, the movement prescribes five daily exercises are to activate the higher abilities of mind, body, and spirit, and contribute to an individual's self-examination and self-knowledge. If practiced properly, Hongzhi promises, Falun Gong will enable one to attain enlightenment and to master many supernatural powers, including levitation, **psychokinesis,** and **telepathy.**

Hongzhi has often stated that he believes that Earth has been quietly invaded by evil aliens from extraterrestrial worlds who have come to undermine humans' spirituality by contributing to the rapid expansion of technology. In his opinion, humankind would be much better off without computers and all

A group of Falun Gong followers perform meditation exercises. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

other machines that seek to replicate human activity and to supplant human productivity.

DELVING DEEPER

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ORDER OF THE SOLAR TEMPLE

The Order of the Solar Temple claims a spiritual heritage from the **Order of the Knights Templar**(founded c. 1118 and dissolved in 1307). Among its declared goals are helping Earth to prepare for the return of Christ in solar glory and assisting humankind through a time of transition as spirituality assumes primacy over materiality. Although the group claims it is descended from the original Templars, the Order of the Solar Temple was founded in 1984 by Joseph Di Mambro (1924–1994) and Luc Jouret (1947–1994). By 1989, the cult had gathered about 500 members, most of them in Switzerland, France, and Canada.

Joseph Di Mambro, of Pont-Saint-Espirit, France, had a fascination with the occult dating back to his childhood. In 1976, he became a self-appointed spiritual master, and by 1978, he had established the Golden Way Foundation in Geneva. About then he made a hard assessment of own appeal, deciding that if his cult was to expand, he needed to find a more charismatic individual to share its leadership.

In 1981, Luc Jouret, a physician who had been grand master of the Renewed Order of the Temple, another group that combined concepts of the Knights Templar and the Rosicrucians, left that order over a policy dispute. Di Mambro appealed to him to jointly form a new order. Jouret agreed, and the two founded the Order of the Solar Temple.

Jouret's credentials as a physician and his dynamic platform personality drew large crowds to his lectures. From 1984 to about 1990, Jouret convinced many that the time of the **apocalypse** was drawing near and the best way to survive was in the safety of the Order of the Solar Temple.

But by 1992, Jouret and Di Mambro had made too many unfulfilled predictions and promises. Even Di Mambro's son Elie declared that he doubted the existence of the masters who were allegedly guiding his father and Jouret, and he went so far as to expose some of the illusions his father employed to create certain phenomena during demonstrations.

With the structure of the Order crumbling, Di Mambro and Jouret began preparing for their transition to another world. Those who remained faithful to the teachings also began their own transitions.

When authorities from Chiery, Switzerland, investigated a fire in a farmhouse on October 4, 1994, they discovered a secret room containing 22 corpses, many of them wearing ceremonial capes. On October 5, three adjacent houses burning in the village of Granges-sur-Salvan yielded the bodies of 25 more members of the Order. Six charred bodies found in Morin Heights, Quebec, a day earlier, were also members. In December 1995, 16 more members were found dead in France, and in March 1997, five killed themselves in Quebec. Joseph Di Mambro and Luc Jouret had convinced at least 74 of their followers to join them in mass suicide.

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The People's Temple

Although James Jones (1931–1978) held degrees from Indiana University and Butler University, he had received no formal training in theology when he was invited to speak at the Laurel Street Tabernacle, an Assemblies of God Pentecostal church, in Indianapolis in September 1954. Following his powerful sermon on racial equality, many members left the congregation to follow Jones and to form a new church, the Wings of Deliverance, which was renamed the People's Temple. Within a short period of time, Jones's gospel of equality and love attracted more than 900 members. In 1965 the temple moved to Ukiah, California, where Jones believed racial equality could be preached with greater openness and less fear of retaliation. Seventy families moved with him. A second congregation was added in San Francisco in 1972.

In 1977, following various exposes directed at the temple, Jones moved his community to the South American nation of Guyana, where he had acquired a lease from the Guyanese government for 4,000 acres of land to be used for colonization. The new community was called the People's Temple Agricultural Project, and eventually more than 900 men, women, and children would follow their charismatic leader to Jonestown.

Members were required to labor 11 hours per day, six days per week, and eight hours on Sunday, clearing land for agriculture, planting crops, and erecting buildings. They ate primarily of rice and beans, and their evenings were filled with required meetings before they were allowed to get some rest. Jones claimed to be receiving messages from extraterrestrials that described a process called "Translation," in which he and his followers would all die together and their spirits would be taken to another planet to enjoy a life of bliss. Jones directed rehearsals of a mass suicide, having followers pretend to drink poison and fall to the ground.

Jim Jones, founder of the People's Temple. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

On November 14, 1978, California congressman Leo Ryan and several representatives of the media visited Jonestown to investigate claims of civil rights violations that had reached the United States. On November 18, a temple member made an attempt on Ryan's life, and the visitors decided to leave Jonestown immediately. While they were boarding two planes on the jungle airstrip, some heavily armed members of the temple's security guards arrived and began firing on the group. Ryan and four others were killed and 11 were wounded before the planes could get into the air.

Jones decreed that it was time to put "Translation" into effect. Some members of the temple committed suicide by ingesting cyanide-laced Kool-Aid, and others injected poison directly into their veins or were shot. An investigation revealed that 638 adult

Actor John Travolta (center) standing with actress Jenna Elfman (left) and wife Kelly Preston (right) while attending a Scientology conference. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

members of the community died, together with 276 children. A few fled into the jungle and survived.

Various investigations continue into the reasons why such a tragedy could have occurred and what appeal James Jones could have had to cause so many individuals to take their own lives. Conspiracy theorists argue that the deaths at Jonestown in November 1978 eliminated evidence of a CIA experiment gone bad. Others suggest that Jones subjected his followers to mind-control experiments of his own and lost control of the situation. And then there are those who insist that Jones was mentally ill and complicated his mental imbalance with drug abuse.

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SCIENTOLOGY

Some have called Scientology a cult of celebrity because of the number of well-known entertainers who ascribe to its teachings. In spite of endorsements regarding the benefits of Scientology from various well-known persons, the organization is often in the center of controversy. Richard Behar, writing in *Time* magazine, stated that rather than being a religion or a church, Scientology "…is a hugely profitable global racket that survives by intimidating members and critics in a Mafia-like manner."

The founder of the church, Lafayette Ronald Hubbard (1911–1986), known to Scientologists as "L. Ron," is said to have studied many Eastern philosophies as he journeyed to the various countries of their origins. When injuries suffered during service as a naval officer during World War II (1939–1945) left him crippled and blind, Hubbard claimed that his ability to draw upon mental insights allowed him to cure himself of his disabilities. He called this process Dianetics, and outlined its central elements in an article for the May 1950 issue of *Astounding Science Fiction* magazine. Shortly thereafter Hubbard published *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*.

Dianetics deals with what it terms the Analytical and the Reactive components of the mind. The Reactive mind absorbs and records every nuance of emotional, mental, and physical pain. Hubbard called the impressions or "recordings" made by the Reactive mind during moments of trauma "engrams," and while the conscious, Analytical mind may remain unaware of their presence, they can cause debilitating mental and physical problems and inhibit one's full potential. The Dianetics process enables a person to explore and be "cleared" of such impediments by an "auditor"—a minister of Scientology—clearing the way to a state of freedom from all the constraints of matter, energy, space, and time and a transcendent level of near-perfection.

In August 1952 the *Journal of Scientology* began publication, and in 1954 the first Church of Scientology was founded in Los Angeles. Increasing demand for more information about Scientology led to the establishment of the Founding Church of Scientology and the first Academy of Scientology in Washington, D.C., in 1955. Today, Scientology claims a worldwide membership of around eight million and more than 3,000 churches.

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Making the Connection

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 *abussos*, which literally means "bottomless," stemming from *bussos*, meaning "bottom." A gorge or chasm that is unfathomably deep, vast or infinite, such as the bottomless pit of hell or a dwelling place of evil spirits.

Anti-Christ From the Greek *antikhristos*. Any antagonist, opponent, or enemy of Jesus Christ, whether a person or a power. A false Christ.

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.

conquistadores From the Latin *conquirere* meaning "to conquer." Spanish soldiers or adventurers, especially of the sixteenth century who conquered Peru, Mexico, or Central America.

coven From the Anglo-Norman, mid-seventeenth century "assembly" and from *convenire* meaning convene.

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 held to be true.

L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986), the founder of the Church of Scientology. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

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.

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.

left-hand path In occult tradition, a practitioner who practices black magick.

neophyte From the Latin *neophytus* and Greek *neophutos* 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

right-hand path In occult tradition, a practitioner who practices white magic.

Sabbath From the Greek *sabbaton*, and the Hebrew *sabba*, both meaning "to rest." Sunday is observed as the Sabbath, or day of rest from work and for religious worship in Christianity, and Saturday is the Sabbath as observed by Judaism and some Christians.

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 *sarkophogos*, which literally means "flesh-eater" and probably refers to the kind of limestone that was used in the making of coffins thought to decompose bodies rapidly.

spell A formula or word believed to have magical power. A trance or a bewitched state.

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.

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 *abussos*, 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.

apothacary 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 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.

cryptomensia 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 *carn*, 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.

enchantments 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 craftmanship. 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 paranormal 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 *neophutos* 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 that 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.

retrocognition 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 *sarkophogos*, 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.

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.

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 *zolion*, 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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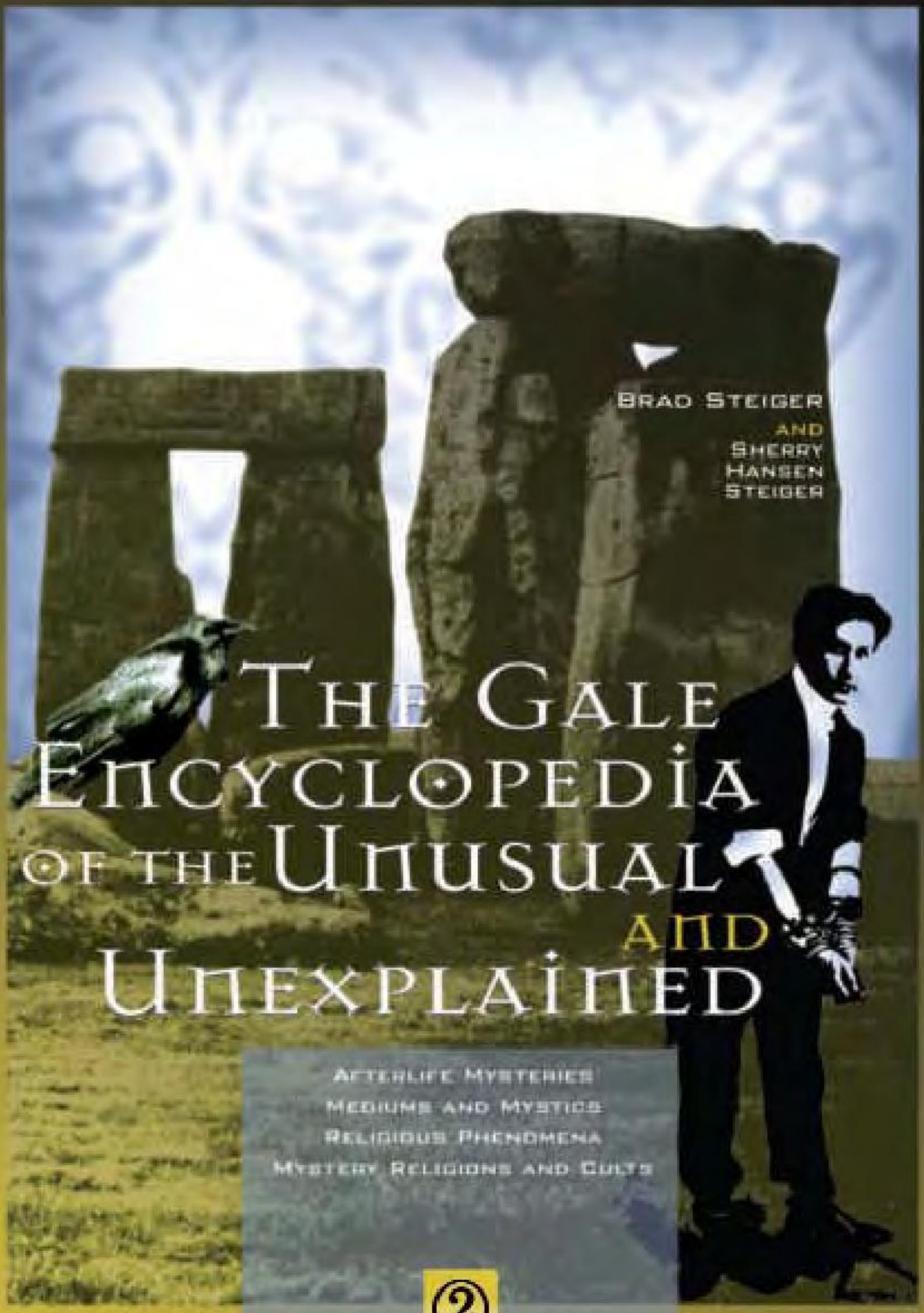
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Preface

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.

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.

Introduction

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.

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 werecreatures 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 Oxia 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 ecclesiaticis 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 *Corrrector* 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.

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—Brad E. Steiger

Chapter Exploration

The Assassins

The Decided Ones of Jupiter

The Freemasons

The Garduna

The Holy Vehm

The Illuminati

The Knights Templar

The Leopard Men

The Mau-Mau

The Rosicrucians

The Thuggee

The Tongs

Chapter 5
Secret Societies

Many people have a deep-seated belief that they could more easily obtain power, wealth, and prestige if they could only be made privy to certain secrets for success that are possessed by mysterious societies that choose to keep their methods hidden from the larger society. Throughout the centuries, such secret societies have taunted outsiders with their forbidden knowledge and, on occasion, frightened or even assassinated those whose persistence in seeking access to their mysteries were unwelcome.

Introduction

In this chapter a number of secret societies will be examined that have fueled the imaginations, fear, and envy of those on the outside of the mysterious organizations for hundreds of years. One of the favorites of paranoid conspiracy theorists, the Freemasons, while once powerful and influential throughout the Western world, is today regarded by many as little more than a social relic of the past. 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. For conspiracy enthusiasts, however, both societies remain a threat to individual freedoms, allegedly operating in the shadows, silently infiltrating political organizations, secretly manipulating every level of government and every facet of society.

Almost without exception, each of the secret societies presented in this chapter began with serious religious aspirations, which slowly disintegrated into political ambitions, and eventually deteriorated into criminal activities. The Garduna and the Holy Vehm had their birth in mystical visions and a passion to defend Christianity from those who would seek to destroy it. Regardless of its founders' noble intentions, both groups were used to further political ambitions and soon become nothing more than outlaw gangs. The Chinese Tongs and Triads began as protective associations for merchants and laborers who were being exploited by the ruling establishment or, in the United States, by the dominant white society. In some cities the Tongs remain primarily private social clubs engaged in such victimless crimes as illegal gambling. The Triad, however, has grown into one of the largest of the worldwide crime organizations.

There will always be those envious and unsuccessful individuals who believe that the rich and successful have acquired their wealth and power only through their possession of secret formulas, utterance of magical words, and performance of supernatural rituals. Those same individuals will seek desperately to become members of groups that they believe have such mystical powers or they will become obsessed in their efforts to destroy them. The Knights Templar gained status as an order of knighthood because of the selfless actions of a handful of knights who vowed to protect pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land. In the beginning, these pious and valiant knights were so poor that they had to share the same horse and take turns riding it. Centuries later, when the Knights Templar had become the wealthiest and most powerful order in all of Europe, it was decided by church and state that the once godly Christian soldiers had acquired their earthly treasure and power by worshipping Satan and committing the most foul acts of desecration and blasphemy. The order of knights that had once served as the bulwark of Christianity during the Crusades to protect the Holy Land was ordered disbanded by papal decree, and its members tortured and burned at the stake. History has not yet determined the degree of their true guilt as heretics, but it is unlikely the Knights Templar deserved such an ignoble end.

While there was never any clear evidence to prove that the Knights Templar committed the acts of human sacrifice of which they were accused, the members of the Leopard Cult of Africa were responsible for many such ritual murders on their jungle altars and left hundreds of mutilated human corpses to prove their guilt. The Thuggee of India, who committed more murders than any other secret society, allegedly dedicated the lives of the thousands of victims which they strangled to death to their goddess Kali.

Of all the secret societies examined in this chapter, only the Tongs and the Freemasons remain in existence in the twenty-first century. While some contemporary metaphysical groups proclaim that their philosophical heritage may derive from the Knights Templar or the Rosicrucians, there is little to substantiate such claims other than an admiration for their precepts and ideals. On occasion, international law enforcement investigators may see elements suggestive of the Thuggee or the Assassins involved in certain murders or assassinations, but there is little evidence that these societies still exist as forces to be feared. On the other hand, there are those who insist that the Illuminati is working behind the scenes to

The Death of Diana, Princess of Wales

Many conspiracy theories about the death of Diana, Princess of Wales (1961–1997), and her lover Dodi Al Fayed still abound. Among the most common allegations of August 31, 1997, are the following:

- Princess Diana was assassinated by angry international arms dealers because of her high-profile global campaign against the use of land mines.
- The men on motorcycles who caused the Fayed limousine to crash were not the paparazzi, but hired assassins who provoked the driver into dangerous speeds and precipitated an accident.
- Diana was murdered by British Intelligence on orders from the Royal Family. Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip were upset by the business of Prince Charles and Princess Diana's divorce. Newspapers reported that the Royals discussed dire consequences with Diana if she continued the relationship. Conspiracy theorists maintain when rumors circulated that Diana might be pregnant with Dodi's child, the Royal Family ordered her death.
- Princess Diana paid the ultimate price for dabbling in the dark arts. It was well known that Princess Diana and Sarah Ferguson, ex-wife of Prince Andrew, sought the counsel of Spiritualist mediums and psychic-sensitives. Some conspiracy buffs have suggested that the death of Diana and Dodi was a result of occult practices that backfired on the princess and that curses she had directed against her enemies had somehow boomeranged and unleashed their energy upon Diana and her lover.
- Diana was killed because she had offended a powerful secret society. Some theorists insist that this secret society did not approve of the public and private actions of Princess Diana and carried out her death sentence before she further embarrassed the Royals.

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bring about a New World Order that will enslave most of the world population.

The most secret of all mystery groups remains the Rosicrucians, whose manifestos helped give birth to many of the most liberating ideals of the European Enlightenment. Although one may see advertisements in magazines inviting the reader to fill out a coupon and become a member of the ancient order of the Rosy Cross, the modern organization exists as a homage to the original anonymous followers of the mysterious Illumined Father Christian Rosencreutz, for no known member of the original group that surfaced in the early 1600s was ever identified.

DELVING DEEPER

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THE ASSASSINS

Regarded as one of the most fearful of all secret societies, the Hashashin, the Assassins, seemed capable of penetrating any security, of striking down any victim regardless of the body of men who might guard him. They moved as if they were deadly shadows and struck with a fury that shattered the nerves and the resolve of their most stalwart foes. The very name of the secret society of killers has given the English language the words "assassin," one who kills for fanatical or monetary reasons; "assassinate," the act of killing suddenly and treacherously; and "assassination," the murder of a prominent person. The original appellation for the society, the Hashashin, is derived from the Arabic "hashish," a name for Indian hemp (*cannabis sativa*), and the accusation was made by European Crusaders and others that the Assassins made liberal use of the narcotic effects of hashish to achieve their fierce courage and to eliminate their fear of death.

Most of the early members of the secret society were followers of the Nizari branch of the Isma Iliyya sect of Shiite Muslims and were located primarily in Syria and Persia. In 1090, Hasan ibn Sabbah (1034-1124) seized the mountain citadel of Alamaut in northern Persia and made it his "Eagles' Nest," a center where he, as grand master, could live in relative safety and direct his forces throughout Asia. Hasan became known as the "old man of the mountains," and he set about creating a fanatical organization composed of devotees, known as *fedayeen*, who did whatever he commanded with blind obedience.

Hasan frequently bought boys from poverty-stricken parents and reared them in the camps where he had gathered young men to be trained as suicide commandos, leading them step by step to higher levels of combat proficiency. At the same time that he was shaping his men into fierce warriors, he also indoctrinated them spiritually, convincing them that as they advanced under his tutelage they would come closer to the sacred and ultimate mystery that only he could reveal. Hasan told them confidentially that the conventional teachings of Islam had misled them. Paradise could not be attained by following the preachings of Muhammad (c. 570–632), but only by complete obedience to Hasan Ibn Sabah, who was the true Incarnation of God on Earth.

Most sources citing the history of the Assassins state that in order to be certain that no doubts remained among the initiates that he was deity made flesh, Hasan supplied them with generous amounts of the drug hashish, then hypnotically guided them to the lavish gardens of heaven where they were allowed to witness the beauty of the afterlife. When the youths regained full consciousness, they were convinced that they had been allowed a glimpse of their future dwelling place in paradise. Although such stories have been widely circulated since the Crusades in the eleventh century, other sources have recently stated that such accusations of heavy drug use among the Assassins only reflected the fact that their contemporaries despised them as members of a minority and unfairly associated the sect with one of the more detestable vices of the time.

Whether or not Hasan ibn Sabbah's cruelty and ruthlessness has been exaggerated by time, one persistent illustration survives to depict the lengths to which he would go to gain dominance over his men. According to the account, on one occasion when Hasan sought to impress a group of young men to become his obedient fedayeen, he dug a hole in front of his throne deep enough to allow only a man's head to remain visible. Next, he commanded a fedayeen to lower himself into the hole and to place a tray with an opening in it around his neck. Once the hole was covered with a colorful rug and the loose dirt brushed aside, it appeared as though Hasan had decapitated a man and placed his head upon a tray. To make the illusion all the more convincing, he poured fresh blood around the supposed detached head of his assistant.

When an aide brought the potential recruits before his throne, Hasan informed them sternly that as God on Earth he had many fearful and wondrous powers. He would cause the decapitated head on the tray before them to speak to them of the glories in paradise that awaited those warriors who died in battle.

At this point, the loyal fedayeen with his head on the tray opened his eyes and testified to the marvels that his soul had witnessed in the hereafter. After the new men had been duly impressed and had sworn their allegiance to Hasan, they walked away speaking in hushed tones of the glory of serving God on Earth. And once the illusion had accomplished its desired end, Hasan had the fedayeen who had so ably assisted him decapitated and his head stuck on a pole so that all could see that he was truly quite dead.

Although the Hashashin came to be feared by Christian Crusaders, kings, princes, sheikhs, and sultans, their membership probably never numbered more than 2,000 fedayeen at any one time. Because Hasan had indoctrinated his warriors to the belief that death in the pursuit of orders guaranteed an immediate transference to paradise, they fought with a fury untouched by the normal fear of dying in combat. Masters of disguise and of many languages and dialects, the Assassins might one day appear as simple peasants working around a castle wall and the next emerge as highly capable warriors springing on their victims from the shadows. The Assassins inveigled themselves into the services of all the surrounding rulers, posing as loyal soldiers or servants, but always awaiting the bidding of their grand master to strike if ordered to do so. A powerful sultan who defied the orders of Hasan might suddenly find himself attacked by Assassins who for many years had been regarded as trusted servants but had only been hiding in his service until such time as the grand master ordered his assassination. As the power of Hasan's secret society became known throughout the East, a monarch never knew which of his seemingly faithful retinue was really an Assassin only awaiting orders to murder him.

BETWEEN 1090 and 1256, there were eight Grand Masters who ruled the society of Assassins

Between 1090 and 1256, there were eight grand masters who ruled the society of Assassins. In 1256 and 1258, the Mongols virtually destroyed the sect in Iran and in Syria. Although the Assassins scattered throughout the East and into Europe, in 1272, the Mamluk Sultan Baybars brought about their downfall as an organized sect.

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THE DECIDED ONES OF JUPITER

In the early nineteenth century, southern Italy suffered greatly from the raids of small gangs of bandits who would descend from

their hideouts in the mountains of Calabria and Abruzzi to rob travelers and to loot the villages. The authorities seemed unable to squelch the bands of thieves and protect the people, and only the vendettas and feuds between gangs themselves prevented the outlaws from uniting as one force to wreak greater havoc. Then, in 1816, a man named Ciro Annunchiarico (d. 1818) became southern Italy's greatest nightmare when he claimed the power of Jupiter, father of the gods of Imperial Rome, and successfully brought the bandit gangs into a single striking force, leading them to rob, pillage, and burn under the banner of the skull and crossbones and the motto, "Sadness, Death, Terror, and Mourning."

By 1817, Annunchiarico commanded 20,000 members of the secret society of the Decided Ones of Jupiter the Thunderer. The men were divided into camps of 300 to 400 members, and squadrons of 40 to 60. The society was structured along military lines and strict discipline was enforced. If Ciro Annunchiarico had so desired, he could easily have led an open revolution against any state government in southern Italy. But Annunchiarico, who claimed that the might of the great god Jupiter flowed through his body, was more interested in personal aggrandizement than in political opportunities.

In 1816, a man named Ciro Annunchiarico became southern Italy's greatest nightmare.

Annunchiarico was the son of wealthy parents who had entered the priesthood and who had seemed destined for a fruitful career in the Roman Catholic Church. The many tasks faced by a common parish priest had little attraction for him, however, and he preferred the life of a country gentleman on the family estate. Neither did the young priest respect his vow of celibacy, and he seduced a young woman who was engaged to Giovanni Montolesi, the son of a wealthy merchant. When Montolesi learned of the affair, he sought out Annunchiarico and reproached him for bringing shame to the priesthood and dishonor to his fiancee. Without a word in his defense, Annunchiarico drew a dagger from his belt and stabbed Montolesi in the heart. Then, from his bizarre perspective, Annunchiarico declared that the man whom he had murdered had insulted him and the entire Roman Catholic priesthood, so he swore a blood-feud against the entire Montolesi family, ambushing and murdering 13 of 14 members in the next few months. Understandably, Annunchiarico was eventually pursued by the authorities and fled with some friends into the mountains to become outlaws.

As a youth, Annunchiarico had gained a reputation for scholarship and high intelligence. As the leader of a small band of brigands who favored a life of luxury above that of living in spartan hideouts, he developed a plan to combine the people's love and respect of the priesthood with their fear of secret societies. Boldly summoning the other bandit chiefs in the mountains to a meeting, Annunchiarico eloquently convinced them that they should unite as one to resist the soldiers that were constantly being sent out to hunt them down. While the chiefs were deciding just who it was among them who should lead the newly united force, Annunchiarico appeared in the full regalia of the priesthood and announced that he would celebrate the Mass. As the chiefs all kneeled to receive his blessing, such an attitude of obeisance signaled their acquiescence to his leadership. And at the same time that he was celebrating the Mass of the Roman Catholic Church, Annunchiarico informed all of the assembled outlaws that the spirit of Jupiter, the ancient father of the gods, had passed into his person and commanded him to form a new order, the Decided Ones of Jupiter.

In a brief period of time, numerous independent bands of thieves and murderers became a single secret society. And when word spread of the alleged supernatural powers of their leader, Ciro Annunchiarico, now known as Jupiter the Thunderer, men flocked to the mountains to join the lodges of the Decided Ones. In order to facilitate the rapid dispersal of his legendary abilities, Annunchiarico secretly used men who resembled him to serve as his doubles, dressed in priestly robes exactly like his, so it would appear that Jupiter the

Thunderer could lead raids in several different places at the same time. He also had his personal bodyguard outfitted in devilish costumes, complete with horns and tails, to perpetuate the belief that he had the power to command and control demons. Neither any of his men nor any of the villagers dared to speak a word against Annunchiarico for fear that an invisible demon lurking nearby would report such an abuse and bring retribution upon them. And then there were reports of his terrible thunderbolts, which he was said to be able to hurtle at his enemies just as Jupiter had flung the deadly bolts in ancient times. When Annunchiarico informed the village clerics that he had now achieved divinity and that only he could celebrate Mass, they all immediately ceased their local celebrations lest they be struck down.

Small bands of soldiers sent against the Decided Ones were quickly annihilated. In 1818, a force of 1,000 regular troops under the command of General d'Octavio were sent into the mountains to arrest Annunchiarico and to destroy his band of outlaws. The superstitious recruits were so fearful of the mighty Jupiter that they permitted Annunchiarico to enter their camp at night and to place a dagger at the throat of their general. Annunchiarico decreed his mercy, but warned the general and the 1,000 men that if they ever dared again to violate his mountains, his thunderbolts would be certain to kill them all. General d'Octavio and his troops were gone at first light the next morning.

When the authorities realized that any army conscripted from southern Italy would hold Annunchiarico in the same kind of superstitious awe as the local populace, they hired a force of 1,200 German and Swiss mercenaries under the command of an Englishman, General Church. Strangely enough, the approach of these battle-hardened veterans of the Napoleonic wars affected Annunchiarico in ways that astonished his men. It became apparent that their god was visibly nervous, even frightened by the approach of the professional soldiers toward the mountains. Suddenly the person who harbored the spirit of Jupiter seemed like an ordinary mortal—and not even a very brave one at that. When word reached the camps of the Decided Ones that the mercenaries were well-equipped and exceedingly experienced men of war, thousands of them deserted within hours. Within a few days, Annunchiarico had only a few hundred of his most loyal disciples remaining out of what had been a fearsome band of 20,000.

Annunchiarico and his remaining Decided Ones retreated to the small village of Santa Marzano, choosing its location because of the wall that encircled the town. Hoping that members of the local populace would join in their defense, Annunchiarico prepared for siege. But the citizens of Santa Marzano could also see that the mighty Jupiter the Thunderer was, after all, just another bandit, and nothing about his person convinced any of them to risk their lives defending him against the Swiss and German soldiers. Within a few days of siege, General Church's mercenaries entered the village and killed those Decided Ones who offered resistance and arrested the others. Annunchiarico and three of his lieutenants managed to escape but were captured four days later.

Even as he was being led to the firing squad, Annunchiarico boasted that he had killed 60 or 70 men with his own hands, and he mocked the priest who came to administer the last rites. Many of the common people who had gathered on the day of execution murmured that the Thunderer would call down one of Jupiter's thunderbolts and escape from the mercenaries who had captured him. Incredibly, after the command was given to the 21-member firing squad to fire a volley at Ciro Annunchiarico, he remained alive, and somehow managed to get to his knees to begin a prayer to Jupiter. The astonished General Church ordered that the Thunderer's own musket be loaded with a silver bullet and that a soldier discharge the weapon directly into Annunchiarico's head, making certain that the legendary leader of the secret society was truly dead.

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BIG BROTHER'S BIOCHIP IMPLANTS GUARANTEE SLAVERY FOR THE MASSES

Conspiracy theorists fear that within the first few years of the twenty-first century, all Americans will be forced to receive a programmable biochip implant somewhere in their body. The biochip will likely be implanted on the back of the right or the left hand to facilitate scanning. A number will be assigned to each individual for life.

Though the biochip's function will be described as primarily for purposes of identification, it will be linked to a massive supercomputer system, enabling government agencies to maintain surveillance of all citizens by ground sensors and satellites. Even worse, say the alarmists, once the system is in place, the biochips can transform everyone into a controlled slave, for these devices will make it possible for outside intelligences to influence a person's brain cells and to direct the individual's brain neurons. Through biochip brain implants, people can be forced to think and to act exactly as preprogrammed.

Furthermore, the conspiracy theorists allege, a U.S. Naval research laboratory, funded by intelligence agencies, has achieved the incredible breakthrough of uniting living brain cells with microchips. They contend that when such a chip is injected into a man's or a woman's brain, he or she instantly becomes a living vegetable and a subservient New World Order slave. And once this device is perfected, the biochip implant could easily be utilized as a "Frankenstein-type weapon," and the Defense Department can produce an army of killer zombies.

Various conspiracy journals recount the allegations of a couple in Palo Alto, California, who are convinced that their teenaged son's psychological problems are the result of a biochip that was implanted into his head by a CIA agent during a tonsillectomy. According to the young man and his parents, he is constantly receiving threats and negative thoughts through transmissions received by the biochip. They contend the device has shown up on X-rays, but that the evidence was destroyed by CIA agents.

Before his execution, former American soldier and convicted Oklahoma City Federal Building bomber Timothy McVeigh (1968–2002) frequently stated his contention that federal agents were able to track him during the 1990s because of an electronic monitoring device that had been placed in his leg. McVeigh and others believed that the U.S. Army secretly implanted such devices in the legs of American soldiers during the Gulf War.

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THE FREEMASONS

There are those who claim that the Freemasons constitute a powerful secret brotherhood of darkness that is planning to take over the world. According to some scholars of the occult, the Masons' "Supreme Architect of the Universe" is none other than Lucifer, who cloaks himself in Masonic literature under such names as Zoraster, Shiva, Abaddon, and other pagan-god disguises. The so-called "holy writings" of Freemasonry, as well as their secret rites, passwords, initiations, and handshakes have their origins in the Roman mystery religions, Egyptian rituals, and Babylonian paganism. Often linked to the **Illuminati,** Freemasonry is said to have exerted its influence on every aspect of American society—including its currency.

Of all of the above alarmist concerns, only the part about the currency may have some credence. On the front of a one-dollar bill, there is a portrait of George Washington (1732–1799), an avowed Mason, who donned his Masonic apron and presided over the dedication of the United States Capitol. The flip side of the bill displays the Great Seal of the United States. The front side of the seal depicts the spread eagle, arrows in one claw, olive branch in the other, and a banner proclaiming *E Pluribus Unum* in its beak. Opposite the spread eagle, the backside of the seal, is an incomplete pyramid with an eye floating in a glowing triangle where the capstone should be. Above the eye is the caption *Annuit Coeptis*, commonly translated as "He has favored our undertaking," and in a scroll beneath is the slogan *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, "a new order of the ages."

Congress first authorized the creation of a Great Seal of the United States in 1792, but no real effort was made to have anyone design one. Nearly 100 years later, in 1884, Congress once again authorized the task of designing a Great Seal for the nation. In 1892, funds were allocated in the hope that an appropriate seal would be finished in time for the Chicago's World Fair. At last both sides of the seal were finally completed, but at its premiere showing, the side that featured the pyramid with the all-seeing eye was turned to the wall because some viewers were offended by the symbol's Masonic associations. The backside of the Great Seal, first authorized by Congress in 1792, was not seen by the American public until 1935 when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945), a 32nd-degree Mason, put it on the back of the one-dollar bill.

Masonic temple in Alexandria, Virginia. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

GEORGE Washington was an avowed Mason.

Most scholars agree that the pyramid represented on the bill is the Great Pyramid of Cheops at Giza, which, to a Mason, is emblematic of the continuity of the craft of Freemasonry from the dawn of civilization in Egypt. For Freemasons it is also a reminder of the legend that Egyptian civilization was founded by survivors from **Atlantis** and that the United States is the New Atlantis foretold by the great master Mason Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626). The pyramid with the all-seeing eye represents the Great Architect of the Universe that guided the Founding Fathers of the United States to establish a nation that might one day reveal itself as the heir of the ancient mysteries of Atlantis and restore all humankind to the earthly paradise that existed in that Golden Age of old.

Freemasons annual meeting in 1992. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

The central mythos of Freemasonry centers around the building of the great temple of King Solomon (tenth century B.C.E.) and Solomon's securing the services of the most accomplished architect in the world, Hiram Abiff, who was said to have designed the magnificent temple according to the precepts of the Great Architect of the Universe. Although Hiram is mentioned in biblical accounts as a master of the arts of construction, the rites of Freemasonry extend beyond the Bible and fashion a parallel myth, portraying Hiram as a primary figure in the creation of the temple. According to Masonic tradition, the ancient builders of Solomon's Temple created the rites still practiced in modern lodges, with the various degrees of initiation and their secret symbols and handshakes.

While the Free and Accepted Order of Freemasons is the oldest fraternity in the world, it doesn't really extend back to the stone masons working on Solomon's Temple—nor does it date even farther back to those who labored on the Egyptian pyramids, as some Masons have claimed. Freemasonry did evolve from the guilds of the stonemasons who traveled from city to city in Europe of the fourteenth century looking for work on the great cathedrals being constructed at that time. The secret passwords and handshakes were unique ways by which a newcomer to a city might prove that he really was a true member of the guild. While there are references to Freemasonry as early as 1390, the fraternity did not come into being until 1717 when four London lodges united.

From its actual beginnings in the early 1700s, Freemasonry exerted a great deal of influence upon society. For one thing, in the midst of seemingly incessant quarreling over religion throughout the European nations, the Freemasons were nondenominational, asking only that its members recognized a Supreme Being and sought somehow to better humanity through the course of their own lives. Because men of low rank could become members and no religious philosophy was deemed

Officers of the New York Mecca Temple. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

superior to another, the lodges of Freemasonry became champions of the emerging concepts of democracy that were suffusing the Enlightenment. Such freedoms of thought and spirituality did not endear the Freemasons to many facets of established society, particularly the Roman Catholic Church, who condemned the fraternity as anti-Christian.

By the mid-1700s, Freemasonry had established its lodges throughout Europe and had been carried across the ocean to the New World by numerous immigrants. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), John Hancock (1737–1793), Paul Revere (1735–1818), and many other of the Founding Fathers of the United States were openly proud of being Masons. A freed slave, Prince Hall, who was initiated into Masonry by a British soldier in Boston, later founded an African lodge, which became the still-extant Prince Hall Masons.

After the Revolution (1775–83), American Freemasonry became extremely powerful in the United States. Lodges were constructed in the smallest of villages, and it became an undeniable sign of prestige in any community to be a member of the Masons. For businessmen who wished to succeed, it was almost a requirement to join the Freemasons.

THE Free and Accepted Order of Freemasons is the oldest fraternity in the world.

At the same time, however, those individuals who were not privy to its secrets had begun to spread rumors about the bizarre rites and grim pledges that the members of the fraternity were sworn to uphold. Curiosity and concern that satanic rites might be held by supposedly upstanding businessmen who had sold their souls to the devil began to spread doubts about what was really going on behind the closed doors of its lodges. While the various oaths and rituals of the Masons would quite likely be judged as a bit overly dramatic and flamboyant by some, they were largely symbolic and representative of an earlier age—and far less danger-

ous to their initiates than many contemporary college fraternities or sororities.

It was the abducted and assumed tragic death of one of its members in 1826 that led to the near-annihilation of the Masons in the United States. William Morgan, a disillusioned Mason from Batavia, New York, let it be known that he was writing a book that would reveal all the secrets of Freemasonry to the world. The printer's shop that was going to publish his manuscript was torched, and a few days later, Morgan was arrested on charges that he was in arrears on a two-dollar debt. That night, a stranger arrived to pay Morgan's bail, and the dissident Mason was then seized by a group of his fellow lodge members and forced into a carriage. Neither Morgan nor his remains were ever found.

BY *1897, the Masons had about 750,000 members.*

One of the cornerstones of Masonry was its loyalty to its members, but the entire nation was offended by the manner in which the juries were stacked in favor of those Masons who were accused of having murdered William Morgan. The general population demanded justice, and they were shocked by the power of a secret society that could stonewall three special prosecutors. After 20 trials for murder and kidnapping, the local sheriff, who was a Mason, and who was obviously an integral element in Morgan's abduction and disappearance, received the most severe judgment of all the defendants when he was sentenced to 30 months in jail.

Not only did an anti-Mason sentiment swell within the country, but the Anti-Mason Party was founded that elected governors in Pennsylvania and Vermont and won seven electoral votes in the 1832 election. It was no longer prestigious to be a Mason. In state after state, lodges closed. Overall, the fraternity lost more than half of its members.

By 1845, Freemasonry began to revive in the United States, but it never again achieved the social status that it had once enjoyed. In 1872, two Masons formed a kind of parody of the Masons and named it the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, aka, The Shriners. By 1897, the Masons had about 750,000 members, and numerous other fraternal organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, the Odd Fellows, and the Loyal Order of Moose sprang into being. In the 1950s, the Masons reached their numerical peak in America with more than four million members.

In 2001, there were about two million Masons in the United States and their average age was well over 60. Younger men, it seems, are no longer attracted to an organization whose members receive such grandiose titles as Master of the Royal Secret, Knight of the Brazen Serpent, or Worshipful Master. As for being a secret society, Masonic Lodge telephone numbers are in the directory, and the texts of many of their oaths have been made public, i.e., "You agree to be a good man and true; you agree to conform to the laws of the country in which you reside; you promise not to be concerned in plots and conspiracies against the government."

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THE GARDUNA

The origins of the Garduna begin in a legend not dissimilar from that of El Cid (c. 1043–1099), the heroic knight

who defended northern Spain from the invading Moors in the eleventh century, and the secret society continues to this day in a criminal organization akin to the Mafia. According to tradition, around 710 a holy man named Apollinario, who lived a hermitlike existence in the hills above Cordova, had a vision in which the Blessed Virgin Mary appointed him to be the savior of Spain and drive the Moors out of the land. At first the holy man was staggered by the very suggestion, regardless of the source from whence it had come. What remained of Gothic Spain had fallen into decay, deteriorating into a patchwork of petty princedoms, woefully ineffectual against the powerful Moors who had conquered most of the land and established their royal seat in Cordova. But when the apparition of Mary presented him with a button that she said had been taken from the robe of Christ, Apollinario knew that he had been given the power to raise a band of holy warriors. He followed her orders to gather an army from the simple countryfolk of Spain, even from the bandits who lived in the mountains, and to avoid the corrupt nobles and landed aristocracy.

The hermit from the hills above Cordova was blessed with a charisma that caused the common people to flock to his leadership. He told them that those who followed him in the Garduna, his sacred army, would be licensed by God and the Holy Virgin to destroy the invading heathens by any means. There would be open warfare, of course, but they would also be free to plot murders and practice any kind of secret treachery. Those who joined the Garduna would be absolved of all wrongdoing as long as their violence was committed only against non-Christians. Thousands joined the holy man in his crusade against the Moors, and his army of peasants, beggars, and bandits fought so fiercely under the standard of the Holy Virgin of Cordova that no Moorish force could repel them.

While the Garduna may have harassed the powerful Muslim armies and conducted a guerilla-type warfare against them, they by no means drove the invaders from Spain as legend told it. After about 714, the Gothic monarchy of Spain had been replaced by the institutions of the conquering Arabs, and a short time after Spain had fallen to the Moors, it became the most prosperous and civilized country in the West. Within a few more years, the Arabs had extended their European empire north of the Pyrenees Mountains to the south of France and from the mouth of the Garonne to that of the Rhone. In 732, Charles Martel of France stemmed the Muslim tide of conquest at the Battle of Tours, and the Arabs retreated back to Spain where they retained a peaceful possession of the country for many centuries. Cordova became a highly respected seat of art and learning, and the Arab philosophers became the sages of the West.

THOSE who followed Apollinario in the Garduna, would be licensed by God and the Holy Virgin to destroy the invading heathens.

Over the centuries, the Garduna degenerated into a loosely knit criminal network controlled by the descendants of the mountain bandits who had followed Apollinario in his crusade against the Moors. Deception and murder were still practiced on a large scale by the Garduna, and they maintained the old dictum that only the blood of non-Christians was to be shed. Perhaps the Garduna would have vanished completely into legend if fifteenth-century Spain had not become a Christian nation and King Ferdinand V (1452–1516) and Queen Isabella I (1451–1504) had not so avidly supported the mission of the **Inquisition** and that of its chief heretic hunter in Spain, Tomas de Torquemada (1420–1498).

Until the Inquisition, Moors, Jews, and Christians had for centuries lived quite peacefully in Spain. The Moors and the Jews were respected for their learning and for their skill as craftsmen and merchants, and it was widely acknowledged that both groups of citizens had made considerable contributions to Spain's rise to power and its recent acquisitions in the New World. Ferdinand reasoned that the Moors and the Jews had grown too powerful and too rich, and that he could extend the

Spanish Empire farther if he were to acquire their wealth. He also considered them heretics because they were not Christians.

The slaughter of innocent people began in earnest with Muslim and Jewish shopkeepers and scholars condemned as heretics and witches. The terrible machinery of the Inquisition was quite effective in and of itself, but Ferdinand recalled the stories of the Garduna, who killed only heathens, and he summoned their leaders to meet with high officers of church and state.

For the bandit chiefs of the Garduna, it was as if they were given a license to kill and to loot. Church officials told them that they must once again become holy warriors and become a weapon of terror against all heretics. All their sins would be forgiven. All their crimes would be pardoned. They were to be a secret society of murderers with the full approval of church and state.

FOR over 100 years, the Garduna murdered, raped, and looted on the orders of the Inquisition.

For more than 100 years, the Garduna murdered, raped, and looted on the orders of the Inquisition. Their victims were always non-Christians or those suspected of being heretics.

By 1670, the Inquisition withdrew its support from the Garduna, but the holy warriors became a secret cult within the church and continued their attacks against all those deemed contrary to the teachings of Christianity. When the church itself withdrew its recognition of the Garduna, they became a secret society, maintaining always that everything they did was an expression of God's will and any alleged crime they might commit was free of the taint of any sin.

During the eighteenth century, the Garduna had expanded its parameters of potential victims to include Christians, as well as unbelievers, and they had begun selling their services of murder, kidnapping, robbery, and so forth to anyone who could afford them. They had become so powerful and daring that if any member of the society should be caught and imprisoned, the others thought nothing of attacking the prison and freeing him.

At the height of its powers in the eighteenth century, the Garduna instituted ranks within the society which could only be attained by acts of merit. At the head of the Garduna was the great brother or grand master, who ruled the society from its headquarters in Seville. Following his orders were the commanders, the district chiefs, and the chiefs, the leaders of individual bands. Under the chiefs came the swordsmen, well-trained men who were responsible for planning the criminal operations of the Garduna. The true fighting men of the society were called the athletes, tough and ruthless individuals who were often escaped convicts, galley-slaves, and vicious criminals. Below the athletes in rank were the "bellows," elderly men who were regarded by their cities and villages as men of good character who acted as the disposers of stolen goods for the society. The lowest rank in the Garduna was held by the "goats," the new recruits who had yet to prove their abilities. There were also two female ranks: the sirens, young beautiful women whose task it was to seduce state officials; and the covers, whose assignment lay in luring unsuspecting victims into ambushes where they could be robbed or murdered.

In 1822, in an era of social reform, police entered the home of the grand master in Seville, arrested him, and confiscated all his documents. Remarkably, the Garduna had kept meticulous records of all of their various criminal activities from 1520 to that date. The grand master and 16 of his district chiefs were publicly hanged in the main square of the city. Members of the other ranks of the Garduna scattered and resumed a life of banditry in the mountains.

The Garduna gave evidence of their survival as a secret society throughout the Spanish Civil War (1936–39) when their battle cry of "Remember the Virgin of Cordova!" was frequently heard. It has been said that the Garduna have established their own church, blending their concept of unorthodox Catholicism with a kind of "holy socialism." With branches allegedly established in Portu-

gal and South America, as well as Spain, the Garduna continues to flourish as a criminal secret society 1,200 years after its conception by the hermit Apollinario.

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THE HOLY VEHM

In the middle of the thirteenth century, when outlaw bands and mercenaries roamed the lawless territory between the Rhine and the Weser rivers in Westphalia, Germany, the Chivalrous Order of the Holy Vehm (or Fehm), a secret vigilante society, was formed by free men and commoners to protect themselves from the marauders. In the beginning, the resistance group had the approval of both the church and the Holy Roman emperor, but as time passed the Holy Vehm became a law unto itself, passing judgment on all those whom they decided should receive a death sentence.

Because the society began with only a handful of members and violent retaliation could be expected from any gang of outlaws who might learn the identities of those commoners who dared to oppose them, an oath of secrecy was imposed upon all those with the courage to join the ranks of the Vehm. During the initiation ceremonies, candidates vowed to kill themselves and even their spouses and children, rather than permit any society secrets to be betrayed. Once the oath had been made, one of the Vehm's *Stuhlherren* or judges, would move his sword across the initiates' throats, drawing a few drops of blood to serve as a silent reminder of the fate that awaited all traitors to the society. After this ritual had been observed, the initiates kissed the cross that was formed by the space between the sword's blade and hilt. Below the *Stuhlherren* in rank were the deputy judges, the *Freischoffen*, and the executioners, the *Frohnboten*. The deputy judges and the executioners carried out the various tasks of inquisitors, jury, and hangman.

THE Holy Vehm was formed by free men and commoners to protect themselves from the marauders.

The name "Vehm" or "Fehm" was a corruption of the Latin word "fama," a law founded upon a common or agreed upon opinion. However, "Fehm" could also mean something that was set apart, and the leaders of the Holy Vehm soon decided that their crusade against evildoers had set them apart and above the laws that governed others. Within a few decades of its formation, the Vehm had more than 200,000 free men and commoners in its ranks—each man sworn to uphold the Ten Commandments and to eliminate all heresies, heretics, perjurers, traitors, and servants of Satan. Once anyone was suspected of violating one or more of the Lord's commandments or laws, he or she was brought before one of the Holy Vehm's courts and was unlikely to escape the death sentence to be hanged.

Because of the great power that the Vehm acquired, it conducted trials of noted outlaws and thieves unopposed in public places, such as village squares or market places, in the full light of midday. As its numbers and influence grew, the Vehm had little reason to fear anyone speaking out against them, but the harsh and punitive secret courts conducted by the society, the *Heimliches Gericht*, were always held at midnight in order to create an even more sinister and frightening effect to their reading of the death sentence. Even less merciful to those suspected of witchcraft or heresy were the "forbidden court," *Verbotene Acht*, and the *Heimliches Acht*, the "secret tribunal," both of which were conducted by the Black Vehm, a splinter group of the Holy Vehm.

Once the outlaws, thieves, and other assorted brigands had been largely driven from Westphalia, the Vehm turned its attention to

those men and women suspected of heresies or of betraying the commandments of God in a variety of sins. Before suspects came to court, they were served with three summonses, each of which gave them the opportunity of attending voluntarily. Each summons also gave the accused a period of consent of six weeks and three days. Because the tribunals of the Vehm had gained a reputation of pronouncing only death sentences, few people attended the courts of their own volition. Those who tried to escape were condemned without the usual pretense of a trial and Vehm executioners were assigned to hunt them down.

Because the tribunals of the Vehm were willing to accept the weakest of circumstantial evidence against any individual accused of a crime or an act of heresy, there appears to be no record of any of the secret courts ever finding anyone innocent. While no accurate records of their victims were ever kept, historians have estimated that thousands of men and women—the innocent along with the guilty—were dragged into the night to attend one of the Vehm's secret courts.

An entire population of sleeping villagers might be awakened by the thudding of swords' hilts on their doors and be summoned by torchlight to attend a midnight tribunal that accused one of their neighbors of some act of heresy—real or imagined. Regardless of the charges levied against those victims the Vehm accused, the sentence was always death. And if any spoke in defense of their friends, they were likely to be hanged as well, for giving false witness to defend a heretic or a traitor. On those rare occasions when the tribunal failed to convince even its own members of an accused individual's guilt, that unfortunate person was hanged to preserve the secrecy of the tribunal.

Eventually the Holy Vehm was condemned by the church and the German state, but the secret society remained active in a greatly diminished capacity. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, it went underground and seemingly ceased all acts of violence. In the 1930s, with the rise of the Nazis to power in Germany, for the first time in its 700-year history the Vehm came into the open, focusing its bigotry upon the Jewish people, judging them to be guilty of heresy. The Chivalrous Order of the Holy Vehm appears to have been destroyed along with their Nazi allies with the fall of the Third Reich in 1945.

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THE ILLUMINATI

For many conspiracy theorists, the Illuminati is the ultimate secret society, a group that stretches its tentacles of control to encompass the entire world. According to these theorists, the members of the Illuminati are the real rulers of the world, and they have been pulling the strings from behind the political scenes for centuries. They have infiltrated every government and every aspect of society around the planet—and some say that their ultimate goal is to accomplish a satanic New World Order, a one-world government, that will prepare Earth's citizens for the coming of the **Antichrist.**

Although such paranoid claims make for exciting reading, the Illuminati of history, rather than legend, was a secret society formed in Bavaria in 1776 with the political goal of encouraging rebellion of the people and the abolition of the established monarchies. Structuring the society along the lines of the classes and orders of the **Freemasons,** the Illuminati included levels of enlightenment that could be achieved by undergoing initiation through various mystical rites and ceremonies. Although the society's founder, a professor of religious law named Adam Weishaupt, sought to establish a new world order in the late eighteenth-century, the Illuminati was destroyed within 15 years of its founding.

The term "Illuminati" was first used by Spanish occultists toward the end of the fif-

Bilderbergers Plan for a New World Order

Certain scholars who have studied the makeup of the Bilderbergers insist that the group is controlled by the 10-man Inner Circle of the Illuminati. According to their claims, this secret cabal has painstakingly prepared an agenda for the masses of humanity into the millennium. Such individuals as the Bilderbergers will become the world's masters, and the vast majority of the global population may look forward to a future existence as pawns, if not slaves, of the Illuminati.

According to certain sources who claim knowledge of the basic plan for world dominance set in motion by the Bilderbergers, the following goals are among their principal objectives:

The United States must promptly pay its debt to the United Nations. In addition, the United States will be asked to contribute billions of dollars to the International Monetary Fund. U.S. taxpayers will be bled almost dry by such expenditures.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will be converted into a United Nations military force. U.S. troops will therefore come under the command of NATO's foreign officers.

"Corporate Governance" will dissolve national sovereignty and bring all of Earth's corporations under a single global order. Local control over businesses and corporations by nations and states will be terminated. The great giants of finance will be able to disregard the laws and dictates of all governments, including those of the United States.

As the twenty-first century dawns, a new system of fascism will emerge under the guise of free trade practices that will be guided by the Illuminati.

The Bilderbergers have approved the Red Chinese model of economics as the standard for the emerging European superstate and the United States. As in Red China, all dissidents will be dealt with severely and placed in work camps.

As soon as the program can be implemented, citizens in every nation will be issued the Universal Biometrics Identification Card.

A Gestapo-like police state will be established to enforce the dictates of the Illuminati's New World Order.

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teenth century to signify those alchemists and magicians who appeared to possess the "light" of spiritual illumination from a higher source. The term may have originated in the **Gnostic** dualism of the forces of Light and Darkness, and many individuals who claimed to be Illuminati, those enlightened by a higher wisdom, joined the **Rosicrucians** and took refuge in France to escape the fires of the Spanish Inquisition.

THE *Illuminati of history, rather than legend, was a secret society formed in Bavaria in 1776.*

The secret society known as the Order of the Illuminati was founded in the city of Ingolstadt in the southern German monarchy of Bavaria on May 1, 1776 by Adam Weishaupt, a 28-year-old professor of religious law. Beginning with only five members, Weishaupt's order grew slowly, numbering about 60 in five cities by 1780. The professor deliberately blended mysticism into the workings of the brotherhood in order to make his agenda of republicanism appear to be more mysterious than a political reform group. He joined the Masons in Munich in 1777 and adopted many of their classes and orders and promised his initiates that they would receive a special communication of occult knowledge as they advanced higher in the ranks of the Illuminati.

Weishaupt's society had little effect on the German political structure until 1780 when he attracted the interest of Adolf Francis, the Baron Von Knigge, a master occultist and a man who had risen to the highest levels in many of the secret societies that preceded the Illuminati, including the Masons. Knigge had no problem melding his interest in the supernatural with Weishaupt's goal of political revolution, and the two men quickly established branches of the Illuminati throughout all of Germany. A few months after Knigge had joined Weishaupt's cause, membership in the Illuminati swelled to 300.

Weishaupt had taken great care to enlist as many young men of wealth and position as possible, maintaining that philanthropy, as well as mysticism, was a principal goal of the society. He had also managed to create around himself a great aura of mystery, permitting himself to be seen by none but those in the highest ranks of the society, encouraging the myth that he was an adept of such great power that he existed largely as an invisible presence. Initiates into the ranks of the Illuminati underwent secret rites, wore bizarre costumes, and participated in grotesque ceremonies that were designed to give complete obedience to Weishaupt. Soon the Illuminati became a force to be reckoned with behind the scenes in Germany's political life, and its members worked secretly to overthrow both church and state.

As their influence as a secret society grew, Weishaupt and Knigge became concerned that a good many authorities were beginning to take seriously the rumors of the existence of the Illuminati. If it should be proven that the society existed in fact, certain of the more powerful German princes would take immediate steps to suppress it. To hide the society even more completely from the scrutiny of public view, the leaders implemented Weishaupt's original plan of grafting the Illuminati onto the larger brotherhood of the Freemasons. The Illuminati were already utilizing the classes and grades of Freemasonry, so the initiates of the Illuminati would easily amalgamate with the more established society. To appear to become one with the Freemasons would allow Illuminism to spread more widely and rapidly, and Weishaupt and Knigge had great confidence that they would soon attain complete control over the blended organizations.

The hierarchy within the Freemasons were not long in discovering that the two interlopers had joined the fraternal brotherhood with less than honorable motives, and in 1782, a group within the Masons called the Strict Observance demanded that a council be held at Wilhelmsbad to examine the true beliefs of Weishaupt and the Illuminati. Knigge's powers of persuasion effectively blocked the attempt of the Strict Observance contingent to expel Illuminism from their society, and he managed to enroll almost all the members of the council in the Illuminati. By 1784, Illuminati membership had risen to 3,000, and the secret society appeared on the verge of assuming control of the entire Masonic establishment.

At the same time that their goals seemed within their grasp, Weishaupt and Knigge fell into a sharp disagreement about the correct manner of proceeding with their master plan; and in April 1784, Knigge withdrew from the Illuminati, leaving Weishaupt the supreme commander of the increasingly powerful society. Later in that same year, a number of initiates who had reached the highest level within the Illuminati became disillusioned when the special supernatural communication from a higher source that Weishaupt had promised had still not manifested after eight years of membership in the society. It now became obvious to them that Weishaupt had only sought to use them as blind instruments for the achievement of his political ambitions. The Illuminati was denounced as a subversive organization by many of its former members, some of whom informed the duchess dowager Maria Anna of Bavaria and the Bavarian monarch, Carl Theodore, that the society sought the overthrow of church and state.

In June 1784, Carl Theodore issued an edict outlawing all secret societies in his provinces. In March 1785, another edict specifically condemned the Illuminati. Weishaupt had already fled to a neighboring province in February, 1785, where he hoped to inspire the loyal members of the Illuminati to continue as a society. In 1787, the duke of Bavaria issued a final edit against the Order of the Illuminati, and Weishaupt apparently faded into obscurity. Although he never realized his goal of a German Republic and the overthrowing of the European monarchies, the sparks that he had ignited with the Illuminati would soon burst into the flames of the French Revolution in 1789.

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THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

The two principal orders of knighthood of the Crusades were established prior to the launching of the first crusade in 1096 and shortly before the second crusade began in 1146. The fundamental principle on which the new orders were based was the union of monasticism and chivalry. Before this time, a man could choose to devote himself to religion and become a monk, or he could elect to become a warrior and devote himself to defending God and country. The founding of the orders of knighthood permitted the vow of religion and the vow of war to be united in a single effort to free the Holy Land from the Muslims.

The oldest of the religio-chivalric orders was the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, also known as the Knights Hospitallers and subsequently as the Knights of Malta and the Knights of Rhodes, founded in 1048. By the middle of the twelfth century, the Hospitallers had become a powerful military factor in the East, and their membership included the most accomplished knights in Christendom. By 1153 they had become the pride of the Christians and the terror of the Saracens. Unfortunately, after a great number of victories for the cross, the moral and chivalric ideals of the order began to become corrupted by the enormous wealth that its warriors had accumulated. In 1187, the Hospitallers were almost annihilated in the disastrous battle of Tiberias, where the Saracen army under the generalship of Saladin (1137–1193), the sultan of Egypt and Syria, thoroughly defeated the Christians and reclaimed Jerusalem.

The second of the great orders of knighthood was founded in 1117 by two French knights and was originally known as the Knights of the Temple of Solomon and later as the Knights Templar or the Knights of the Red Cross. Hugues des Paiens and Geoffrey of Saint-Omer, two compassionate nobles, had

Knights Templar parade in 1930. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

observed the hardships endured by Christian travelers en route to Jerusalem and decided to serve as guides and protectors for the defenseless pilgrims. The warrior guides soon gained a reputation for their service to the helpless wayfarers; they were joined by seven other knights who admired their principles. The nine men bound themselves by the traditional vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty, then added the oaths to defend the Holy Sepulcher and to protect those pilgrims who journeyed there. At first the Knights of Saint John, the Hospitallers, lent aid and encouragement to the new society of brothers. There could be no rivalry with this new order of knights who comprised only nine members and were known by others as the "Poor Soldiers of the Holy City." It was said that Hugues and Geoffrey only had one horse between them when they first began their missions of benevolence.

Then, at the council of Troyes in 1127, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) drew up a code for the order and designed an appropriate uniform, consisting of a white tunic and mantle with a red cross on the left breast. Pope Honorius II (d. 1130) approved the following rules of conduct and discipline for the order in 1128:

- to recite vocal prayers at certain hours;
- to abstain from meat four days in the week; to cease hunting and hawking;
- to defend with their lives the mysteries of the Christian faith;
- to observe the seven sacraments of the church, the fourteen articles of faith, the creeds of the apostles and Athanasius;

A woodcut depicting the Knights Templar in 1118. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

- to uphold the doctrines of the Two Testaments, including the interpretations of the church fathers, the unity of God and the trinity of his persons, and the virginity of Mary both before and after the birth of Jesus;
- to go beyond the seas when called to do so in defense of the cause;
- to retreat not from the foe unless outnumbered three to one.

In addition to the rules of conduct and discipline, humility was one of the first principles of membership in the Knights Templar. The helmet of the Templar must bear no crest; his beard should never be cut; his personal behavior should be that of a servant of others; and his tunic should be girt with a linen cord as a symbol that he was bound in service.

There were four classes of members in the Templars—knights, squires, servitors, and priests—each with their individual list of duties and obligations. The presiding officer of the order was called the grand master and was assisted by a lieutenant, a steward, a marshal, and a treasurer. The states of Christendom were divided into provinces, and over each was set a grand master. The grand master of Jerusalem was considered the head of the entire brotherhood, which grew in numbers, influence, and wealth to become one of the most powerful organizations in the medieval world. Counts, dukes, princes, and even kings sought to wear the red cross and white mantle of the Templar, an honor which was recognized throughout Europe.

THE two principal Orders of Knighthood of the Crusades were established in 1096.

In 1139, Pope Innocent II (d. 1143) granted the Templars an unprecedented mark of papal approval: the churches of the Templars were exempt from interdicts; their properties and revenues were free from taxation to either crown or Holy Mother Church. The Templars now had the prestige of being triumphant crusaders. They had the blessing of the pope. They had the gratitude of those whom they had protected on their pilgrimages. They had vast estates with mansions that could not be

invaded by any civil officer. Thousands beseeched the order to allow them to become members of the Templars. In the course of time the Knights of the Temple became a sovereign body, pledging allegiance to no secular ruler. In spiritual matters, the pope was still recognized as supreme, but in all other matters, the grand master of Jerusalem was as independent and as wealthy as the greatest king in Europe.

What had begun as the mission of two poor knights with one horse who vowed to watch over Christian pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem had become a privileged order of opportunists bloated with wealth. And in their new quest for power and wealth, the protection of the pilgrims was often forgotten. Even St. Bernard issued a series of exhortations that the order was accepting into its membership too many knights who were but adventurers and outlaws and that a good number of the nobility who had joined the Templars were men who had been regarded as oppressors and scourges by their serfs.

THE *Knights Templars owed their allegiance only to the pope.*

There were three divisions of the Templars in the East—Jerusalem, Antioch, and Tripoli. In Europe, there were 16 provinces—France, Auvergne, Normandy, Aquitaine, Poitou, Provence, England, Germany, Upper and Lower Italy, Apulia, Sicily, Portugal, Castile, Leon, and Aragon. A majority of the Templars were French, and it was estimated by the middle of the thirteenth century that as many as 9,000 manors were held by the Templars in France.

The chief seat of the Templars had remained in Jerusalem from the origins of the order in 1118 to 1187, when it was moved to Antioch after the Christians' defeat by Saladin in the plain of Tiberias. The Hospitallers and the Templars had been slaughtered in battle and 230 captive knights had been beheaded when they refused the Muslims' offer to convert to the religion of the Prophet. The grand master established the Templar headquarters in Antioch for four years, then moved to Acre in 1191. A third transfer of the Templar seat was made in 1217 when the grand master moved to the Pilgrim's Castle near Cesarea. When the Muslims captured Acre in 1291 and overthrew the Christian kingdom, the Templars had bravely fought until they were exterminated almost to the man. The surviving Templars retreated to Cyprus, which they had purchased from King Richard the Lion-Hearted (1157–1199) for 35,000 marks.

Although defeated by the soldiers of the Prophet Muhammad and driven out of the Holy Land, the Knights Templar retained their many estates and their enormous wealth in Europe. However, especially in France, the Templars were becoming diminished in popularity, and the jealousies of the government had been aroused against them. Lords, dukes, and princes were not only envious of the order's burgeoning treasury, but they fumed over the Templars' exemption from the burdens of taxation imposed by church and state on others. The self-righteous among the rulers and the people were indignant over the knights' pride, arrogance, and licentiousness, and rumors began to spread that the order had acquired heretical practices during their time in the East.

In 1306, King Philip IV (1268–1314) of France, called Philip the Fair, sought refuge for himself and the royal treasury in the Templars' massive fortress in Paris. The unruly mobs were calling for his death, and he feared that the disloyal among his nobles would loot the nation's wealth. While Philip was in the process of entrusting the treasury of France to the Templars' protection, he also managed to gain sight of the incredible wealth that the Knights had accumulated. When he fully comprehended that this was only a portion of their immeasurable riches and that the Templars had forts and estates throughout France, each containing its own deposit of treasure, he was awed by the enormity of their riches.

When Philip sat more securely on his throne, he began to perceive the Templars as rivals for his kingdom. The Knights had more money and power than he, the king, and they owed their allegiance only to the pope. Philip

met with Pope Clement V (c. 1260–1314) to seek his counsel on how the order might be exterminated. Although the Templars had enjoyed the blessing of the papacy for decades, the pope admitted that he had been made uneasy by accusations that the order had sought to protect their own interests by securing a separate treaty with the Mulis when the Christian kingdom in the East was falling. Clement, however, was reluctant to make any kind of move against the Knights. The king pressed his case with the pope—and made an issue of the fact that the papacy at that time was located at Avignon, which was one of Philip's territories.

Then Philip found the mysterious Esquire de Floyran, who claimed to have been a member of the Knights Templar. Floyran said that the order had deceived the church and the people for more than a hundred years. What had begun as a pious service to pilgrims and defenders of the cross against the infidels had degenerated into a monstrous blood cult. Principal among the demons they worshipped was Baphomet, the three-headed god of the **Assassins,** a heretical Muslim sect. Floyran swore that he had seen initiates into the order spitting upon crucifixes, participating in vile rites, even sacrificing babies to demons.

There has never been any conclusive evidence to prove whether de Floyran was a true member of the Knights Templar who had a personal grudge against the order or if he was an imposter on the king's own payroll, but armed with the supposed insider's sensational accounts, the backing of the highest church officials in France, and the endorsement of William of Paris, the Grand Inquisitor, King Philip demanded that the pope conduct an investigation into such charges against the Knights Templar. Whether or not Clement believed such stories, he gave his approval that a judicial inquiry be instituted, and the knights were charged with heresy and immorality.

On the night of October 13, 1307, all of the Templars' castles in France were surrounded by large bodies of men that were led by small parties of priests and noblemen. When the unsuspecting knights were ordered to open their gates in the name of the king, they immediately complied. Taken completely by surprise, about 900 knights were arrested, and all their property and holdings in France were seized. When word of the arrests reached other countries, other nobles and priests quickly followed suit and imprisoned the Templars wherever they might be found.

The Knights Templar were accused of infidelity, Muhammadanism, atheism, heresy, invoking Satan, worshipping demons, desecration of holy objects, and uncleanness. The prosecution had difficulty proving such charges, so they were often forced to resort to torturing the prisoners to obtain confessions. In Paris, the grand master of the Templars, Jacques de Molay (1243–1314), pleaded the innocence of the order against all such charges. In spite of his personal friendship with de Molay, who was the godfather of his younger son, Philip ordered the grand master and the 140 knights imprisoned with him to be starved, tortured, and kept in filthy dungeons.

Although the pope had little problem yielding to pressure and issuing a ban on the order, he hesitated to give his sanction to the extermination of the knights. Philip, however, was determined to see the Templars destroyed and their wealth distributed to the state. For two weeks, the knights imprisoned in Paris suffered the rack, the thumbscrew, the pincers, the branding iron, and the fire. Thirty-six died under torture without speaking. The rest confessed to every charge the Inquisition had leveled against them—the worship of Baphomet, a black cat, and a serpent; the sacrifice of babies and the murders of pious knights who opposed them.

A grand council was called in Paris on May 10, 1310, to review the confessions. But Philip's victory was sullied when 54 of the knights withdrew their confessions and appealed to government and church officials that they had been tortured. They swore that they had remained true to their vows and that they had never practiced any kind of **witchcraft** or **Satanism.** Philip silenced their pleas three days later when he ordered all 54 of the Templars burned at the stake in a field behind the alley of St. Antoine.

In 1312, the pope convened the Council of Venice to weigh the fate of the Templars. It

was decided that the order should be abolished and its property confiscated, but Pope Clement chose to reserve final judgment concerning whether the knights were guilty of the heinous charges brought against them. In spite of 573 witnesses for their defense, Templars were tortured en masse, then burned at the stake. The landed possessions of the order were transferred to the Hospitallers, and their wealth was distributed to the sovereigns of various states. Everywhere in Christendom, except in Portugal, where the Templars assumed the name of the Knights of Christ, the order as an organization was suppressed.

In 1314, as he was being burned to death on a scaffold erected for the occasion in front of Notre Dame, the Knights Templar grand master, Jacques de Molay, recanted the confession that he gave under torture and proclaimed his innocence to Pope Clement V and King Philip—and he invited them to meet him at heaven's gate. When both dignitaries died soon after de Molay's execution, it was believed by the public at large that the grand master and the Knights Templar had been innocent of the charges of heresy.

Although the Order was officially dissolved by Papal Decree in 1312, the mystique of the Knights Templar still remains strong in the twenty-first century. There are groups claiming an association with the Templar Order around the world. Some only affirm that they are following the ideals of the Knights Templar. Others state that they can trace a historical connection with the original order.

The Militi Templi Scotia or the Scottish Knights Templar point out that the papal Order of Suppression issued in 1312 was not enforced in Scotland because the Scots believed the charges against the Knights were unproven. Under the excommunicated King, Robert the Bruce, Scotland provided a safe haven for any Knights Templar who were able to flee Europe and reach its shores. According to tradition, the Knights who sought refuge in Scotland fought side by side with Robert the Bruce to win independence from England. In turn, the king protected the Order and Temple lands in Scotland.

The Militi Templi Scotia remains active and emphasizes its historical connection to the original Order of Templar Knights. They make a point of proclaiming that they are not a secret society and have even expanded membership to include women. As with the original Order, however, all members must be professing Christians or individuals of "high ideals."

Another group in the United Kingdom also claims a historical continuity with the original Order because of Knights Templar who managed to reach England. The Supreme Military Order of Temple of Jerusalem of England, Wales, and Scotland states that it is not a secret society and that, as with the Militi Templi Scotia, it has no affiliation with the Freemasons. The order is open only to Christians according to the website http://theknightstemplar.org. Associated with the Supreme Military Order of Temple of Jerusalem is the North American Order of Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon, Knights Templar and can be found at the website http://www.knightstemplar.org.

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THE LEOPARD MEN

In ancient Egypt, the leopard was esteemed as an aspect of divinity and associated with the god Osiris, the judge of the dead. For many African tribes, the leopard is a powerful totem animal that is believed to guide the spirits of the dead to rest.

For many centuries a leopard cult has existed in West Africa, particularly in Nigeria and Sierra Leone, wherein its members kill as does the leopard, by slashing, gashing, and

mauling their human prey with steel claws and knives. Later, during gory ceremonies, they drink the blood and eat the flesh of human victims. Those initiates who aspire to become members of the cult must return from a night's foray with a bottle of their victim's blood and drink it in the presence of the assembled members. The cultists believe that a magical elixir known as *borfima*, which they brew from their victim's intestines, grants them superhuman powers and enables them to transform themselves into leopards.

The members of the cult kill on the slightest pretext. Perhaps one of the members became ill or his crops failed. Such misfortunes as these would be sufficient to demand a human sacrifice. A likely victim would be chosen, the date and time of the killing agreed upon, and the executioner, known as the Bati Yeli, would be selected. The Bati Yeli wore the ritual leopard mask and a leopard skin robe. It was preferable that the sacrifice be performed at one of the leopard cult's jungle shrines, but if circumstances demanded a more immediate shedding of blood, the rite could be conducted with the ceremonial two-pronged steel claw anywhere at all.

The first really serious outbreak of leopard-cult murders in Sierra Leone and Nigeria occurred shortly after World War I (1914–18). At that time, it was believed the cult was suppressed by the region's white administrators because many of its members were captured and executed. However, in actual fact, the leopard men simply went underground, continuing to perform ritual murders sporadically every year over the next two decades.

In 1946, the leopard men became bold and there were 48 cases of murder and attempted murder committed by the leopard cult in that year alone. And it soon became obvious that, much like the **Mau-Mau** in Kenya, the leopard men had begun directing many of their attacks against white men as if to convince the native population that the cult had no fear of the police or of the white rulers. The trend continued during the first seven months of 1947, when there were 43 known ritual killings performed by the leopard cult.

Terry Wilson had been district officer of a province in Eastern Nigeria for only six months when, early in 1947, he discovered that the leopard men had begun operating in his jurisdiction, claiming mainly young women as their victims. When Wilson raided the house of a local chief named Nagogo, his men found a leopard mask, a leopard-skin robe, and a steel claw. Acting on a tip from an informer, Wilson ordered his police officers to dig near the chief's house, where they found the remains of 13 victims. The chief was put in prison to await trial, and Wilson set out on a determined mission to put an end to the leopard men's reign of terror.

But the local inhabitants were too terrified of the leopard cult to come forward. There were several more murders during the weeks that followed, including the wife and daughter of Nagogo, the imprisoned chieftain. A desperate Wilson hoped that the sight of the mutilated bodies of his family would anger Nagogo into betraying the cult members who had so obviously turned on him, but the shock proved too much for the chief. When he saw the bloodied corpses of his wife and daughter and realized how viciously his fellow leopard men had betrayed him, he collapsed and died of heart failure.

FOR many African tribes, the leopard is a powerful totem animal.

Although Wilson received 200 additional police officers as reinforcements, the leopard men became increasingly bold in their nocturnal attacks. One night they even sacrificed a female victim inside the police compound and managed to get away without being seen. After that cruelly defiant gesture, the cult committed several murders in broad daylight. The native inhabitants of the region lost all confidence in the police and their ability to stop the slashings and killings of the powerful leopard men. Even some of Wilson's men began to believe that the cultists might truly have the ability to shapeshift into leopards and to fade unseen into the shadows.

One night in mid-August 1947, Wilson was awakened by the warning growl from his

dog. When he rose to investigate, a four-foot-long, barbed arrow whistled by his head, narrowly missing him and embedding itself in the wall. The next morning at police headquarters, he learned that two of his officers had also barely escaped death that previous night.

Wilson knew that his men were becoming unnerved. They were trying to stop an enemy who was essentially invisible. They struck without warning after preselecting their victims by a process that evaded all attempts to define it. There was no way for Wilson and his officers to determine who the cult's next victims would be or to guess where they might strike. And the natives were far too intimidated to inform on the leopard men—if, in fact, they did know anything of importance to tell the officers.

The district officer decided to attempt to set a trap. On the path to a village where several slayings had already taken place, Wilson sent one of his best men, posing as the son of a native woman. The two walked side by side toward the village while Wilson and a dozen other officers concealed themselves in the bushes at the side of the path.

Suddenly, issuing the blood-curdling shriek of an attacking leopard, a tall man in leopard robes charged headlong at the couple, swinging a large club. The young police officer struggled with the leopard man, but before Wilson and the other men could arrive on the scene, the cultist had smashed in the officer's skull with the club and fled into the bushes.

Wilson had lost one of his best officers, but the knife that the young man still held in his hand was covered in blood. The police would now be able to search for a man with a severe knife wound.

The district officer was about to have some men take the constable's body to the compound when he had a sudden flash of intuition that the leopard man might return to the scene of the crime. While the other officers searched the neighboring villages, Wilson hid himself behind some bushes overlooking the trail.

Around midnight, just as Wilson was beginning to think about returning to the compound, a nightmarish figure crawling on all fours emerged from the jungle, pounced on the young officer's corpse, and began clawing at his face like a leopard. But rather than claws raking the body, Wilson caught the glint of a two-pronged steel claw in the moonlight. The killer had returned to complete the cult ritual of sacrifice. Wilson advanced on the leopard man, and the robed murderer snarled at him as if he were truly a big cat. When he came at him with the two-pronged claw, Wilson shot him in the chest.

With Wilson's act of courage, the natives of the region had been provided with proof that the leopard men were not supernatural beings that could not be stopped. The members of the cult did not have magic that could make them impervious to bullets. They were, after all, men of flesh and blood—savage, bestial, and vicious—but men, nonetheless. Once word had spread that the district officer had killed one of the leopard men, witnesses began to come forward in great numbers with clues to the identity of cult members and the possible location of a secret jungle shrine.

The shrine itself was discovered deep in the jungle, cunningly hidden and protected by a large boulder. The cult's altar was a flat stone slab that was covered with dark bloodstains. Human bones were strewn over the ground. A grotesque effigy of a half-leopard, half-man towered above the gory altar.

During February of 1948, 73 initiated members of the cult were arrested and sent to prison. Eventually, 39 of them were sentenced to death and hanged in Abak Prison, their executions witnessed by a number of local tribal chiefs who could testify to their villages that the leopard men were not immortal.

Interestingly, on January 10, 1948, just a month before the leopard men were hanged in Nigeria, three women and four men were executed for their part in the lion men murders in the Singida district in Tanganyika. The lion people had dressed in lion skins and murdered more than 40 natives in ritual slayings that left wounds on their victims that resembled the marks of a lion's claws.

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NASA Covers Up Evidence of Alien Life on Mars

NASA meddler Richard Hoagland insists that not only have the astronauts been to Mars, but they have been covering up the discovery of ruins and artifacts. Especially intrigued by the so-called Mars Face, a Sphinx-like object that appeared on numerous NASA photographs during the Viking I orbit in 1976, Hoagland has demanded the agency to divulge the discovery.

In April 1998, NASA's Mars Global Surveyor spacecraft traveled near Mars and sent back photos debunking theories that ancient civilizations constructed the face. The new pictures showed only an pile of rocks, completely devoid of the profile of the previous portraits of the Mars Face.

Within hours of NASA's statement, Hoagland's website declared, "Honey, I Shrunk the Face!" He insists NASA has been hiding the artifacts for decades. Hoagland unearthed a 1960 NASA-commissioned report recommending any future discoveries of alien life be kept from the public so as not to disturb the evolutionary flow of twentieth-century civilization.

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The Mau-Mau

It has been said that no one knows the real meaning of "Mau-Mau" other than a Kikuyu (also Gikuyu) tribesperson and that is because its name, like its origins, is shrouded in ancient African tribal mysteries and covered in blood. On the other hand, some authorities claim that the name was invented by European settlers and applied to the native insurrectionists in Kenya. At any rate, the name was first heard among the white population of Africa in 1948 when police officials in the British colony of Kenya began to receive rumors of strange ceremonies being held late at night in the jungle. These midnight assemblies were said to be bestial rituals that mocked Christian rites and included the eating of human flesh and the drinking of blood. Then came the reports of native people being dragged from their beds at night, being beaten or maimed, and forced to swear oaths of initiation to a secret society. In each case, their assailants were said to be members of a secret society called the Mau-Mau.

In 1952, a state of emergency was declared in Kenya as the midnight rituals and beatings had escalated into the murder of Kikuyu policemen, whose bodies were found mutilated and bound with wire, floating in rivers. White farmers discovered their cattle disemboweled and the tendons in their legs severed so they could not walk. The secret society that

Mau-Mau being rounded up. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

had begun by practicing **black magic** and the administration of blood oaths had degenerated into the most violent sorts of barbarism.

THE *Mau-Mau weapon of choice was the machete.*

The Mau-Mau weapon of choice was the panga, the broad-bladed machete commonly used to hack a path through thick jungle vegetation. The society appeared to favor bloody and brutal attacks as a means of striking fear into the hearts and minds of all who might oppose them, but their choice of enemies seemed often difficult to comprehend. The first man to die at the hand of the Mau-Mau was a Kikuyu chief who spoke out against the secret society that had chosen to resort to savagery and barbarism to achieve its political objectives. In October 1952, a lone white settler was killed and disemboweled. An elderly farmer was found dead in November; in January 1953, two men who worked a farm as partners were discovered murdered by the Mau-Mau. A vicious attack on January 24, 1953, claimed the Rucks, a family of English heritage, who had always been regarded as dealing with their black employees in a fair-minded and charitable manner, even to the extent of supporting a clinic at their own expense. The bodies of the husband, wife, and their six-year-old son were found so hacked and ripped as to be nearly unrecognizable as human beings.

Later it was learned that native men and women who had been in the Rucks' employ for many years had been foremost in the

slaughter of the English family. What seemed particularly insidious to the white population was discovering to their horror that employees who had been loyal to them for decades were suddenly rising up and butchering them without warning. When the Mau-Mau demanded that blood be shed, long-standing associations and friendships between black and white were no longer considered something of value.

Such unprovoked butchery as that exhibited toward the Rucks had the white farmers watching their employees apprehensively and preparing for another brutal attack on their isolated homes. But the next violent raid occurred on March 26, 1953, against the police station at Naivasha. The station was overrun and guns and ammunition were taken away in a truck. Later that same night, the Mau-Mau bound the circular huts of the villages of Lari with cables so the doors could not be opened, poured gasoline over the thatched roofs, and set the homes on fire. Most of the men of the village were away serving in the Kikuyu Guard, an anti-Mau-Mau force, so the greatest number of the 90 bodies found in the charred remains were those of women and children. In addition, the Mau-Mau had mutilated more than1,000 of the villagers' cattle as further punishment for opposing them.

As nearly as it can be determined from the vantage point of an historical re-examination of events, the Mau-Mau was quite likely an ancient Kikuyu secret society that was reactivated. The Kikuyu tribe was the most populous and educated in Kenya, but their culture also permitted secret societies to flourish, and there were many such groups that had been in existence since long before the Europeans came to Africa. The Mau-Mau leaders invoked the old secret society in order to stir up the Kikuyu tribe to support their demands for independence and for the return of the Kikuyu land that the whites had stolen over the years. What was ignored by the society's leaders was the fact that the land occupied by the European settlers had long been designated a kind of buffer zone between the Kikuyu and their traditional enemies the Mazai tribe.

The ranks of the Mau-Mau increased when they began to force many unwilling individuals from other tribes into participating in their blood oaths. The oathing ceremonies began with the new members taking a vow to honor the old religion of their tribal ancestors. There were at least seven stages of oath-taking, which might take several days or weeks to complete and which included the drinking of blood, eating portions of human flesh, cohabiting with animals, and ingesting bits of brains from disinterred corpses. After the seventh stage of the oath-taking had been reached, the members had to repeat the cycle and reinforce their vows by beginning again. No man or woman was exempt from this requirement, not even the leaders of the society.

BY the time the Mau Mau was disbanded, they had slaughtered over 2,000 African tribespeople.

The Mau-Mau reign of terror was broken by groups of white settlers who joined the auxiliary police and army units who had combined forces with ex-terrorist Kikuyus. The former Mau-Mau members were provided with small arms and grenades, and they, in turn, taught the whites how to move silently through the thick underbrush. In May 1956, Dedan Kimathi, who was identified as the militant head of the Mau-Mau, was captured by a party of Kikuyu tribal police. Soon after Kimathi had been apprehended, the Mau-Mau society crumbled from lack of ammunition and arms, internal quarrels in the ranks, and disease brought about by the hardship of existing in the jungle under extremely difficult conditions. By the time the Mau-Mau was disbanded, they had slaughtered more than 2,000 African tribespeople and brutally maimed many thousands more native people. Although the murders of Kenyan civilians of European ancestry were brutal and bloody, the actual numbers of those killed at the hands of the Mau-Mau were greatly exaggerated by the media. Actual deaths of white settlers attributed to the Mau-Mau insurrectionists have been listed as low as 32 to 57, to as high as less than 100.

Dedan Kimathi was executed by the British in 1957 for having ordered atrocities and mur-

ders as the leader of the Mau-Mau. The Kikuyu Central Association, the political party that fronted for the secret activities of the Mau-Mau, was headed by Johnstone Kamau, better known as Jomo Kenyatta (1892–1978). Under his leadership, Kenya gained independence in 1963.

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THE ROSICRUCIANS

The citizens of Paris awoke one morning in 1622 to find that their city had been ornamented with posters which the Brethren of the Rosy Cross (Rosicrucians) had scattered to announce that their secret order was now moving among the Parisians to save them from the error of death. In the seventeenth century, the Rosicrucians were rumored to have accomplished the transmutation of metals, the means of prolonging life, the knowledge to see and to hear what was occurring in distant places, and the ability to detect secret and hidden objects.

ROSICRUCIANS *were rumored to have accomplished the transmutation of metals.*

Such announcements were met with great excitement. It was a time of reformation and enlightenment, and all of Europe was looking forward to the new world that the **alchemists** and **magicians** promised was about to emerge from the ashes of the old. And leading such a movement of a new appreciation of the arts and sciences and humankind's true place in the universe was the Illumined Father and Brother Christian Rosencreutz (1378–1484), a brilliant magus, who at the age of 16 had already gained secret wisdom teachings from the sages of Arabia and the Holy Land.

When Rosencreutz returned to Germany circa 1450, he became a recluse, for he could see that Europe was not yet ready for the complete reformation which he so yearned to present to it. For one thing, he claimed to have acquired the fabled philosopher's stone, which enabled him to produce all the gold and precious gems necessary to allow him to build a house where he could live peacefully and well. To share the power of the legendary stone of transmutation with the unwise, the worldly, and the greedy would be disastrous. Quietly, Rosencreutz accepted only a handful of carefully evaluated students to whom he imparted the knowledge that he had acquired in ancient Egypt and the connection that he had made with the mystery schools and the esoteric teachings of great masters. He was particularly enthusiastic about telling his students about **Pharaoh Amenhotep** and the monotheistic view of one God. At first there were only three disciples in attendance; then later, eight brothers, including Rosencreutz himself, swore to uphold the following precepts:

1. They would not profess any creed but the goal of healing the sick without reward;
2. They would affect no particular style of clothing;
3. They would meet once each year in the House of the Sainted Spirit;
4. Each brother would carefully choose his own successor;
5. The letters "R.C." would serve as their only seal and character;
6. The Brotherhood would remain secret for 100 years.

When Rosencreutz died in 1484 at the age of 106, the five brethren who had been chosen to travel throughout Europe performing charitable deeds had established a reputation for being selfless benefactors. Although Rosencreutz had been buried in secret, one of the brothers happened by chance to discover his burial chamber and read the promise inscribed above the entrance that Rosencreutz would return in 126 years. The discovery of the illu-

mined father's prediction inspired the surviving brothers to work in earnest to spread the teachings of Christian Rosencreutz throughout the world.

Between 1604 and 1616, three manifestos were released in Germany by the secret brotherhood of the Rosicrucians (from the Latin, Rosae Crucis, "Rose Cross"). The first two pamphlets called upon the educated and influential to unite to bring about a reformation of the educational, moral, and scientific establishments of Europe. The German monk Martin Luther (1483–1546) had already set in motion a reformation in the spiritual sphere of life, the Rosicrucian Fraternity pointed out, but now it was time to educate the people of Europe to understand the true relationship of humankind to the universe and to perceive truly the distinctions between the material and the divine.

The manifestos condemned all those who contributed to the moral decay of Europe, and the brotherhood promised to help alleviate all suffering and to eradicate all ignorance. The Illumined Father Christian Rosencreutz possessed the wisdom and the wealth through the transmutation of base metals to elevate the common people of Europe.

The manifestos also shared some startling assertions, among them:

1. The end of the world was near, but those who had become enlightened by the new reformation would be initiated into a higher consciousness.
2. New stars had appeared in the constellations of Cygnus and Serpentarius that predicted the destruction of the Roman Catholic Church.
3. The Illumined Father divined the secret code that God placed in the universe in the beginning of time and blessed those who possess such magic.
4. The transmutation of base metals into gold and precious gems is a natural miracle that has been revealed to such magi as Christian Rosencreutz. Forget about the efforts of the pseudo-chemists.
5. The Rosicrucian Fellowship has wealth to distribute, but it does not wish a single coin from anyone.

The manifestos created great excitement in early seventeenth-century Europe. Royalty, common folk, merchants, mystics, alchemists—all clamored for more information about the mysterious secret brotherhood. Those who were ill wished healing. Those who were poor were eager to accept a portion of the wealth the brotherhood was willing to distribute. Those who were greedy wanted their turn with the philosopher's stone and their opportunity to transmute tons of base metals into tons of gold.

And perhaps most of all, people wanted to join the secret society and become Rosicrucians, but no one knew where any of their lodges were or where they might find the House of the Sainted Spirit. Desperate individuals placed their letters of application for the fraternity in public places where they hoped the Rosicrucians might find them and contact them.

It wasn't long before charlatans began posing as members of the secret fraternity and attempting to charge the gullible for admittance, but when the deceivers could not produce mounds of gold upon demand, the crooks were either imprisoned or pummeled. Nor had too much time passed before word spread among the religious that the Rosicrucians were satanists who sought only to delude Europe into sin.

In spite of entreaties, threats, and demands, no Rosicrucian stepped forward to identify himself, and the society remained secret—the most secret of all secret societies. It is interesting to speculate that the symbol of Martin Luther, the Protestant reformer and founder of the Lutheran Church, was a red rose and a cross, which remains the emblem of Lutheranism. Could Luther also have sought to reform the whole societal structure of Europe, as well as the Roman Catholic Church? Unlikely, for Luther would not have used the language of the alchemist and the magus. Another member, according to some, is the great Francis Bacon (1561–1626), whose unfinished manuscript, *The New Atlantis* (1627), describes an earthly utopian paradise, a secret brotherhood who wear the Rose Cross on their turbans, who heal people without charge, and who meet yearly in their temple. The philosopher Rene Descartes

(1596–1650) was once nearly arrested on the accusation that he was a member of the secret society, but he convinced his accusers that the Rosicrucians were invisible, while, he, it was plain to see, was not.

While the true identity of the Rosicrucians may never be known, nor whether such a man as Christian Rosencreutz ever really existed, the concepts expressed in their three manifestos pertaining to individual freedom, the separation of church and state, and the quest to determine humankind's true place in the universe became ideals that inspired the period of Enlightenment and have been carried over into modern times.

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THE THUGGEE

No organized cult of killers has ever murdered as many people as the Thuggee. In the 1830s this Indian secret society strangled upward of 30,000 native people and travelers as a sacrifice to their goddess Kali, the "Dark Mother," the Hindu Triple Goddess of creation, preservation, and destruction. The name Thuggee comes from the Sanskrit *sthaga*, "deceiver."

THE *name Thuggee comes from the Sanskrit* sthaga, *"deceiver."*

Although the Thuggee probably originated sometime in the sixteenth century, they were not uncovered by British authorities until about 1812. Great Britain was beginning to expand its territories in India, and the British administrators were becoming increasingly alarmed by reports of bands of stranglers that were roving the countryside murdering travelers. At first there appeared to be no connection between the bizarre killings, but then the bodies of 50 victims were found hidden in a series of wells in the Ganges area. Such large-scale mass murder could not have been kept secret for so long unless special pains had been taken to dispose of the victims' corpses. Examination of the bodies revealed that the murderers had broken all joints of their victims' limbs to speed up the process of decomposition and to prevent the swelling of the graves that would attract scavenging jackals and other wild animals. Such evidence convinced the authorities that they were dealing with one secret society, the Thuggee.

The murderous craft of the Thuggee was hereditary. Its practitioners were trained from earliest childhood to murder by the quick, quiet method of a strong cloth noose tightened about the neck of their victims. This weapon, the "Rumal," was worn knotted about the waist of each member of the Thuggee.

The Thuggee gloried in silent and efficient acts of murder above any other earthly accomplishment, and they traveled often in the guise of traders, pilgrims, and even as soldiers marching to or from service. On occasion, the more flamboyant would pretend to be a rajah with a large retinue of followers. Each band of Thuggee had a small unit of scouts and inveiglers who would loiter about hotels and market places gaining information regarding travelers and the weight of their coin purses. The inveiglers posed as travelers headed for the same destination as their intended victims. They would worm themselves into the confidences of their prey, pleading the old adage of safety in numbers.

The mass slaughters of large groups of merchants and travelers were usually committed when all were encamped. Working in groups of three, one Thuggee would loop the Rumal around the victim's neck, another would press his head forward, and the third would grab his legs and throw him to the ground. In the rare instance when an intended victim escaped the nooses in the death area, he would run into scouts posted at the edge of the jungle. One

hundred percent mortality of their victims was the goal of the Thuggee.

In spite of what first appeared to be indiscriminate murder on a very large scale, the Thuggee had a peculiar code of ethics whose rules forbade the killing of fakirs, musicians, dancers, sweepers, oil vendors, carpenters, blacksmiths, maimed or leprous persons, Ganges water-carriers, and women. Despite the restriction against the murder of females, however, the presence of wives traveling with their husbands often necessitated the strangling of a woman to protect the secrecy of the society.

The strongest rule of the brotherhood was the one prohibiting the shedding of blood. According to Thuggee beliefs, the goddess Kali taught the fathers of thuggery to strangle with a noose and to kill without permitting the flow of blood. All victims of the Thuggee were sacrificed to Kali, and the members of the secret society would have been greatly incensed by an accusation that they killed only for booty.

With the exception of a small number of boys who may have been captured or spared during a raid, a man had to be born into the cult in order to become an initiate. The minimum age for initiation into the society was 10, and the young candidates were allowed to watch their elders at work from hidden points some distance from the site of the attack. At the age of 18, they were permitted to make their first human sacrifices to Kali.

The Thuggee had their female counterparts in a secret sect of Tantrists who held that it was only by a constant indulgence in passion that a human could ever achieve total union with Kali. Only indulgence in the five vices that corrupt the soul of humankind—wine, meat, fish, mystical gesticulations, and sexual indulgence—could drive the poisons out of the human body and purify the soul.

In 1822, William Sleeman, an officer in the Bengal Army who had transferred to civil service, was appointed by Governor General Lord Bentinck to rid India of the society of stranglers. Fluent in four Indian dialects, Sleeman had been the British official who had first confirmed the growing suspicion that the murders were committed throughout central India by the Thuggee. He was well aware that it would be no easy task putting a halt to such large-scale murders, for the members of the secret society were indistinguishable from any other of the many bands of outlaws who infested the country's roads. And what made the job of identifying the Thugs even more difficult was the fact that they were indistinguishable from any of the travelers and merchants who were their victims. As their name implied, they were master deceivers.

Finally, by meticulously marking the scene of each discovered attack site on a map and by maintaining careful records of the dates, Sleeman was able to begin to predict the areas where the next mass murders were likely to take place. When his agents and informants brought him word that known members of the Thuggee had been seen in a certain region, Sleeman sent his personally recruited police officers out disguised as merchants in order to ambush the Thugs who appeared to attack what they believed was a group of harmless travelers.

Between 1830 and 1841, Sleeman's police captured at least 3,700 Thugs, breaking forever the back of the infamous secret society. Of this total, only 50 received a pardon for supplying valuable information that had been utilized in destroying the secret society. The remainder of those apprehended were imprisoned for life and 500 were hanged. Without exception, the Thuggee condemned to be hanged went to their own deaths with the same lack of emotion with which they had murdered their victims. In many instances, their final request from the hangman was that they be permitted to place the noose around their own neck.

Trials of Thuggee brought out many ghastly facts about the deadly skills of some of its members. A band of 20 confessed that they had participated in 5,200 murders. An individual named Buhram, who had been a strangler for 40 years, had the highest lifetime score to his discredit—931. When asked if he experienced any feelings of remorse or guilt, he answered sharply that no man should ever feel compunction in following his trade.

Although isolated cases of a Thug's proficiency with a noose still exist in India and in

other parts of the world, the stranglers of the goddess Kali no longer exist as a secret society. The designation of "thug," however, remains as a negative term applied to brutish criminals.

The violent chapter imprinted in India's history by the cult of the Thuggee has been portrayed quite often in motion pictures, notably *Gunga Din* (1939) with Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Victor McLaglen; Terence Fisher's *Stranglers of Bombay* (1960); Steven Spielberg's *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984) with Harrison Ford and Kate Capshaw; and *The Deceivers* (1988) with Pierce Brosnan.

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THE TONGS

According to the Internet Movie Base, the Chinese Tongs have been an integral element of violence and mystery in 140 motion pictures in China and the United States. Interestingly, the first American film on the subject,*The War of the Tongs*, was released in 1917. In 1985, *Year of the Dragon* provoked a great deal of controversy in its portrayal of a racist white cop (Mickey Rourke) battling hordes of evil Chinese gang members. The greatest flaw in the motion picture was blending Chinese gangs, the Tongs, and the Triad into one massive "Chinese Mafia" kind of amalgamated crime organization. In actuality, although the gangs exist, they are separate from the Tongs, a survivor of the protective societies of ancient times, and the Triad, a recent element of organized crime that grew out of the Tongs.

The first Tong in America is believed to have originated in San Francisco in 1874. Essentially, the Tong (which originally meant "parlor") was a merchants' protective association created to defend themselves against brutal treatment directed at them by the white inhabitants of the city. Eventually, the Tong became powerful enough to sell "protection" to the newer merchants and to establish illegal gambling halls. Success in extortion and gambling led to an extension of activities into opium distribution and prostitution.

Although in 1880 the Chinese population in New York City was only around 800, the first Tong was established there in that year. By 1890, a rush of immigration increased the total to 13,000 Chinese in the city, and the Tong was ready to exploit a population isolated by language, culture, and prejudice. In 1900, rival Tongs ignited a series of Tong wars that lasted intermittently until the 1930s. It was at that time that the larger American public became fully aware of the Tong warriors with their chain mail shirts and hatchets.

Like so many secret societies, the origins of the Triad Tong have been lost in the lore of legend. According to some students of the Tongs, in 1647 a community of monks who lived in the Fukien Province of China had become masters in the art of war. When a foreign prince invaded China, the emperor sent 138 of these monks to throw out the invading forces. After three months of bitter fighting, they routed the enemy and returned to their monastery laden with gifts and honors from the grateful emperor.

While the monks were content to resume their lives of contemplation, some of the emperor's ministers were jealous of the favors he had bestowed upon them and persuaded him that the monks were deceptively planning a rebellion. Fearful of their martial arts skills, the emperor decided to attack the monks without warning and sent a strong force of the Imperial Guard, armed with gunpowder, to destroy the monastery. It was said the flames ignited by the blasts soared up to heaven, where they were seen by the Immortals who, perceiving the injustice being dealt the monks, came down to Earth and pushed aside one of the monastery's huge walls, enabling 18 monks to escape. Most of them

THE "MAGIC BULLET" THAT KILLED JFK?

The question of who killed U.S. President John F. Kennedy (1917–1963) on November 22, 1963, has been a subject of controversy. Conspiracy theorists dispute allegations that Lee Harvey Oswald was able to accurately hit a moving target at that distance with the bolt-action rifle allegedly in his possession. They insist one person could not have fired so many shots so quickly from this type of rifle.

In 1964, the Warren Commission, a group of government officials investigating the assassination, concluded that a single bullet passed through Kennedy's body and struck Texas governor John Connally. A fatal second shot hit the president in the head, and another bullet missed the presidential automobile altogether.

Conspiracy theorists dismiss the so-called "magic bullet" that passed through Kennedy and through the back, ribs, right wrist, and left leg of Connally. Governor and Nellie Connally believed that two bullets had struck the president and that a third and separate bullet had wounded the governor.

On July 3, 1997, former U.S. president Gerald Ford, the only surviving member of the Warren Commission, admitted he had altered the commission's description of the gunshot. According to Ford, the original text said that a bullet had entered Kennedy's back at a point slightly above the shoulder and to the right of the spine. Ford changed the bullet's entrance point from Kennedy's upper back to "the base of the back of the neck." Such a seemingly minor change would support the commission's single-assassin hypothesis that was based on the "magical" path of a single bullet that could pass through Kennedy's neck and leave another six wounds on his body before striking Texas governor John Connally's back, ribs, right wrist, and left leg. Ford told the Associated Press, "My changes were only an attempt to be more precise. I think our judgments have stood the test of time."

A poll conducted by the University of Ohio and Scripps Howard News Service in 1997 revealed that 51 percent of Americans dismissed the "magic bullet" theory. Twenty percent believed federal government agents killed Kennedy. Another 33 percent, while not accusing government agents, felt that a conspiracy was "somewhat likely."

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were so badly burned that they soon died, and the surviving five escaped from the Imperial troops by miraculous means.

After many ordeals the five monks came to a city in Fukien Province where they founded a Tong whose aim was to overthrow the emperor who had betrayed their loyalty. That Tong exists today as the Triad Tong, and the five monks who founded it, according to the legend, are known as the Five Ancestors. Although the revolt against the emperor failed, the survivors scattered throughout China and established five Provincial Grand Lodges, each led by one of the five monks.

THE *true name of the Tong was "I Ho Chuan," which means the Tong of "The Fists of Righteous Harmony."*

Initiation into the Triad Society is based on a blood ceremony. First, the ancient Five Heroes are invoked by an "Incense Master" who offers libations of tea and wine. The candidate for initiation is challenged at the entrance to the lodge by guards carrying razor-edged swords. He is allowed to enter only after answering a series of ritual questions as he crawls under crossed swords. Once inside the lodge, the initiate participates in a lengthy reenactment of the traditional ordeals of the Five Ancestors, swears 36 oaths, and learns his first secret signs. Then a rooster is brought in and beheaded, a warning to the initiate that he will suffer the same fate if he betrays the Tong. Finally, he drinks a mixture of blood, wine, cinnabar, and ashes. In times past, the blood used to be drawn from the initiate and other members of the lodge. Today the blood is generally that of the slaughtered rooster.

The blood oaths that were so favored by the Tongs originated with the Yellow Turbans, one of the earliest and most mystical societies in China. Founded in the middle of the second century in northeast China, the Yellow Turbans revered Chang Cheuh, a great healer and magician, as a savior of the nation against the despotic Han dynasty. Cheuh's society soon numbered so many thousands that he needed 36 generals to lead the rebellion that conquered the entire north of China within less than a month. Three of Chang Cheuh's disciples have been credited with taking the first blood oath when each of them slit open a vein, filled a vessel with blood, and drank the mixture of their vital fluid while vowing eternal brotherhood. This basic blood oath ceremony, with many variations, became an integral part of Tong ritual.

In the summer of 1900, the notorious Boxer Tong drove more than 3,000 people—mainly European missionaries, their families, and Chinese Christian converts—into the legation district of Peking. The siege had been provoked by the terror tactics of the Tong, which had been given almost a free hand by the Manchu government to free the nation from the foreign imperialists whom they accused of exploiting the Chinese people. "Boxer" was the Western name for this Tong, derived from its symbol of a clenched fist. The true name of the Tong was "I Ho Chuan," which means the Tong of "The Fists of Righteous Harmony."

The Boxers believed that they could achieve the righteousness of their cause by force, and they depended greatly on supernatural elements to aid them in achieving invulnerability. They employed rituals compounded of self-hypnotism, mass-hysteria, and drugs. At the height of their ceremonies, the initiates reached a state of frenzy wherein they would smash their clenched fists against unyielding surfaces until the blood flowed from broken knuckles. Then after a period of spasmodic twitching, foaming at the mouth and screaming hysterically, they would roll about on the ground until they became unconscious. At this point, they were led into the Inner Temple to be taught the magical secrets of the Tong and to receive their power of invulnerability against death at the hands of a foreigner. The imparting of invulnerability was followed by the blood oath of the Tong, in which each initiate drank a measure of blood.

Initially the violence of the Boxers was directed against small Christian missionary

outposts, especially in the Shantung province. The Empress Dowager, who became a regent after forcing her nephew from the throne, had encouraged the attacks. On her orders, Imperial officers were ordered to assist the Tong during the 55-day siege against the foreign legations. However, even before the various nations whose citizens were under attack sent relief forces to capture the city and squelch the rebellion, many Imperial soldiers had already deserted the Boxers and were starting to fight against them from the ranks of other Tongs.

The Triad reached the United States with the mass of Chinese workers who immigrated to the west coast during the gold rush fever of the 1840s. Bewildered in a strange land and mercilessly exploited by people who had hired them as common laborers, the Chinese immigrants welcomed the protection provided by the Triads that sprang up among their communities, hiding behind the fronts of innocent social clubs. Among the first of the Triads to establish itself in the United States was the so-called "Five Companies," named after the five districts of China. Once it had established itself, it began to exploit the same Chinese population it had previously protected.

The main nerve-center of the Triad was—and remains—Hong Kong. There are seven main branches, each with its own area of influence and working independently of the others. Although its influence on the course of Chinese politics has been considerable, the Triad has never been unduly concerned about which government happens to be in power.

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

blasphemy An irreverent utterance or action showing a disrespect for sacred things or for God.

chieftain The leader of a clan, tribe, or group.

conspiracy An evil, treacherous, or unlawful plan formulated in secret between two or more people to commit a subversive action or plot.

desecration When something sacred is treated in a profane or damaging manner.

fanatical Extreme enthusiasm, frenzy, or zeal about a particular belief, as in politics or religion.

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.

insurrectionist Someone who is in rebellion or revolt against an established authority, ruler, or government.

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.

magus A priest, wizard, or someone who is skilled or learned, especially in astrology, magic, sorcery, or the like.

metaphysical Relating to abstract thought or the philosophical study of the nature of existence and truth.

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.

shapeshift Someone or something that is able to change form or shape.

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.

transmutation The act of transforming or changing from one nature, form, or state into another.

Chapter 6

Magic and Sorcery

The earliest traces of magical practice 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 by supernatural means to placate the spirits of the animals they killed for food, to dispel the restless spirits of the humans they had slain in territorial disputes, and to bring peace to the spirits of their deceased tribal kin. Throughout the evolving centuries to the present day, humankind continues to seek magical means of improving its lot in life, providing order to the chaos of the physical world, and winning the favor of the inhabitants of the unseen world.

Chapter Exploration

Alchemy
Valentine Andreae
Roger Bacon • Helvetius
Hermes Trismegistus
Albertus Magnus • Paracelsus

Magick
Abremelin Magick
Black Magick
Enochian Magick
Vodun/Vodoun/Voodoo
White Magick

Magi
Agrippa
Count Allesandro Cagliostro
Aleister Crowley • John Dee
Dr. Faust • Marie Laveau
Eliphas Levi • Simon Magus
Pico della Mirandola • Pythagoras
Count Saint-Germain

Wicca

People of Wicca
Margot Adler
Philip Emmons (Isaac) Bonewits
Raymond Buckland
Gavin Frost and Yvonne Frost
Gerald Brosseau Gardner
Sybil Leek
Margaret Alice Murray
M. Macha NightMare
Starhawk
Doreen Valiente

Witchcraft
Familiars
The Inquisition—The Time of the Burning
Sabbats

Witchcraft Trials
England • France
Germany • Salem, Massachusetts
Scotland • Spain

Witchhunters
Jean Bodin • Henri Boguet
Matthew Hopkins • Pope Innocent III
Pierre de Lancre

INTRODUCTION

The practice of magic and sorcery began in Paleolithic times, at least 50,000 years ago, when early humans began to believe that there was supernatural power in a charm, a spell, or a ritual to work good or evil. As such beliefs progressed, certain tribal members were elevated in status to that of magician, sorcerer, priest, and priestess by their demonstrable abilities to influence the weather, to heal the sick, to communicate with the spirit worlds, and to interpret dreams. The four main principles behind early magic remained constant throughout the evolution of magical practices: 1.) A representation of a person or thing can be made to affect the person or thing it depicts. 2.) Once objects have been in touch with each other they continue to influence one another even at great distances. 3.) An unseen world of spirit forces may be invoked to fulfill the magician's will. 4.) As above, so it is below; as within, so it is without. There is nothing in heaven or in Earth that is not also in humankind.

Primitive animism, 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, and invoking evil spirits to cause destruction to competing villages, eventually gained a higher level of sophistication and evolved into more formal religious practices and the rudiments of early science. The word "magic" comes from the Greek "magein," denoting the science and religion of the priests of Zoroaster (or according to some scholars from "megas," signifying the "great" secret science, i.e. knowledge). So it is that by the time of the historic period, the great civilizations of Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia had fully developed magical systems with entire hierarchies of sorcerers, priests, seers, and **magi.** Greece and Rome supported both a state religion of gods and goddesses and a loosely structured priestcraft as well as a healthy respect for those magicians who could prove their worth as dependable soothsayers. In addition, the **mystery schools** in Greece and Rome were popular with aristocrat and commoner alike and kept alive the mystical impulse in both cultures. Many researchers have drawn comparisons between certain of the mystery school traditions and the great festivals, the **Sabbats** of the witches as they gathered in the forests of Europe.

When Constantine the Great (d. 337) legally sanctioned Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, he in effect granted the early Church Fathers a kind of dominion over their constituents that they had not previously enjoyed. As the influence of the Christian clergy grew in the empire, many of them expressed their opinions that magic and sorcery were not harmonious with the teachings of Christ. At the Ecumenical Council of Laodicea held in 364, a canon was issued that forbade Christian priests to practice magic, astrology, or mathematics. By 525, with the influence of Christianity growing ever stronger, the Council of Oxia prohibited the parishioners 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. The Council of Tours in 613 ordered all priests to teach their congregations that magical practices were ineffective methods by which to guarantee the health of humans and animals and were not to be employed as a means of bettering one's lot in life. With each subsequent church council issuing stronger canons and edicts against magic and sorcery, those who dared to continue practicing the occult arts were forced to go underground.

European magic remained a pastiche of older pagan practices and ancient rituals until the Crusades of the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. Warrior knights, nobles, and clerics returned from their encounters with the Muslim armies with a great appreciation of their science and their sophisticated levels of magic. Other crusaders remained after battles had been won or lost to explore the arts of the Eastern sorcerers and to learn for the first time of the alchemical works of the magi of old Persia and the scholars and magicians of the Byzantine Empire. Many Christian adventurers returned with the secrets of what they called "Constantinople magic" and began to experiment with the ancient teachings in hidden laboratories. By

the twelfth century, a school of medieval magic built on the magical systems of the Spanish Moors and the Jewish Kabbalah had begun to achieve popularity among the intellectuals of Europe, who found in alchemy a perfect expression of their quest for God and for gold. The true alchemist sought the transcendent powers of the material and immaterial dominions that could transmute base metals into gold and transform the baser human instincts into a purity of spirit.

Although the church had issued many canons forbidding the clergy to practice magic and commanding them to teach their parishioners that the teachings of Christ were all that was necessary to achieve peace on Earth and salvation in heaven, it had taken little real action against those learned men practicing magic or the common folk practicing witchcraft other than an occasional excommunication or expulsion from the congregation. Organized persecution of magicians or witches was practically unknown. In 906, Abbot Regino of Prum recognized that earlier canon laws had done little to eradicate the practices of magic and wizardry, so he issued his *Canon Episcopi* to condemn as heretical any belief in witchcraft or the power of sorcerers. If anyone believed in such alleged powers, Satan was deceiving them, declared Abbot Regino. In 1000, Deacon Burchard, who would later become archbishop of Worms, published *Corrrector*, which updated Regino's work and stressed that only God had the power to change one thing into another. Alchemists could not change base metals into gold, and witches could not shapeshift into animals.

Church punishment of those who persisted in practicing magic or witchcraft remained virtually nonexistent until exaggerated claims of the powers of the Cathar sect reached the ears of the papacy. According to startling reports, the Cathars were practicing foul sorceries, blasphemous heresies, and **black magick.** What was worse, they appeared to be prospering in their cities in southern France. In 1208, Pope Innocent III (1160 or 1161–1216) ordered a crusade launched against the Cathars, who were able to resist the armies sent against them until their central city of Montesegur fell in 1246. Hundreds of Cathars were burned at the stake as heretics, witches, and sorcerers, for by the time their besieged sect had fallen, the Holy Inquisition had been founded in 1233 to stamp out magic, sorcery, and witchcraft.

After it became quite apparent that the church and state had undergone a dramatic change in attitude toward the practice of magic, the alchemists/magicians and the magi became much more cautious in sharing the results of their experimentations. Because the practitioners of "higher magic," such as **Paracelsus, Agrippa, Roger Bacon, Albertus Magnus,** and others emphasized the mystical, the practical, and the appropriate religious imagery in their work, they did not suffer the severe persecutions directed toward the practitioners of so-called "lesser magic," the witches, the wizards, and the sorcerers who were condemned as black magicians. They were, however, kept under close scrutiny by the church and were subject to constant attacks by their more conventional peers in the medical and clerical professions. For any of them to have become too outspoken regarding their magical practices would have won them their own time of interrogation and torture at the hands of the Inquisition.

Paracelsus may well have expressed the credo of the alchemist of higher magic when he said that nature does not produce anything that is perfect in itself—it is humankind that must bring everything to perfection. It is the sincere alchemist-magician who fulfills nature. God, Paracelsus said, did not create objects made of iron. God created the metal that must be enjoined with fire in order to fashion useful items. Nothing has been created in its final state. Everything is first created in its primary state. It is the alchemist who must bring the fire of creativity to make art. Alchemy is the art that makes the impure into the pure. Higher magic can separate the useful from the useless and transmute it into its final substance and ultimate essence.

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ALCHEMY

The image of alchemists as defrocked wizards and full-time frauds is not quite accurate. Most of them were, in fact, highly spiritual men whose quest to transmute one substance into another was closer to mysticism than modern chemistry. The essence of alchemy lay in the belief that certain incantations and rituals could convince or command angelic beings to change base metals into precious ones.

According to ancient tradition, the mummy of **Hermes Trismegistus,** the master of alchemical philosophy, was found in an obscure chamber of the Great Pyramid of Giza, clutching an emerald tablet in its hands. The words contained on the tablet revealed the alchemical creed that "It is true and without falsehood and most real: that which is above is like that which is below, to perpetuate the miracles of one thing. And as all things have been derived from one, by the thought of one, so all things are born from this thing, by adoption." Within the secrets inscribed on the tablet was the "most powerful of all powers," the process by which the world was created and by which all "subtle things" might penetrate "every solid thing," and by which base material might be transformed into precious metals and gems.

ALCHEMY was introduced to the Western world in the second century C.E.

For centuries, the writings of Hermes Trismegistus were considered a precious legacy from the master of alchemy. The Hermetics believed that the nature of the cosmos was sacramental: "that which is above is like that which is below." In other words, the nature of the spiritual world could be discovered through the study of the material substance of Earth; and earthly humans, created of the dust of the ground, comprised the *prima materia* of the heavenly beings they would become, just as the base elements of Earth comprised the raw materials for gold. The alchemical adepts believed that the most perfect thing on the planet was gold and that it was linked with the sun. The sun was considered to be the lowest manifestation of the spiritual world and therefore provided the intermediary between God and humankind.

The science of alchemy was introduced to the Western world at the beginning of the second century of the common era. It was, however, 200 years before the practice of the craft reached its zenith, concurrent with the persecutions of the pagans by the Christians. Zosimus of Panapolis, self-appointed apologist of alchemy, cited a passage in Genesis as the origin of the arcane art: "The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair." To this scriptural reference, Zosimus added the tradition that in reward for their favors, the "sons of God," who were believed to be fallen angels, endowed these women with the knowledge of how to make jewels, colorful garments, and perfumes with which to enhance their earthly charms.

The seven principal angels whose favor the alchemist sought to obtain for their transformation were Michael, who was believed to transmute base metals into gold and to dissolve any enmity directed toward the alchemist; Gabriel, who fashioned silver and foresaw the future; Samuel, who protected against physical harm; and Raphael, Sachiel, Ansel, and Cassiel, who could create various gems and guard the alchemist from attack by demons. However, members of the clergy were skeptical that the alchemists were truly calling upon angels, rather than demons in disguise, and they recalled the words of the Church Father Tertullian (c. 155 or 160–after 220), who confirmed earlier beliefs that the "sons of God" referred to in Genesis were evil perverts who bequeathed their wisdom to mortals with the sole intention of seducing them to mundane pleasures.

While the Hermetic was akin to the mystic, a great deal more came out of those smoky lab-

oratories than candidates for the torture chambers of the Inquisition. In the intellectual half-light of the Middle Ages, the brotherhood of alchemy, perhaps by accident as much as design, did produce a number of valuable chemical discoveries. Albert le Grand produced potassium lye; Raymond Lully (1235–1315) prepared biocarbonate of potassium; **Paracelsus** (1493–1541) was the first to describe zinc and chemical compounds to medicine; Blaise Vigenere (1523–1596) discovered benzoic acid. Discoveries increased during the Renaissance when such men as Basil Valentine (c. 1450–1492) discovered sulphuric acid, and Johann Friedrich Boetticher (1682–1719) became the first European to produce porcelain. Evidence has been disinterred from the musty alchemists' libraries in Europe that suggests that certain of the medieval and Renaissance alchemists conducted experiments with photography, radio transmission, phonography, and aerial flight, as well as the endless quest to transmute base metals into gold.

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Valentine Andreae (1586–1654)

Valentine Andreae (or Andreas) was a Lutheran pastor who held as his ideal not only Martin Luther (1483–1546), the powerful guiding force behind the Protestant Reformation, but also Christian Rosencreutz (1378–1484), legendary founder of the **Rosicrucian** mystical movement, and Paracelsus (1493–1541), the revered alchemist. Andreae was a brilliant scholar who as a youth had traveled widely throughout Europe and had risen in the clerical ranks to become a chaplain at the Court of Wurtemberg, Germany. Embittered by the misery that had been brought to his fatherland as a result of the Thirty Years' War (1618–48), Andreae became an apologist for the Rosicrucians and wrote *The Hermetic Romance* or *The Chemical Wedding* (1616), an allegorical autobiography of Christian Rosencreutz the founder of the fraternity. Since the seal of the Rosicrucian Fraternity, the seal of Martin Luther, and the crest of the Andreae family all bear the image of the cross and the rose, understandable confusion has arisen from time to time regarding the "autobiography." Upon the book's initial publication, many scholars, aware that Rosencreutz had been dead for 130 years, speculated that his spirit had dictated the work. Later academic debates swirled around the question of whether or not Andreae and Rosencreutz were the same person and whether the Fraternity was actually founded in the seventeenth century, rather than the fifteenth.

Andreae admitted the work was his own and proclaimed it an allegorical novel written in tribute to Rosencreutz, as well as a symbolic depiction of the science of alchemy and Hermetic magic. Others identified the work as a comic romance, lightly depicting the most profound alchemical symbols in a fanciful manner. The royal wedding to which the hero Rosencreutz is invited is in reality the alchemical process itself in which the female and male principles are joined together. As the novel continues, the vast arcana of alchemical truths are represented by various animals, mythological beings, and human personalities.

In addition to being an advocate of alchemy and the process of contacting intermediary spirits to accomplish good for society, Andreae believed in becoming an active reformer of social ills, as well as supporting the reformation of the church. His treatises *The Tower of Babel* (1619) and *The Christianopolitan Republic* (1620) argue in favor of a general transformation of European society.

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ROGER BACON (C. 1220–1292)

Roger Bacon, an English Franciscan friar, scientist, and philosopher, accepted what he termed the "natural magic" that occurred within mathematical and physical areas of experimentation, but he was resolutely against the use of incantations, the invocation of spirits, and the casting of spells. In his opinion, magicians were charlatans, reciting magical formulas even though they knew the effects they created were but the products of natural phenomena.

Bacon recognized that there were mysterious forces that appeared to be magical, such as those that moved the stars and the planets; but he argued that all knowledge that existed on Earth depended upon the power of mathematics. The friar also admitted the difficulties in discerning between the natural magic of science and the black arts. He was convinced, though, that natural magic was good and black magic was evil.

This thirteenth-century alchemist seemed to have powers of prediction when he told his contemporaries that physics, not magic, would produce huge vessels that would be able to navigate the oceans and rivers without sails or oars, cars without horses that would be able to move at tremendous speed, flying machines that would soar across the skies guided by a single man seated at centrally located controls, submarine machines that could dive to the bottom of the sea without danger to its crew, and great bridges without pillars that could span rivers. Bacon has been credited with dozens of inventions, such as the telescope, eye glasses, gunpowder—all derived through his science, rather than his magic.

In his medical practice, Bacon worked with certain alchemical formulas prized by specially gifted scientists since ancient times that could create a mysterious liquid known to prolong human life. He also employed the alchemical and homeopathic principles that "like produces like," that is, if one wishes to prolong one's life, he or she should eat the flesh of creatures that are long-lived, such as various reptiles.

Steadfastly arguing that all human knowledge depends upon a study of mathematics, Bacon insisted that the noblest expression of mathematics is **astrology.** At each person's birth the heavenly energies determine powerful physical, mental, and emotional factors that strongly affect that individual's destiny. The stars do not decide one's fate, Bacon conceded, for humans did have free will as a divine gift, but the celestial movements did most certainly dispose one toward one's fate. Therefore, he concluded, astrology should be utilized as a powerful tool in medicine, alchemy, and predicting the future of individuals and nations.

Friar Bacon was well aware that the church did not share his enthusiasm for astrology, but he argued that the Bible itself is the basic source of astrological knowledge and that a careful study of astrology would ultimately prove the claims of theology. Fellow clerics who opposed such a study, Bacon said, were merely ignorant.

In spite of such statements that seemed tinged with heresy, Bacon's religious views

were essentially orthodox, and he sincerely believed that his studies would only serve to advance the power and the prestige of the church. He also drew upon scripture when he acknowledged the enormous power of the spoken word ("In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1). Bacon stated that all miracles at the beginning of the world were the result of God's word. Therefore, when humans spoke with concentration and the proper intention and desire, their very words could accomplish powerful effects upon the self, upon others, and upon material things.

In his great determination to produce a work that would unify all learning, wisdom, and faith, Friar Bacon wrote *Opus Majus* (1268). Despite the fact that Bacon continued to attack superstition and reject the black arts, he remains widely known as a magician, rather than an early experimental scientist.

Delving Deeper

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Helvetius (1625–709)

While not a great deal is known about the life of John Fredrick Schweitzer, called Helvetius, his place in the history of alchemy is secure because, according to tradition, he witnessed a genuine transmutation of base metal into gold and later replicated the process in the presence of doubtful observers.

On December 27, 1666, when he was working in his study at the Hague, a stranger appeared and informed him that he would remove all Helvetius's doubts about the existence of the **philosopher's stone** that could serve as the catalyst to change base metals into gold because he possessed such magic. The stranger immediately drew from his pocket a small ivory box, containing three pieces of metal of the color of brimstone and, for their size, extremely heavy. With those three bits of metal, the man told Helvetius, he could make as much as 20 tons of gold.

Helvetius examined the pieces of metal, taking the opportunity of a moment's distraction to scrape off a small portion with his thumbnail. Returning the metal to his mysterious visitor, he asked that he perform the process of transmutation before him.

The stranger answered firmly that he was not allowed to do so. It was enough that he had verified the existence of the metal to Helvetius. It was his purpose only to offer encouragement to alchemical experiments.

After the man's departure, Helvetius procured a crucible and a portion of lead into which, when the metal was in a molten state, he threw the stolen grain he had secretly scraped from the stranger's philosopher's stone. The alchemist was disappointed when the grain evaporated and left the lead in its original state. Thinking that he had been made the fool by some mad burgher's whimsey, Helvetius returned to his own experiments, forgetting about the dream of a magical philosopher's stone.

Some weeks later, when he had almost forgotten the incident, Helvetius received another visit from the stranger. He impatiently told the man to perform a transmutation before his eyes or to leave.

This time the stranger surprised him by agreeing to prove that what he and his brother alchemists most desired truly did exist. He admonished Helvetius that one grain was sufficient for the process to be accomplished, but it was necessary to wrap it in a ball of wax before throwing it on the molten metal, otherwise its extreme volatility would cause it to vaporize. To the alchemist's astonishment and his great delight, the stranger transmuted several ounces of lead into gold. Then he permitted Helvetius to repeat the process by himself, allowing the alchemist to convert six ounces of lead into pure gold.

Helvetius found it impossible to keep a secret of such immense value and importance. Soon the word of his remarkably successful experiments spread throughout Holland, and Helvetius demonstrated the power of the philosopher's stone in the presence of the Duke of Orange and many other prestigious witnesses. The duke's own goldsmith assayed the gold and declared it to be of highest quality. The famous philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) visited Helvetius in his laboratory and examined the crucible and gold for himself. He left the alchemist convinced that the transmutation had been authentic.

Soon, after repeated demands for such incredible demonstrations, Helvetius had exhausted the small supply of catalytic pieces that he had received from the mysterious stranger. Search as he might, Helvetius could not find the man in all of North Holland nor learn his name, and the stranger never again visited him.

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HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

In alchemical/magical tradition, powerful secrets of alchemy were found inscribed on an emerald tablet in the hands of the mummy of Hermes Trismegistus, the master magician and alchemist, who had been entombed in an obscure chamber of the Great Pyramid of Giza. The preamble to the key to transmuting base materials to precious metals and gems instructed the adept that "It is true, without falsehood, and most real: that which is above is like that which is below, to perpetrate the miracles of one thing." The writings of Hermes Trismegistus were considered by the alchemists as a legacy from the master of alchemy and were, therefore, precious to them.

As much as the thought of such a find may fire the imagination, the discovery of the Emerald Tablet at Giza is quite likely an allegory. The alchemists, who were concerned with the spiritual perfection of humankind as well as the transmutation of base metals into gold, commonly recorded their formulas and esoteric truths in allegorical form. Today it is known that there was no single personage named Hermes Trismegistus and that the Leyden Papyrus discovered in the tomb of the anonymous magician contains the oldest known copy of the inscription from the legendary Emerald Tablet, which is itself a description of the seven stages of gold-making.

Hermes, who is called Trismegistus, "three times the greatest," was a deity of a group of Greeks who once founded a colony in Egypt. This transplanted god drew his name from Hermes (Mercury to the Romans), the messenger of the Greek hierarchy of deities and the god who conducted the souls of the dead to the underworld kingdom of Hades. The Egyptians identified Hermes Trismegistus with Thoth, who, in their pantheon of gods, was the divine inventor of writing and the spoken word. These same Greek colonists developed an interest in the old Egyptian religion, then went on to combine elements of their hellenistic beliefs, add fragments of Judaism and other Eastern belief constructs, and set about creating a synthesis of the various theologies. A vast number of unknown authors worked at the great task of composing a series of esoteric writings, all of which were attributed to the mythical figure of Thoth-Hermes. Eventually, Thoth-Hermes became humanized into a legendary king, who supposedly wrote the amazing total of 36,525 volumes of metaphysical teachings. In the third century, Clement of Alexandria reduced the total to 42, which he said he saw in a vision being carried by adepts.

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Albertus Magnus. (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

ALBERTUS MAGNUS (C. 1193–1280?)

Albertus Magnus, Bishop of Ratisbon, became interested in alchemy and is credited with some extraordinary accomplishments, including the invention of the pistol and the cannon. Albertus is said to be one of those magi who actually achieved the transmutation of base metals into gold by means of the **philosopher's stone.** In addition, some said that he was able to exert control over atmospheric conditions, once even transforming a cold winter day into a pleasant summer afternoon so he and his guests could dine comfortably outside. A prolific writer, Albertus produced 21 volumes containing directions for the neophyte-practicing alchemist. Certain witnesses to his laboratory credited him with the creation of an automaton that performed menial tasks and was capable of intelligent speech. The term "Magnus" (great) usually ascribed to him was not awarded to him as a result of his many accomplishments, but is simply the Latin equivalent of his family name, de Groot.

Born at Larvingen on the Danube in circa 1193, Albertus was thought as a child to be quite stupid, capable, it seemed, of understanding only basic religious ideals, rather than any kind of complex study. Then one night the boy claimed to have received a visitation from the Blessed Virgin, and his intelligence quotient soared thereafter. Feeling obliged to devote his life to the clergy when he completed his studies, Albertus did so well in the clerical profession that he was made Bishop of Ratisbon. He held the position only a brief time before he resigned and announced that he would devote his intellect and his energy to science.

Albertus's scientific discoveries and his studies in alchemy and magic were always conducted with complete loyalty to the church. In his estimation, magic should be used only for good, and from the modern perspective, Albertus was not so much an alchemist as he was one of the most brilliant of the early experimental chemists. It remains a matter of conjecture whether or not Albertus really did accomplish the ultimate alchemical feat of transmuting base metals into gold, but tradition has it that he bequeathed his philosopher's stone to his distinguished pupil, St. Thomas Aquinas (1224–1274). Once it was in his possession, according to the old legend, Aquinas destroyed the stone, fearful that the accusations of communing with Satan that had been levied at his mentor might be true.

Ever since he left the clergy, Albertus had lived in pleasant seclusion in his estate near Cologne. As he grew older, it is said that the dullness of mind that had characterized his youth returned, and Albertus Magnus died in relative obscurity.

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PARACELSUS (1493–1541)

The German physician Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim traveled throughout Europe, practicing medicine, occultism, and

Paracelsus (1493–1541). (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

alchemy under the name of Paracelsus. As with so many of the true alchemists, Paracelsus believed that it was far more important to contemplate nature and the majesty of God's handiworks than to spend all one's time studying the knowledge that could be found in books. If one could acquire the kind of purity of belief, such as Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) affirmed existed in the heart of a child, one could literally transform base substances into precious metals and gems, for the primary ingredient necessary for alchemical success lay in obtaining the *prima materia*, the essence of all substances, the primeval building blocks of the universe. In the view of Paracelsus, this essential substance was both visible and invisible, and it was the soul of the world from which all elements had sprung, and its power was accessible to all who had the purity of heart and the faith to attain it. For Paracelsus, as for many of his alchemical brotherhood, the gospels of Jesus and the writings of **Hermes Trismegistus** had much in common.

Paracelsus also excited the medical community and lay people alike with his wonder medicine, the alkahest. There was the spirit alkahest that fortified the body against diseases, and there was the metal alkahest that matured and perfected base metals into gold. As a result of a series of chemical experiments, Paracelsus became the first to describe zinc, which had been unknown to science, and he introduced many practical curative compounds to the medical practitioners of his day. At the same time that he delivered these medicines into the hands of the doctors, he admonished them to remember always that the first doctor of humankind was God, the divine creator of all health.

Paracelsus believed firmly that the fully realized human was the one who lived a healthful life. In addition, those who sought divine harmony should study astrology in order to learn the harmony of the spheres, should become a theologian in order to comprehend the needs of the soul, and should practice alchemy in order to understand that there are universal substances to be found everywhere in the material world. Those many accomplishments should then be capped with the fully realized human becoming a mystic to perceive always that there exist things beyond logic.

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MAGICK

For thousands of generations, from the earliest days of the cave dweller to Star Wars technology, a belief in magick has served the human race. And its practitioners maintain that it will be as powerful and as meaningful in the New Age. Magick, spelled with a "k," is the use of rituals, chants, ceremonies, and affirmations designed to give the individual control of the supernatural forces that manipulate the universe. Magic spelled minus the "k" denotes trickery, sleight-of-hand, misdirection, the rabbit-out-of-the-hat stage magician.

According to those who practice magick, the supernatural forces could not care less by what names they are called. It does not matter to them if the magician or sorcerer ascribes to them the catch phrases of contemporary science or evokes the ancient names of the old gods and goddesses. What is important to these forces is that the magician acknowledges that they do exist…that they are there to be called upon and to act as powerful servants for those who have learned to control them.

Those who seriously practice the ancient rites and rituals of magick truly believe that they can master the ability to control unseen forces that can be made to produce whatever it is that they seek in life—peace, happiness, the secret of love, the pursuit of wealth—all these things can come easily to those who understand the power of true magick.

The practitioners devoted to the various belief systems have few problems weaving their particular school of magick into the fabric of contemporary living, no matter how complex a schedule they might have. Moments can be culled from the day's work and assembled before bedtime for ritual work. For the more complex ceremonies a greater amount of time is needed, but for certain elementary rituals they claim that 15 minutes to a half hour are all that is required. Absolute quiet is preferable, but the magician can acquire the ability to blot out extraneous sounds and perform the necessary rituals regardless of environmental distractions. The serious magicians keep a record of what works, what does not work, and what factors they think contributed to the success of a particular ritual.

It may be that true magick lies in the unlimited reach of the psyche: mind contacting mind through other than sensory means; mind influencing matter and other minds; mind elevating itself to a level of consciousness where past, present, and future become an Eternal Now. Although humans may clothe these experiences according to the cultural context in which they are most functional, these evidences of the non-physical capabilities of human beings are universal.

Prestidigitation, the-hand-is-quicker-than-the-eye kind of magic, may have been born when certain clever individuals began to use their brains in an attempt to mimic the transcendental qualities of their mind. Perhaps long ago, a canny young man, jealous of a master shaman's ability to move an object through **psychokinesis,** mind influencing matter, cleverly duplicated the feat by attaching one end of a long black hair to a pebble and the other to a finger. The shaman might have spent years acquiring the discipline necessary to a semi-controlled functioning of his psychic ability, but the crafty young magician with his trickery could guarantee results on every attempt.

Magick spelled with a "k" refers to rituals, chants, and ceremonies. Magick spelled minus the "k" alludes to trickery, sleight-of-hand, and misdirection

Throughout all of history, there have been sorcerers, **magi,** and magicians. Perhaps some were truly able to produce the genuine manifestation of some extraordinary psychic ability, but it is likely that the far greater numbers of wizards and miracle workers had only mastered an imitative exploitation based on the essence of the idea of supernatural powers.

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Abramelin Magick

The essence of Abramelin magick can be found in *The Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*, which was translated by MacGregor Mathers from a manuscript written in French

MERLIN: REAL OR FICTION?

Merlin, the **magus** who served as a tutor to young Arthur Pendragon before he became king, has become almost universally known as the mentor to all those youth seeking wisdom, spiritual values, and material prosperity. Although scholars tell those fascinated by the legend of Camelot that Merlin, Arthur, Guinevere, and Lancelot, are fictional creations, there are still those who seek out their graves.

Some scholars point to a sixth-century writer and seer named Myrrdin, who went mad and took refuge in the Forest of Celydon when his king Gwenddolau was defeated at the Battle of Arderydd in 573. Merlin first appears in the *History of the Kings of Britain,* (1135) a classic work by Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1100–1154).

Merlin became the prophet associated with the quest for the **Holy Grail.**Other accounts detail how Merlin became trapped in a hawthorn tree, where he dwells forever. Some scholars think, this version restores the story of Myrddin, trapped by his madness in the forest.

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in the eighteenth century. The work purports to be much older, however. It was dated 1458 and claims to be translated originally from Hebrew. The text reveals to the adept that the universe is teeming with hordes of angels and demons that interact with human beings on many levels. All the vast array of phenomena on Earth are produced by the demonic entities, who are under the control of the angels. Humans are somewhere midway between the angelic and the demonic intelligences on the spiritual scale, and each human entity has both a guardian angel and a malevolent demon that hover near him or her from birth until death.

Abramelin magick provides instruction to the initiates of the "Magic of Light" that will enable them to achieve mastery over the demons and place them under their control. Abramelin the great magus learned how to accomplish such a difficult task by undergoing a process of spiritual cleansing and the development of a powerful will. In addition to spiritual and mental exercises, Abramelin discovered words of power that can be arranged in magic squares and written on parchment. With the proper application of these magical squares, the magus can command the demons and order them to assist him in the acquisition of earthly knowledge and power. By applying such magic words as "abracadabra," Abramelin magicians claim they can gain the love of anyone they desire, discover hidden treasures, become invisible, invoke spirits to appear, fly through the air and travel great distances in a matter of minutes, and animate corpses to create zombies to serve them. Abramelin magicians believe they can heal illnesses or cause diseases, bring about peace or war, create prosperity or poverty. They claim to shapeshift into different animal or human forms.

The difficulty that most practitioners of Abramelin magick encounter is that there are few words in any language that are able to fulfill the requirements of such productive squares. The basic concept of the Abramelin school of magick as determined by MacGregor Mathers in his translation of the French manuscript dictates that the letters in the squares must form the word that represents the desired object and must read the same in all directions. Mathers achieved little success in translating the words provided by Abramelin or in forming others that were little more than collections of meaningless letters.

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Black Magick

Black magick is the use of supernatural knowledge and powers for the purpose of doing evil or for working evil upon another human being. Practitioners of black magick deliberately seek to invoke demonic entities in order to control their powers and to force them to obey their will. Black magick is, therefore, a perversion of the mystical sciences. Rather than attempting to be of service to one's fellow humans as do the practitioners of **white magick,** the black magicians seek to gain control over supernatural forces for the sole purpose of personal aggrandizement, the glorification of their baser appetites, and the sowing of discord, discontent, and disease.

The desire to use supernatural entities to wreak havoc upon one's enemy or to acquire material wealth and power was in play during the time of the ancient Egyptians and Persians. The Greeks and Hebrews adapted many of the rituals and incantations, transforming the gods of the earlier cultures into the demons of their own time. This process of deity transmutation was continued into medieval times when the earlier gods of the Middle East became devils, the ancient mysteries and fertility rites became orgies, and the orders of worship for the old hierarchy of gods and goddesses became patterns for sorcery. By the Middle Ages, belief in black magick and the powers of evil became so intense that the world had become a dark and shadowy place of dread ruled by Satan.

Baphomet: The Sabbatic Goat from the 1896 edition of *Transcendental Magic.* (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

The sorcerers of the Middle Ages who practiced black magick followed to the letter the instructions recorded in the **Great Grimoires,** books filled with rites, rituals, incantations, conjurations, and evocations of demonic entities. The deity most often invoked by the dark sorcerer of medieval times to the present day is Satanas, a direct descendant of the

Egyptian Set and an alias for the Persians' Ahriman, the Muslims' Iblis, the Hebrews' Asmodeus and Beelzebub, and Pan, the goat-footed nature god of the Greeks, who became the image of Satan in the common mind. In addition to Satan, the master creator of evil, there were many other ancient gods who had been transformed into demons and personified as vices who could be ordered to do the bidding of the black magicians of the Middle Ages: Moloch, who devours children; Belial, who forments rebellion; Astarte and Astaroth, who seduce men and women into debauchery; Baphomet, who plots murders, and so on.

BLACK *magick is the use of supernatural knowledge and powers for doing evil.*

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ENOCHIAN MAGICK

The apocryphal book of Enoch told of the order of angels called "Watchers," or "The Sleepless Ones." The leader of the Watchers was called Semjaza (in other places, Azazel, the name of one of the Hebrews' principal demons), who led 200 Watchers down to Earth to take wives from among the daughters of men. It was from such a union that the Nephilim, the giants, the heroes of old, as well as the ancient practitioners of sorcery, were born. The fallen angels taught their wives to cast various spells and to practice the arts of enchantment. They imparted to the women the lore of plants and the properties of certain roots. Semjaza did not neglect human men, teaching them how to manufacture weapons and tools of destruction.

In Enochian magick, the practitioner employed words of power that allegedly had been passed down in an oral tradition from the times of Enoch. The actual evocation began with the chanting of the appropriate words, which varied from spirit to spirit. These words of power were said, by their very sounds, to exert a strong emotional effect. A famous example is: *Eca zodocare iad goho Torzodu odo kilale qaa! Zodacare od sodameranul Zodorje lape zodiredo ol noco mada dae iadapiel!* These words are supposedly from the Enochian language, believed by magicians and other occultists to pre-date Sanskrit. They were addressed to the angelic beings that the magi believed would assist them in their magick and they translate as follows: "Move, therefore, and show yourselves! Open the mysteries of your creation! Be friendly unto me, for I am servant of the same, your God, and I am a true worshipper of the Highest."

In all chanting, recitations, and litanies, the impact of a group is far more impressive than that of a single voice, and the Enochian practitioners always thought a group must be composed of individual seekers of like dedication. When properly performed, such rituals have a powerful impact on the emotions. This is heightened by a measured walking around the inside of a magic circle, and dancing.

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VODUN/VODOUN/VOODOO

Vodun, voudoun, or, more popularly, voodoo, means "spirit" in the language of the West African Yoruba people. Vodun as a religion is a mixture of African beliefs and rites that may go back as many as 6,000 years with the teachings, saints, and rituals of Roman Catholicism. Early slaves, who were snatched from their homes and families on Africa's West Coast, brought their gods and religious practices with them to Haiti and other West

The Practice of Brujeria

Among certain Hispanic and Native American cultures of the Southwest, the practice of Burjeria is feared as a manifestation of evil. Those who use rituals, spells, incantations, potions, and powders to work ill against others are known as brujas (witches), who are primarily female in number (the male witch is known as a brujo). All the negative facets of witchcraft feared by people throughout the world are practiced by the brujas: manifesting the evil eye, casting spells to cause physical or mental illness, bringing about bad luck, even death. The brujas create dolls in which they insert bits of the victim's hair, fingernail clippings, or pieces of clothing and focus their evil intent upon the miniature representative of the person to be cursed. If an Anglo doctor with modern medical techniques cannot cure someone who has fallen suddenly ill, a bruja is suspected as being the cause of the problem.

Brujas are also thought to be accomplished shapeshifters, possessing the supernatural ability to transform themselves into owls, coyotes, or cats. In the form of an animal, they may spy upon potential victims and may even administer a potion into their unsuspecting quarry's food or water or hide a bad-luck charm on his or her premises. There are certain amulets or rituals that offer some protection from the brujas, but the only sure way to rid oneself of their evil deeds is to employ the services of a **curandero.** Sometimes the curandero is able to contact the bruja through supernatural means and demand that the curse or spell be removed. In more severe cases, the curandero may have to direct a spell toward the bruja and defeat her on the spiritual level in order to force her to remove the evil directed toward the victim.

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Voodoo religious articles. (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

Indian islands. Plantation owners, who purchased the slaves for rigorous labor, were compelled by order of the lieutenant-general to baptize their slaves in the Catholic religion. The slave suffered no conflict of theology. They accepted the white man's "water" and quickly adopted Catholic saints into their family of nature gods and goddesses.

VOODOO *refers to "spirit."*

The connotations of evil and fear that are associated with vodun originated primarily from the white plantation owners' obsession with the threat of slave revolts, for they and their overseers were outnumbered 16 to 1 by the field hands whom they worked unmercifully in the broiling Haitian sun. As the black population increased and the white demand for slave labor remained unceasing, vodun began to take on an anti-white liturgy. Several "messiahs" emerged among the slaves, who were subsequently put to death by the whites in the "big houses." A number of laws began to be passed forbidding any plantation owner to allow "night dances" among his Negroes.

In 1791, a slave revolt took place under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743–1803) which was to lead to Haiti's independence from France in 1804. Although L'Ouverture died in a Napoleonic prison, his generals had become sufficiently inspired by his example to continue the struggle for freedom until the myth of white supremacy was banished from the island.

After the Concordat of 1860, when relations were once again reestablished with France, the priests who came to Haiti found the vestiges of Catholicism kept alive in vodun. The clergy fulminated against vodun from the pulpits but did not actively campaign against their rival priesthood until 1896 when an impatient monseigneur tried to organize an anti-vodun league without success. It wasn't until 1940 that the

Catholic Church launched a violent campaign of renunciation directed at the adherents of vodun. The priests went about their methodic attack with such zeal that the government was forced to intercede and command them to temper the fires of their campaign.

Today there are more than 60 million people who practice vodun worldwide, largely where Haitian emigrants have settled in Benin, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Togo, various cities in the United States, and, of course, in Haiti. In South America, there are many religions similar to vodun, such as Umbanda, Quimbanda, or Candomble. A male priest of vodun is called a houngan or hungan; his female counterpart, a mambo. The place where one practices vodun is a series of buildings called a humfort or hounfou. A "congregation" is called a hunsi or hounsis, and the hungan cures, divines, and cares for them through the good graces of a loa, his guiding spirit.

The worship of the supernatural loa is the central purpose of vodun. They are the old gods of Africa, the local spirits of Haiti, who occupy a position to the fore of God, Christ, the Virgin, and the saints. From the beginning, the Haitians adamantly refused to accept the church's position that the loa are the "fallen angels" who rebelled against God. The loa do good and guide and protect humankind, the hungans argue. They, like the saints of Roman Catholicism, were once men and women who lived exemplary lives and who now are given a specific responsibility to assist human spirituality. Certainly there are those priests, the bokors, who perform acts of evil sorcery, the left-hand path of vodun, but rarely will a hungan resort to such practices.

The loa communicates with its faithful ones by possessing their bodies during a trance or by appearing to them in dreams. The possession usually takes place during ritual dancing in the humfort. Each participant eventually undergoes a personality change and adapts a trait of his or her particular loa. The adherents of vodun refer to this phenomenon of the invasion of the body by a supernatural agency as that of the loa mounting its "horse."

There is a great difference, the hungan maintains, between possession by a loa and possession by an evil spirit. An evil spirit would bring chaos to the dancing and perhaps great harm to the one possessed. The traditional dances of vodun are conducted on a serious plane with rhythm and suppleness but not with the orgiastic sensuality depicted in motion pictures about voodoo or in the displays performed for the tourist trade.

All vodun ceremonies must be climaxed with sacrifice to the loa. Chickens are most commonly offered to the loa, although the wealthy may offer a goat or a bull. The possessed usually drinks of the blood that is collected in a vessel, thereby satisfying the hunger of the loa. Other dancers may also partake of the blood, sometimes adding spices to the vital fluid. After the ceremony, the sacrificed animal is usually cooked and eaten.

A Voudoun *"congregation" is called a hunsi or hounsis.*

The traditional belief structure of the Yoruba envisioned a chief god named Olorun, who remains aloof and unknowable to humankind, but who permitted a lesser deity, Obatala, to create the earth and all its life forms. There are hundreds of minor spirits whose influence may be invoked by humankind, such as Ayza, the protector; Baron Samedi, guardian of the grave; Dambala, the serpent; Ezli, the female spirit of love; Ogou Balanjo, spirit of healing; and Mawu Lisa, spirit of creation. Each follower of vodun has his or her own "met tet," a guardian spirit that corresponds to a Catholic's special saint.

Vodun has a supernatural entity that is unique among the practitioners of sorcery—the zombi, those dread creatures of the undead who prowl about at night doing the bidding of those magicians who follow the left-hand path. Vodun lore actually has two types of zombi: the undead and those who died by violence. A Haitian is most cautious in his or her approach to a cemetery for it is there that one is most likely to meet one of the unfortunate wraiths who died without time for proper ritual. For the

Haitian peasant, zombies, the living dead, are to be feared as real instruments of hungan who have succumbed to the influence of evil and become sorcerers. The people of the villages believe that the sorcerer unearths a corpse and wafts under its nose a bottle containing its soul. Then, as if he were fanning a tiny spark of life in dry tinder, the sorcerer nurtures the spark of life in the corpse until he has fashioned a zombi. The deceased are often buried face downward by considerate relatives so the corpse cannot hear the call of the sorcerer. Some villagers take the precaution of providing their departed with a weapon, such as a machete, with which to ward off the evil hungan.

Haiti is filled with terrible tales of the zombi. There are eyewitness accounts from those who have allegedly discovered friends or relatives, supposedly long-dead, laboring in the field of some native sorcerer. Upon investigation, such zombi usually turn out to be mentally defective individuals who bear a strong resemblance to the deceased. Unfortunately, some unscrupulous hungan have been known to take advantage of mentally handicapped individuals and turn them into virtual beasts of burden. Then, too, it is quite likely that certain hungan have discovered the secret and utilization of many powerful jungle drugs. Modern science owes a heavy debt to native sorcery for some of its most effective painkillers and tranquilizers. It seems possible that a hungan who follows the left-hand path, seeking his own vengeance or that of another, could mix a powerful drug into the victim's food and induce a deep state of hypnotic lethargy in the person, transforming him or her into a blank-eyed, shuffling, obedient zombi.

There is also the matter of the voodoo doll and voodoo curses. Anthropologist Walter Cannon spent several years collecting examples of "voodoo death," instances in which men and women died as a result of being the recipient of a curse, an alleged supernatural visitation, or the breaking of some tribal or cultural taboo. The question that Cannon sought to answer was, "How can an ominous and persistent state of fear end the life of a human?"

Fear, one of the most powerful and deep-rooted of the emotions, has its effects mediated through the nervous system and the endocrine apparatus, the "sympathetic-adrenal system." Cannon has hypothesized that, "if these powerful emotions prevail and the bodily forces are fully mobilized for action, and if this state of extreme perturbation continues for an uncontrolled possession of the organism for a considerable period . . . dire results may ensue." Cannon has suggested, then, that "vodun death" may result from a state of shock due to a persistent and continuous outpouring of adrenalin and a depletion of the adrenal corticosteroid hormones. Such a constant agitation caused by an abiding sense of fear could consequently induce a fatal reduction in blood pressure. Cannon assessed voodoo death as a real phenomenon set in motion by "shocking emotional stress to obvious or repressed terror." Dr. J. C. Barker, in his collection of case histories of individuals who had willed others, or themselves, to death (*Scared to Death* [1969]), saw voodoolike death as resulting, "purely from extreme fear and exhaustion…essentially a psychosomatic phenomenon."

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WHITE MAGICK

In the earliest of societies, the practitioner of white magick was the **shaman,** the medicine man, the herbalist—the individual sought out by the village when it was necessary to receive a proper potion to dissolve an illness or a proper charm to drive away an evil spirit. In these same early societies, the roles of priest and magician were often combined into a man or a woman who had the ability to enter a **trance state** and commune with the entities that dwelt in nature and the spirits who lived

in the unseen world. The priest/magican knew how to appease angry entities whose sacred spaces were violated, how to eject an unwelcome possessing spirit from a human body, and where to find the herbs that could banish illness. All of these tasks were accomplished with the good of the tribal members as the priest/magician's primary objective.

By the Middle Ages in Europe, magic and religion remained intertwined for those who would practice white magick. Although **black magick** certainly existed as a power and claimed those dark magicians who succumbed to personal greed and were paid to use their craft against others, the practitioners of the higher magic attracted such gifted minds as that of **Eliphas Levi, Agrippa,** and **Paracelsus,** all of whom considered magic as the true road to communion with God and believed that the fruits of such communion should be expressed in service to their fellow humans. Levi believed that the white magicians who devoted themselves to faith and reason, science and belief would be able to endow themselves with a sovereign power that would make them masters over all spirits and the forces of the material world. Paracelsus proclaimed that the white magician did not need to draw magic circles, chant spells, or practice rituals. In his belief construct nothing was impossible to the human spirit that linked itself with God. All magic was possible to the human mind expressing itself through faith and imagination.

White magicians continue to practice their traditions on a high level of mystical ideals and devote themselves to transcendental magic, rather than the occult. While the darker applications of magic and sorcery receive the greater share of popular attention, those adepts of all traditions who practice white magick continue to do so quietly and secretly, serving humankind by working in the light, rather than the darkness.

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Magi

Everyone who knows the traditional story of Christmas has heard of the three magi who followed the star in the East and who traveled afar to worship at the manger wherein lay the baby Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.). These magi were not kings, but "wise ones," astrologers and priests of ancient Persia, philosophers of Zoroastrian wisdom, and their title has provided the root for the words "magic," "magician," and so forth. Such men were the councilors of the Eastern empires, the possessors of occult secrets that guided royalty.

During the Middle Ages, magi were men who accumulated occult wisdom and knowledge from the Kabbalah.

In Europe during the Middle Ages, those who bore the title of magi were more likely to be men who had devoted their lives to the accumulation of occult wisdom and knowledge from the Kabbalah, the ancient Egyptians, the Arabs, and various pagan sources, and had thereby come under the scrutiny of the church and suspected of communicating with demons. Although these individuals valiantly clung to precious fragments of ancient lore and insisted that they were practitioners of good magic, the clergy saw few distinctions between the magi and the witches that the Inquisition sought to bring to trial for demonolatry and devil worship. It was not until the advent of the Renaissance that the magi and their forbidden knowledge began to gain a certain acceptance among the courts of Europe and the better educated members of the general populace.

Perhaps one of the greatest difficulties that the magi had with the orthodox clergy was their contention that angelic beings could be

summoned to assist in the practice of white magick. There were seven major planetary spirits, or archangels, that the magi were interested in contacting: Raphael, Gabriel, Canael, Michael, Zadikel, Haniel, and Zaphkiel. One of the original sources of such instruction allegedly came from the great Egyptian magi and master of the occult, Hermes-Thoth, who described the revelation he had been given when he received a shimmering vision of a perfectly formed, colossal man of great beauty. Gently the being spoke to Hermes and identified itself as Pymander, the thought of the All-Powerful, who had come to give him strength because of his love of justice and his desire to seek the truth.

Pymander told Hermes that he might make a wish and it would be granted to him. Hermes-Thoth asked for a ray of the entity's divine knowledge. Pymander granted the wish, and Hermes was immediately inundated with wondrous visions, all beyond human comprehension and imagination. After the imagery had ceased, the blackness surrounding Hermes grew terrifying. A harsh and discordant voice boomed through the ether, creating a chaotic tempest of roaring winds and thunderous explosions. The mighty and terrible voice left Hermes filled with awe. Then from the All-Powerful came seven spirits who moved in seven circles; and in the circles were all the beings that composed the universe. The action of the seven spirits in their circles is called fate, and these circles themselves are enclosed in the divine Thought that permeates them eternally.

Hermes was given to comprehend that God had committed to the seven spirits the governing of the elements and the creation of their combined products. But because God created humans in his own image, and, pleased with this image, had given them power over terrestrial nature, God would grant the ability to command the seven spirits to those humans who could learn to know themselves, for they were and could come to conquer the duality of their earthly nature. They would truly become magi who learned to triumph over sensual temptations and to increase their mental faculties. God would give such adepts a measure of light in proportion to their merits, and they would be allowed to penetrate the most profound mysteries of nature. Assisting these magi in their work on Earth would be the seven superior spirits of the Egyptian system, acting as intermediaries between God and humans. These seven spirits were the same beings that the Brahmans of ancient India called the seven Devas, that in Persia were called the seven Amaschapands, that in Chaldea were called the seven Great Angels, that in Jewish Kabbalism are called the seven Archangels.

Later, various magi sought to reconcile the Christian hierarchy of celestial spirits with the traditions of Hermes by classifying the angels into three hierarchies, each subdivided into three orders:

- *The First Hierarchy:* Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones
- *The Second Hierarchy:* Dominions, Powers, and Authorities [Virtues]
- *The Third Hierarchy:* Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.

These spirits are considered more perfect in essence than humans, and they are thought to be on Earth to help. They work out the pattern of ordeals that each human being must pass through, and they give an account of human actions to God after one passes from the physical plane. They cannot, however, interfere in any way with human free will, which always must make the choice between good and evil. In their capacity to help, though, these angels can be called upon to assist humans in various ways.

It is these archangels, then, that the magi evoke in their ceremonies. Accompanying the concept of the planetary spirits, or archangels, was something the Egyptians called "hekau" or word of power. The word of power, when spoken, released a vibration capable of evoking spirits. The most powerful hekau for calling up a specific spirit in ceremonial magic is that spirit's name.

"To name is to define," cried **Count Cagliostro,** a famous occultist of the eighteenth century. And, to the magi of the Middle Ages, to know the name of a spirit was to

be able to command its presence, thereby making them true miracle workers.

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(Henry) Cornelius Agrippa (von Nettesheim) (1486–1535). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

AGRIPPA (1486–1535)

Henry Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim, author of *The Occult Philosophy*,(1531) one of the most influential works in Western occultism, was an accomplished physician, soldier, and occultist who traveled widely throughout Europe. More commonly known as Agrippa, the versatile magus envisioned magic as a blend of scientific knowledge, religious doctrine, and occult secrets. While his intellect brought him fame, wealth, and political favor, the turbulent times in which he practiced his craft also brought him condemnation, poverty, and prison. Agrippa became immersed in the supernatural and the occult and sought to develop a synthesis that would unite various magical systems and religious traditions with the Kabbalah.

While in Paris on a mission for the Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519), Agrippa formed a secret society with a group of like-minded scholars and noblemen. The pact they vowed to uphold envisioned a reformed world, and they pledged to come to one another's assistance whenever needed. Later, when their efforts to restore one of their members to his former position of power failed, the group was disbanded.

A humanist and feminist ahead of his time, Agrippa exalted the position of women far above the prevailing sentiment of the early sixteenth century. In 1509, he composed *The Nobility of the Female Sex* and *The Superiority of Women* while lecturing at the university at Dole. Agrippa annoyed a number of clerics when he presented teachings from the Bible, the Church Fathers, and various works of philosophy to argue his praise of women. The paean to the fair sex was dedicated to Margaret of Austria, Maximilian's daughter, who was mistress of Dole and Burgundy, in the hope that he might obtain her patronage. Unfortunately for his cause, a Franciscan friar in Margaret's cabinet warned her that Agrippa was a heretic who taught the Kabbalah of the Jews and whose attentions were not to be trusted. Once the clergy saw that royal support would not be forthcoming for Agrippa, they also managed to squelch publication of his praise of women.

Discouraged by Margaret's rejection of his work, Agrippa went first to England, then to Cologne where he continued his lectures and his studies. In 1515, his military prowess while serving in Maximilian's campaign in Italy earned him a knighthood on the battlefield. Coincident with this honor, the Cardinal of St. Croix asked Agrippa to serve as representative to the council of Pope Leo X (1475–1521). Agrippa was pleased to do so, for he saw this as an opportunity to rectify matters with the church whose clergy he had offended in the past, but when the council was disbanded before he could state his defense, he abandoned both his military and ecclesiastical careers.

Agrippa returned to teaching, lecturing on **Hermes Trismegistus** at Turin and Pavia, and

Cornelius Agrippa's magical square. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

adding to his fame as a magus. In 1520, he left his position as a city official at Metz when he ran afoul of the inquisitor Savini from whom he rescued a woman unjustly accused of witchcraft. With the unforgiving Inquisition now keeping a close watch on his activities, Agrippa began practicing medicine in such cities as Cologne, Geneva, and Fribourg. In 1524, King Francis I (1494–1547) appointed him as personal physician to his mother, the Duchesse Louise of Savoy, and Agrippa was at last on a pension. Such security soon dissipated, however, when he rebuked the duchess for asking him to debase his talents by divining her future from the stars.

Agrippa continued his nomadic existence, moving from city to city, country to country. In 1529, he was summoned to provide counsel for Henry VIII of England (1491–1547), the chancellor of Germany, an Italian marquis, and Margaret of Austria, governor of the Netherlands. Twenty years after he had dedicated *The Superiority of Women* to her, Margaret finally granted her approval to the work and appointed Agrippa historiographer of her court.

It was at this time when destiny appeared at last to have smiled upon him that Agrippa confused follower and foe alike by publishing *On the Vanity of Arts and Sciences* (1529), which proclaimed that nothing was certain in either the arts or the sciences. The product of his disillusionment with the lack of material rewards that his scholarship and his alchemical practices had produced, Agrippa's work advised that the only reliable source to which humans might turn was religious faith. As if such preachments were not baffling enough coming from a leading occultist of the day, a scholar known throughout all of Europe as the great champion of alchemy and magic, Agrippa's *Occult Philosophy*, which had been written when he was a youth but had remained in manuscript form, was published about a year later. In this monumental work, Agrippa declared that magi were able to perform miracles through the occult wisdom revealed to them by supernatural beings. With one book recanting the occult beliefs of the other, but still declaring that all human endeavors were uncertain acts of vanity, Agrippa found himself once again devoid of a stable audience and relieved of his pension as an imperial historiographer. He was jailed in Brussels for one year for his inability to pay his debts, and upon his release he sought refuge at Grenoble in the home of M. Allard, Receiver General of the Provence. Agrippa died there in 1535.

Before he died, Agrippa was seen everywhere with his large black dog, Monsieur. Because of his reputation among the people as a black magician, it was widely believed among the townsfolk of Grenoble that Monsieur was Agrippa's **familiar.** After Agrippa's death, the large dog seemed to vanish mysteriously, thereby convincing people that the magus had been in league with Satan all along. Although a friend testified that he had often walked Monsieur for the scholar and that the large black canine was simply a dog, the townspeople persisted in their belief that they had often witnessed the magus Agrippa in the company of his demonic familiar.

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Count Allesandro Cagliostro (1743–1795)

Count Allesandro Cagliostro was widely known as the man who held the secret of the **philosopher's stone,** the alchemist who turned lowly metals into gold and in Strasburg produced alchemically a diamond which he presented to Cardinal Louis de Rohan. Cagliostro was said to have invented the "water of beauty," a virtual fountain of youth, and when the best doctors in Europe admitted their defeat in difficult cases, they summoned the count and his curative powers. Although most students of sorcery and magic regard Cagliostro as a charlatan, certain scholars of the occult still regard him as one of the greatest magi of all time.

By the time he was 14, Cagliostro (Peter Basalmo) was an assistant to an apothecary in Palermo, Italy, and had become an expert in the principles of chemistry and medicine. Driven to obtain less conventional knowledge, the teenager fell in with a group of vagabonds who were continually in trouble with the police. When he was 17, he had gained a reputation as one who could evoke the spirits of the dead, but he used this knowledge to fleece a wealthy citizen of Palermo and he fled to Messina, where he assumed the title and the identity of Count Cagliostro.

It was in Messina that the young man met the mysterious Althotas, a man of Asian appearance, dressed in caftan and robes, who upon their first encounter proceeded to reveal the events of Cagliostro's past. As they became better acquainted, Althotas said that he didn't believe in ordinary magic, but maintained that the physical laws were mutable and could be manipulated by the powers of mind. The two traveled together to Egypt where they visited the priests of many esoteric traditions and received much secret knowledge. From Egypt they went to Asia and began to pursue alchemical experiments.

When Althotas died on the island of Malta, Cagliostro returned to Italy with a considerable fortune accumulated from his work with various alchemical teachers. In 1770, when he was 26 years old, he met Lorenza Feliciani while in Rome, and he asked her to marry him. Lorenza's father was impressed by Cagliostro's apparent wealth and readily consented to the wedding. While some biographers believe his riches came from his successful alchemical experiments, others accuse the count of duping wealthy aristocrats out of their inheritances and of running disreputable gambling houses. His marriage to Lorenza is also clouded with charges of chicanery and deceit. Although most accounts depict her as an honest and good woman, she traveled throughout Europe and Great Britain with Cagliostro and appears to have been involved in his various schemes. By far the most important of Cagliostro's creations was the Egyptian Masonic rite, whose lodges admitted both sexes and whose main temple was presided over by the Grand Mistress Lorenza and the Grand Copt Cagliostro.

Count Allesandro Cagliostro was allegedly the one who held the secret of the philosopher's stone.

In the lodges ruled by the Grand Mistress and the Grand Copt, women were so emancipated that they were encouraged to remove all of their clothing to be initiated into the mysteries of nature. Those women who received the magnetic powers bestowed upon them by the Grand Copt were promised the ability to make full use of their own occult force. In the Egyptian Masonic lodge, physical happiness was equivalent to spiritual peace.

Wealthy members of European royalty sought his magical elixir of regeneration, and Count Cagliostro is said to have cured thousands of people with his lotions and potions during his reign in Europe as a master conjurer. Today, researchers can only guess if these

illnesses were linked to hysteria or psychosomatic delusions.

Although the church had chosen to ignore accusations of deception and charlatanism directed against Cagliostro, it could not overlook the formation of another Masonic lodge. And when the Grand Copt sought to establish a lodge within the boundaries of the papal states, he was arrested on September 27, 1789, by order of the Holy Inquisition and imprisoned in the Castle of Saint Angelo. Inquisitors examined Cagliostro for 18 months, and he was condemned to death on April 7, 1791. However, his sentence was commuted to perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of Saint Angelo. Unable to accept such a fate, Cagliostro attempted to escape. He was placed in solitary confinement in a cistern in the Castle of San Leo near Montefeltro where he suffered with little food, air, or movement. Sometime in 1795, the governor took pity on the prisoner and had him removed to a cell on ground level. It was here, around March 6, the unhappy magi died. Although the records are incomplete, it is thought that his wife, Lorenza, who had been sentenced to the Convent of St. Appolonia, a penitentiary for women in Rome, died in 1794.

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ALEISTER CROWLEY (1875–1947)

Aleister Crowley (Edward Alexander Crowley) is one of the most controversial figures in the annals of modern occultism. Along with the Freudians, Crowley believed that most of humankind's ills were caused by inhibition of the sexual impulses. Consequently, much of Crowley's magick drew its impetus from the release of psychic energy through sexual activity, including homosexuality and other practices that earned for Crowley the distinction of being named one of the most sinister figures of modern times. In his day, and for some time afterward, the name of Aleister Crowley was almost synonymous with evil. Crowley's own mother, a fundamentalist Christian, dubbed him "The Great Beast 666," a diabolical image drawn from the Book of Revelation.

In Cairo, Egypt, in 1904 a being that called itself "Aiwass" suddenly took possession of Crowley's wife after she had uttered something to the effect that "they" wished to communicate with him. At the time, they were standing before the Stele of Revealing in the Cairo Museum. There followed three days of dictation by Aiwass to Crowley. The text of this dictation forms *The Book of the Law* (1904), which was supposed to herald the coming of the Age of Horus, the child.

Crowley won the distinction of being the "wickedest man in the world" while he was conducting an institution he called the Sacred Abbey of Thelema. Located on the island of Sicily, the abbey was dedicated to the practice of magic, uninhibited sex accompanied by liberal use of drugs, and worship of ancient Gnostic deities. Ritual intercourse, both hetero and homosexual in nature, was the chief form of worship.

Drawing upon ancient Gnostic magical texts, Crowley added to an old Graeco-Egyptian text and performed the rite of *Liber samekh*, celebrating sexual release and the passage of the spirit from a lower level of consciousness to a higher one. Crowley added his own contributions to the original Gnostic text, some of which were "High Supernatural Black Magic" and "Intercourse with the Demon." According to Crowley the ritual was the one to be employed by the Beast 666 for the attainment of knowledge and conversation with his holy guardian angel. In *The Black Arts* (1968) Richard Cavendish comments on the *Liber samekh:* "To know the angel and have intercourse with the demon . . . means to summon up and liberate the forces of the magician's unconscious. The performance of the ritual is accompanied by…the mounting frenzy with which the barbarous names of power are chanted…ending in a climax which is both physical and psychological and in which the magician's innermost powers are unleashed."

Aleister Crowley in 1934. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

Crowley's life and career are illustrations of the two possibilities inherent in experimenting with altered states of consciousness. Whatever else might be said about him, Crowley was a powerful magician and a master of the art of ritual. Crowley's excesses and eventual decline probably were results of his reliance upon narcotics. His philosophy of life was summed up in an analysis by journalist Tom Driberg in the days when Crowley was beginning to be called the wickedest man in the world: "His basic commandment was 'Do what thou wilt.' Since his training in serious, formal magick (as he spelt it) was rigorous, he did not mean by this 'Follow each casual impulse.' He meant 'Discover your own true will and do it.' In other words, 'Know yourself and be yourself.'"

Before his death Crowley was rumored to have started a group on the American West Coast that included the study and practice of alchemy. The deaths of several persons as the results of mysterious explosions were connected with this practice; but if a Crowley cult ever existed, it had all but vanished within a few years after his death.

ALEISTER *Crowley was dubbed "The Great Beast 666."*

Delving Deeper

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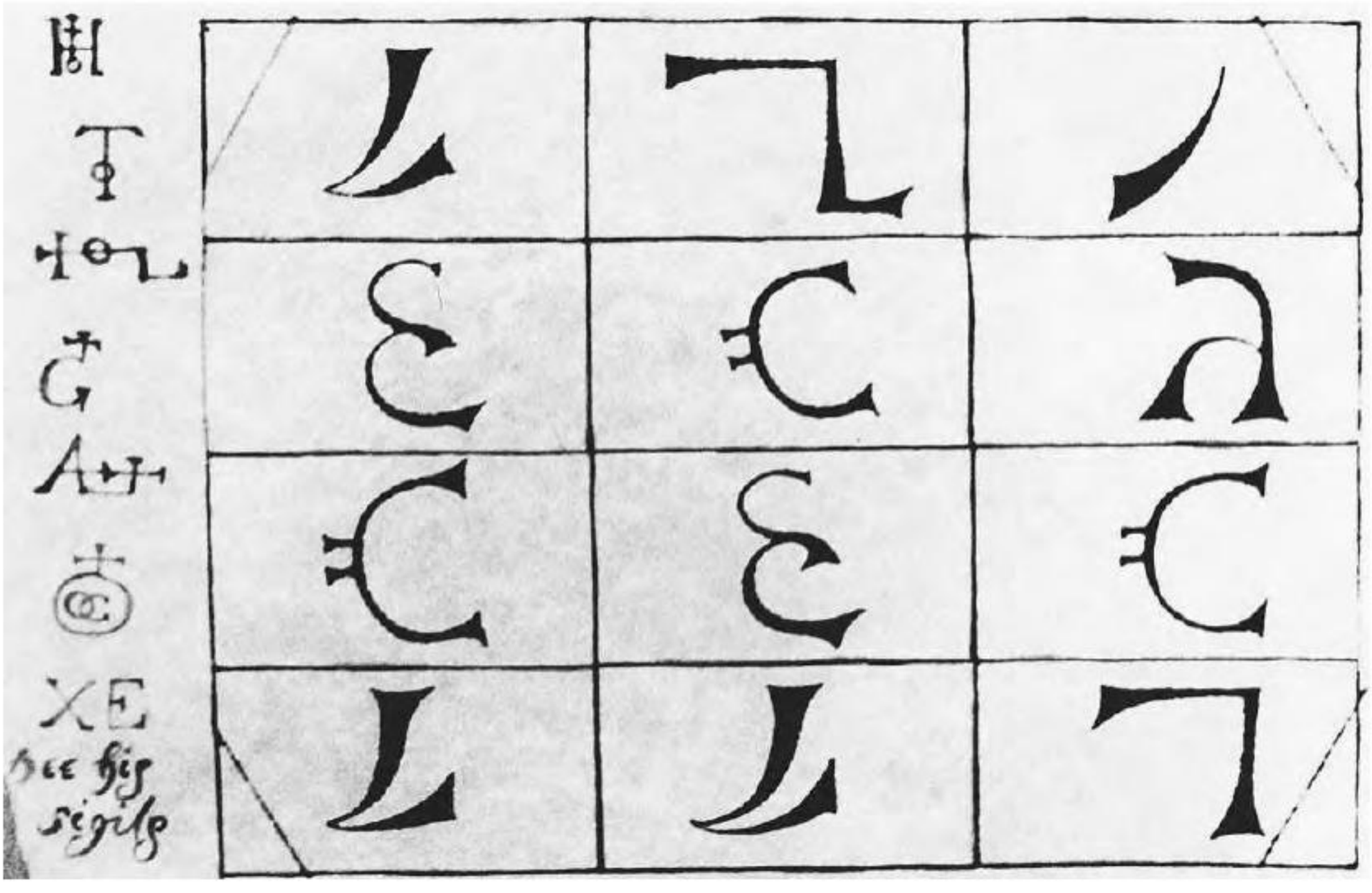

Secret Enochian letters used by John Dee.
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JOHN DEE (1527–1608)

Although Dr. John Dee's reputation as a black magician may be undeserved, he seems destined to remain so categorized in the history of magic and the occult. Dee came from a family of means, and he was admitted to St. John's College, Cambridge, when he was only 15. His application to his studies was intense, and he soon distinguished himself as a scholar. He slept only four hours per night, ate a light meal, participated in various forms of recreation for two hours, then used the remaining 18 hours for study.

When he left Cambridge, he traveled to Holland to study with Mercator (1512–1594) and other learned men of his day. Returning home, he was made a fellow of Trinity College, and he gained a wide reputation as an astronomer.

Dee left England again soon after acquiring fame as an astrologer and an astronomer, and he taught at many European universities. In 1551, he was back in England and was received by King Edward VI (1537–1553), who awarded him a pension of 100 crowns per annum. This stipend Dee later exchanged for a rectory at Upton-upon-Severn.

During Queen Mary I's (1516–1558) reign (1553–58), Dee was accused of trying to kill her by "enchantments." He was seized, confined, and tried. After a long trial that lasted until 1555, he was at last acquitted.

When Elizabeth I (1533–1603) ascended to the throne in 1558, she consulted with Dee as to which day the stars deemed the most propitious hours for her coronation. Pleased with his pronouncements, she continued to grant him the favor of her attention, and she made many promises of preferment—none of which were kept. Disillusioned by the intrigues of the English Royal Court, Dee left the country for Holland. In 1564 while residing in Antwerp, Dee published his greatest work, *Monas Hieroglyphica*. After he had presented a copy to the Emperor Maximilian II

(1527–1576), Dee returned to England to produce more learned occult volumes.

In 1571, while residing once again on the Continent, Dee fell ill. When Elizabeth heard of it, she sent two of her best physicians to attend to him. The queen also conveyed additional proofs of her high regard for him and made further promises. When he recovered, Dee returned to England and settled at Mortlake in Surrey. Here he accumulated an extensive library of works on occultism and allied subjects, prompting his neighbors to decree that he was in league with the devil. While Dee insisted that he did not practice black magic, it seemed apparent that he knew a great deal about the subject.

After Elizabeth's death, James I (1566–1625) refused to extend patronage to Dee because of his troubled reputation as a practitioner of the dark arts. Dee returned to Mortlake, where he died in 1608 in a state of neglect and poverty. Dr. John Dee's globes, magic stone, and other items of his occult practices may be seen today in the British Museum.

John Dee (1572–1608). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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DR. FAUST (C. 1480–1540)

Although many assume that Dr. Faust was a fictional character created by Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) for his famous play, *The Tragedy of Dr. Faustus* (1589), and utilized again later by Johnann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) for his masterwork *Faust* (1808), there actually was a magician named Georg Faust, who was born in Knittlingen, Wurttenburg, Germany, around 1480. Faust was a traveling magician, visiting town after town, performing feats of legerdemain, telling fortunes, and professing to have supernatural powers. While some contemporary scholars were impressed with his alleged abilities, others branded him as nothing more than an unscrupulous charlatan. At some point, Georg Faust became confused with an academic named Johann Faust, and he was mistakenly credited with many of the learned professor's scholastic achievements.

THE first cinematic production of Dr. Faust was a French film in 1905.

When Georg Faust died around 1540, he had become such a legendary magician in Germany that in 1558 Johann Speiss published a book entitled *The History of Dr. Johann Faust*, which listed his many feats and adventures. Speiss included his interpretation of how Faust had become a master magician by selling his soul to the devil in exchange for 24 years of limitless knowledge and power.

Over the course of time, the Faust story has been the subject of numerous plays, operas, and films. The first cinematic production of the ageless tale of Dr. Faust selling his soul to the devil for unlimited knowledge was a French film in 1905. The noted German actor Emil Jannings played the role in a classic

Mephistopheles appearing before Faust in the 1865 edition of *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang Goethe.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

version of the story in 1926, and British actor Richard Burton enacted Dr. Faustus in 1968.

Delving Deeper

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Marie Laveau (c. 1794–1881)

Marie Laveau succeeded Sanite Dede as the **voodoo** queen (high priestess) of New Orleans sometime around 1830. No one in the hierarchy of voodoo priests and priestesses disputed Laveau's rise to that position, for it was widely known that she was gifted with powers of sorcery and the ability to fashion charms of unfailing efficacy.

Laveau was a Creole freewoman, and by profession a hair dresser. Her prestige among the white establishment was assured when the son of a wealthy New Orleans merchant was arrested for a crime of which he was innocent, although there was much false evidence against him. His father appealed to the voodoo high priestess to put a spell on the judge to cause him to find the young man not guilty.

Laveau took three Guinea peppers and placed them in her mouth before she went to the cathedral to pray. Although she was the recognized voodoo priestess of New Orleans, she did not find her beliefs incompatible with Catholicism and Christian charity, and she attended Mass daily. On that particular day, she knelt at the altar for several hours, praying for the young man to be found innocent. Then, later, by a ruse, she managed to enter the courtroom and place the peppers under the judge's seat. The judge found the prisoner not guilty, and Marie Laveau was handsomely rewarded by the merchant.

Laveau greatly popularized voodoo by revising some of the rituals until they became her unique mixture of West Indian and African tribal religions and Roman Catholicism. She invited politicians and police officials to the public ceremonies that she conducted on the banks of Bayou St. John on the night of June 23, St. John's Eve. On other occasions, she would hold voodoo rituals on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain and at her cottage, Maison Blanche. Hundreds of the most prominent families in New Orleans would be present at these public celebrations of voodoo, hoping to get a glimpse of Marie Laveau herself dancing with her large snake, Zombi, draped over her shoulders. For the white onlookers, the music and the dance provided exciting entertainment. For Marie Laveau's fellow worshippers, the rites were spiritual celebrations, and even Zombi was an agent of great voodoo powers. On other occasions in private places, the high priestess celebrated the authentic rites of voodoo for her devoted congregation, far from the critical eyes of the white establishment and clergy.

Tomb of Voodoo Queen Marie Laveau I (1783–1881). (CORBIS CORPORATION)

For many years, legend had it that Marie Laveau had discovered the secrets of immortality and that she lived to be nearly 200 years old. Some speak in hushed whispers that she is still alive, conducting voodoo rituals in the secret shadows of New Orleans. Such a legend quite likely began when Laveau cleverly passed the position of high priestess to her daughter, who greatly resembled her, at a strategic time when she had just begun to age. Laveau retired from public appearances to continue to conduct the intricate network of spies and informants she had built up while her daughter assumed the public persona of Marie Laveau, voodoo queen of New Orleans. Because she now appeared ageless and could sometimes be seen in more than one place at a time, her power and mystery grew ever stronger among her voodoo worshippers and the elite white community, as well. As far as it can be determined, Marie Laveau died in New Orleans on June 15, 1881.

MARIE Laveau was the recognized voodoo priestess of New Orleans.

DELVING DEEPER

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ELIPHAS LEVI (C. 1810–1875)

Eliphas Levi (Alphonse Louis Constant) was born in France about 1810, the son of a shoemaker. His parents soon decided that he should be educated for the life of a parish priest. Constant became a deacon, took a vow of celibacy, and seemed destined for a quiet life in the clergy. But then his life suddenly assumed a different course when he upset members of the church hierarchy for espousing doctrines quite contrary to those endorsed by the papacy. For one thing, Father Constant felt that somewhere along the ages the theologians of the church had confused Lucifer, the bearer of light, with Satan, the Prince of Darkness, and had judged him unfairly. Such a liberal attitude to the angel who led the revolt in heaven did not sit at all well with his superiors, and Father Constant was expelled from the church.

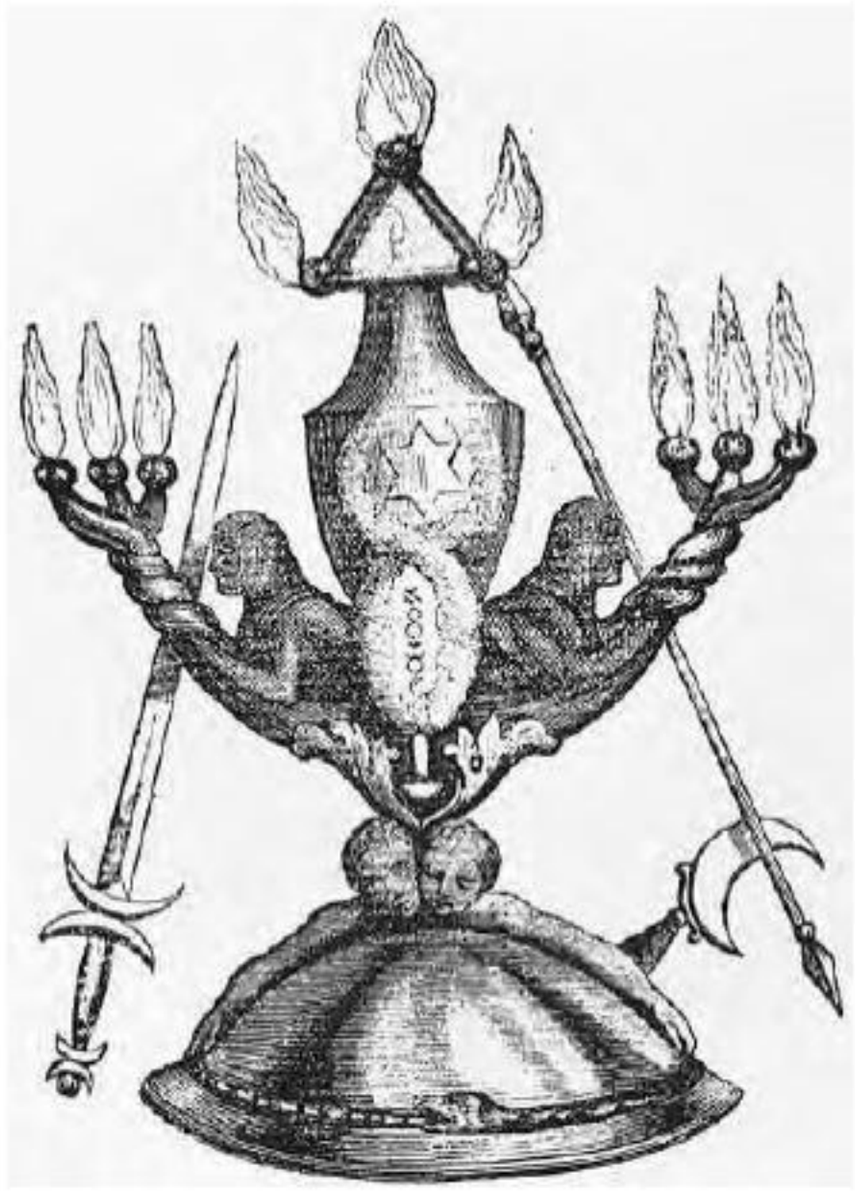
For many years after his expulsion from the Roman Catholic Church, Father Constant appears to have traveled throughout France and other European nations rather anonymously, and little is known of those years in which he lived in obscurity, collecting his thoughts, forming his political and spiritual philosophies. In 1839, he published a pamphlet entitled *The Gospel of Liberty*, which, because of its socialistic leanings, earned him six months in prison in Paris.

Once he served his term in prison, he put aside his vow of celibacy and married a 16-year-old girl, whose parents soon had the union annulled. It was after his painful separation from his wife that Alphonse Louis Constant assumed the identity of Eliphas Levi and began to devote his time to an intensive study of alchemy and the occult. Often his focus was on the **Kabbalah** and the **tarot,** believing firmly that the ancient cards depicted a concise summary of all the revelations that had come down to humankind through the ages.

Levi saw in the symbolism of the tarot cards the key to the Egyptian hieroglyphs, the mysteries of Solomon, and the truths hidden in the apocryphal text of the Book of Enoch and the scrolls of **Hermes Trismesgistus.** To do a spread of the tarot cards, in Levi's opinion, was to establish communication with the spirit world. To seek within the tarot might bring the serious magician a clue to the manipulation of the natural and divine energy that permeated all of nature. The existence of

such a force, Eliphas Levi believed, was to discover the Great Arcanum of Practical Magick.

His *Doctrine of Transcendental Magic* was published in 1855, followed by *Rituals of Transcendental Magic* in 1856. Other works of Eliphas Levi include *The Key of the Grand Mysteries* (1861) and *The Science of the Spirits* (1865). Eliphas Levi died in 1875, esteemed by many and hailed as the last of the alchemists. Others have criticized certain of his writings by suggesting that his imagination may have in some instances surpassed his actual knowledge of the arcane.



Eliphas Levi's magical instruments. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Delving Deeper

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Simon Magus (c. first century)

Several cults with widely differing beliefs all bearing the label of "Gnostic" arose in the first century, very strongly competing with the advent of Christianity. Many of the Gnostic sects blended elements of Christianity with the **Eleusianian mysteries,** combining them with Indian, Egyptian, and Babylonian magic, and bringing in aspects of the Jewish Kabbalah as well.

The first Gnostic of importance was Simon Magus, a Samarian sorcerer, a contemporary of the apostles, who was converted to Christianity by Philip. Although he had been a highly respected magus, Simon continued to be impressed by the remarkable powers of the apostles and their ability to heal and to manifest miracles. When he saw Peter and John baptizing people by the laying on of hands, he asked that he might be taught the power of transferring the Holy Spirit to others. Eagerly, Simon offered to pay the apostles a fee to teach him how to manifest the Holy Spirit. Peter strongly rebuked him for attempting to buy this profound spiritual gift (Acts 8:9–24). Simon accepted the rebuke and asked Peter to pray for his forgiveness. The term "simony" to describe the purchasing of ecclesiastic blessings has come down through the ages.

Simon apparently brooded over his inability to acquire the Holy Spirit from the apostles, and, according to legend, he fell back on his old ways of sorcery and began to traffic once again with demons. To prove his power, Simon announced to all of Rome that he would fly into the sky and ascend to the heavens, just as Jesus had done. Remarkably, Simon, supported by demons, began to fly upward. Peter, however, fearful that many innocents would be attracted to this false prophet, prayed that God would end Simon's flight. Frightened away by the apostle's prayers, the demons fled the artificial wings supporting Simon, and the magus crashed to the ground, breaking both legs.

The story of Simon Magus fueled the beliefs of generations of magi and alchemists that there was a secret oral tradition that had been passed down from Jesus that had much greater power and authority than the scriptures and epistles offered by the orthodox teachers of Christianity. The Gnostics, like the initiates of the Greek and Egyptian mysteries, sought direct experience with the

divine and they believed that this communion could be achieved by uttering secret words of wisdom that God had granted to specially enlightened teachers.

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PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA (1463–1494)

Born in 1463 in Mirandola castle, near Modena, Italy, Pico, the Count of Mirandola, was one of those precocious young geniuses who were gifted with a precise memory, a facility for language, and a talent for philosophy, mathematics, and theology. Early in his studies, Mirandola came to believe that the future could be predicted through a practiced interpretation of dreams, communication with benevolent spirits, and a careful analysis of the intestines of birds. He took a great deal of inspiration from the ancient Chaldean oracles and the old mystery schools of **Orpheus** and **Eleusis,** and he was greatly influenced by the teachings of the **Kabbalah.** For centuries, the Kabbalah had remained a mysterious esoteric philosophy that had been developed within the larger framework of the Jewish religion. Jealously guarded by various rabbis, the teachings of the Kabbalah remained largely unknown by medieval Christians until such magicians/scholars as Pico Mirandola brought the ancient mystery within the reach of European alchemists and magi by translating the Hebrew into Latin.

When he was 24, Mirandola became confident that he could prove the divinity of Christ through certain doctrines of the Kabbalah and esoteric magic, and armed with 900 theses for public debate on the matter, he set out for Rome. The young magician's proofs were not accepted warmly by the church, however, relying as they did upon such elements as nature spirits, pagan gods, and Jewish mysticism. Pope Innocent VIII (1432–1492), ever on the alert for the presence of witches in whatever disguise they may present themselves, appointed a commission to examine Count Mirandola's theses for any taint of heresy. Although his percentage of acceptable theses was quite high, the papal commission managed to discover four of Mirandola's arguments to be greatly heretical and another nine to be less so, but erroneous in their concepts.

In 1487, Pico Mirandola offered a defense of those 13 theses that had been judged heretical and accused those in the papal commission who had condemned them as being themselves heretics. They could hardly be considered worthy of judging him, he derided them, for they were essentially ignorant men who couldn't even speak or write acceptable Latin, the official language of the church.

Mirandola's intellectual snobbery was ill-advised, for he had offended bishops with power, two of whom had influence with the Inquisition. Mirandola fled Italy, but he was arrested in France and placed in a dungeon to await his trial for heresy. It was only through the intervention of such substantial members of the artistocracy as Lorenzo de Medici that he was allowed to return to Florence and be spared the certain tortures and likely death sentence at the hands of the inquisitors.

Innocent VIII remained unforgiving; but in 1493, one year before Pico Mirandola's death at the age of 31, Alexander VI (1431–1503) accepted his apology and removed at last the threat from the Inquisition that had pursued the young count for six years.

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PYTHAGORAS (C. 580–C. 500 B.C.E.)

Pythagoras, one of the greatest philosophers and mathematicians of the sixth century B.C.E., is said to have traveled the known world of his time, accumulating and absorbing wisdom and knowledge. According to the legends surrounding his life, he was taught by Zoroaster (c. 628–c. 551 B.C.E.), the Persian

prophet, and the Brahmans of India; and he initiated into the **Orphic,** Egyptian, Judaic, Chaldean, and many other mystery schools.

Pythagoras is among those individuals given the status of becoming a myth in his own lifetime. The philosopher was said to have been born of the virgin Parthenis and fathered by the god Apollo. Pythagoras' human father, Mnesarchus, a ring merchant from Samos, and his mother consulted the **Delphic Oracle** and were told that he would be born in Sidon in Phoenicia and that he would produce works and wonders that would benefit all humankind. Wishing to please the gods, Mnesarchus demanded that his wife change her name from Parthenis to Pythasis, in order to honor the seeress at Delphi. When it was time for the child to be born, Mnesarchus devised "Pythagoras" to be a name in which each of the specially arranged letters held an individual sacred meaning.

After traveling the known world, Pythagoras formed his own school at Crotona in southern Italy. An unyielding taskmaster, he accepted only those students whom he assessed as already having established personal regimens of self-discipline. To further stress the seriousness of his study program, Pythagoras lectured while standing behind a curtain, thereby denying all personal contact with his students until they had achieved progress on a ladder of initiatory degrees that allowed them to reach the higher grades. While separated from them by the curtain, Pythagoras lectured his students on the basic principles of music, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.

Pythagoras called his disciples mathematicians, for he believed that the higher teachings began with the study of numbers. From his perspective, he had fashioned a rational theology. He believed the science of numbers lay in the living forces of divine faculties in action in the world, in universal macrocosm, and in the earthly microcosm of the human being. Numbers were transcendent entities, living virtues of the supreme "One," God, the source of universal harmony.

Devoted to his studies, his travels, and his school, Pythagoras did not marry until he was about 60. The young woman had been one of his disciples, and she bore him seven children. The legendary philosopher died when a rejected student led an angry mob against the school and burned down the house where Pythagoras and 40 students were gathered. Some accounts state that Pythagoras died in the fire; others have it that he died of grief, sorrowing over how difficult a task it was to elevate humanity.

PYTHAGORAS *was said to be fathered by the god Apollo.*

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Count Saint-Germain

Frederick the Great (1712–1786) of Prussia called the Count of Saint-Germain the man who could not die, for according to the count, he had already lived 2,000 years by partaking of his discovery of a regenerative liquid that could prolong human life indefinitely.

Saint-Germain captivated the courts of Europe in the eighteenth century. He would refer to a pleasant chat with the Queen of Sheba and relay amusing anecdotes of Babylonian court gossip. He would speak with reverence of the miraculous event that he had witnessed at the marriage feast at Cana when the young rabbi Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) turned water into wine. Saint-Germain spoke and wrote Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, English, Italian, Portugese, and Spanish. He was also a talented painter and an accomplished virtuoso on the harpsichord and violin. The count was also a successful alchemist, and it was widely rumored that he had succeeded in transforming base metals into gold. It was believed that he could remove flaws from diamonds, and in this way improved one of the gems of King Louis XV (1710–1774). His chemical training

far surpassed that of his contemporaries of the eighteenth century. His skill at mixing pigments was considered extraordinary, and famous painters begged in vain for the count to reveal his formulas.

MANY *occult groups claim Count Saint-Germain as their spirit guide.*

It was also claimed by many that Saint-Germain could render himself invisible—a remarkable accomplishment said to have been often witnessed. He was also a proficient hypnotist and could fall at will into a state of self-hypnosis. Members of Europe's royal courts also heard him speak often of an invention that would occur in the next century and which would unite people of all lands. He called it a steamboat, and he implied that it would be he who would be on hand in the future to help create the vessel.

Who was the Count of Saint-Germain and what was his true place of origin? The mystery has never been solved, and he remains one of history's most intriguing enigmas. Some scholars have conjected that the man was a clever spy on a secret mission who had deliberately shrouded his past with mystery. Why, these scholars ask, would the skeptical Prussian King Frederick promote such fantastic tales of the count unless he had some reason to do so?

Saint-Germain seems to betray himself as a diplomat with his astounding knowledge of the political past. Having gained access to secret court files, he could have studied European history methodically and with earnest purpose. His wide range of claimed artistic talents may have been amateurish, but wildly exaggerated by those who would stand to gain by the count's missions.

Old records show that Saint-Germain died in the arms of two chambermaids at the court of the Landgrave of Hessen-Cassel, a fervent alchemist. But in spite of his supposed death, there are many recorded instances of the reappearance of the count. Many believe that he only feigned death, just as he had done many times before, so that he could go on sipping of his elixir of life and observing world events from a more quiet perspective.

After the fall of the Bastille in July 1789, Marie Antoinette received a letter of warning that was allegedly signed by the Count of Saint-Germain. Madame Adhemar, Marie Antoinette's confident, kept a rendezvous with the count in a chapel. Saint-Germain, then supposedly dead for five years, told her that he had done everything that he could to prevent the Revolution, but that the great magician **Cagliostro,** a fervent antimonarchist, had taken control of the events. It was further said that the Count of Saint-Germain showed himself many times during the French Revolution. He was said to have been observed often near the guillotine, sadly shaking his head at the bloody work initiated by his pupil, Cagliostro.

Today, many occult groups claim the Count of Saint-Germain as their **spirit guide,** and he remains popular as a spiritual mentor from beyond. Others maintain that the Count of Saint-Germain still lives, periodically feigning death in whatever guise he continues to walk the earth, so that he might on occasion offer his counsel to those men and women in high political places.

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WICCA

According to the U.S. Census, the number of individuals professing to be Wiccans rose from the 8,000 reported in 1990 to 134,000 self-proclaimed witches in 2001. A study released in November 2001 by the Graduate Center of the City University of New York found that the number of adults

who subscribe to a pagan religion was more than 140,000.

Since the Middle Ages, witchcraft, the "old religion," or Wicca, the "ancient craft of the wise," have been used interchangeably to name the followers of the same nature religion. While the interchangeability of the names remains true today, even those men and women who practice Wicca or witchcraft have difficulty reaching a consensus regarding what it is exactly that they believe and whether or not Wicca can truly be traced back to ancient times or whether it developed as a new natural religion in the early nineteenth century and gained momentum in the mid-twentieth century. As one practitioner of Wicca said, no Wiccan can decide for another what Wicca really is. One definite assertion that may be made about Wicca is that practitioners of the religion are not Satanists. They do not worship the devil or glory in the exaltation of evil. Worship of and agreements with the devil presuppose his existence, and the Wiccans do not believe in the Satan of Christianity.

Oberon Zell (formerly Tim Zell, primate of the neo-paganistic Church of All Worlds, St. Louis, Missouri, and publisher of *The Green Egg*) does not believe **Satanism** can be classed as a religion, but is merely a Christian heresy. According to Zell, a true pagan religion is one that originated in nature and is characterized by natural modes of expression, contrasted with those religions that owe their existence to a philosophy taught by one or more great prophets and formulated in various creeds and dogmas. Those who follow Wicca, the craft of the wise, maintain that their faith qualifies as a true pagan religion with its beliefs and practices rooted in the processes of nature.

Generally speaking, Wiccans believe that the sources of good and evil lie within each individual, thus universally agreeing with the eight words of the Wiccan Rede: "If it harm none, do what you will." The craft is therefore concerned with the properties of the human mind, including that little-known, little-used area of the psyche termed "the occult." Wiccans do not believe that there is anything supernatural about the manifestations and phenomena associated with this extrasensory area of the mind. They believe that psychic powers lie dormant in everyone, to a greater or lesser degree, and the disciplines of Wicca are designed to develop these to the fullest.

Wicca is a polarized religion, embodying within its worship the male principle in the figure of the Horned God and the female in that of the goddess. Thus its adherents believe that Wicca presents a truer picture of the nature and workings of the universal creative principle than do those religions that overemphasize either the male or the female values and relegate the other to a subordinate status. Wicca incorporates both cognates of the universal creative principle.

WITCHCRAFT *is also referred to as the "old religion."*

In *Witchcraft Here and Now*, **Sybil Leek** defined witchcraft as a religion of a primitive and transcendent nature, "with overtones embodying the female in her most elevated octave" together with the "adoration of creative forces." In her view, such a religion provided "...the total aspect of godliness, in a god which has no name or a thousand different ones, one which has no sex but is both sexes and neutral as well."

Wiccans believe in good and evil as expressions of the same indestructible energy, which, like matter, is neither created nor destroyed but can be changed in form. Because Wiccans do not have a god or devil in the conventional sense of absolute good and absolute evil, they consider these qualities to be positive and negative expression of the same life-energy, neither of which are permanent forms but subject to change as situations and circumstances change.

Wicca conceives of spirit as part of the universal creative principle, existing as a thought form. In keeping with its transcendental nature, Wicca views spirit as the convenient expression for a certain kind of matter, which is thought to contain a dynamic energy of its own. This energy is capable of

being transmitted by means of mental activity and can be used to transmute other forms of energy into matter.

Witchcraft/Wicca generally accepts the doctrines of reincarnation and karma but rejects the idea of original sin. Witches believe that the human spirit is at birth like a blank page upon which one's actions and experiences write the details of one's character. This is somewhat qualified by the belief that the ways in which individuals will react to their experiences during a particular incarnation is to a large extent determined by the karmic patterns inherited from past lives. Through a series of incarnations, the spirit seeks to perfect itself by learning to live to an ever-increasing extent in accord with nature's laws. The good is sought in those areas subject to human will. Evil, then, consists of the conscious rejection of the good and the conscious effort to embrace evil. This belief carries with it the idea that humans are free to choose good or evil but can lose this freedom through the constant and prolonged choice of one path or the other. On one side are what some religions would call "saints" and on the other, those who habitually choose evil, with the great majority of men and women falling somewhere in between the two extremes.

ACCORDING *to the United States Census, the number of Wiccans rose to 134,000 in 2001.*

At this point, one can see an important difference between Wicca and Satanism. Witches seek the good by willing the good, while those who practice **black magick** or who follow the "left-hand path" have yielded control of their thoughts and actions to the flesh, that part of human nature motivated solely by the search for satisfaction of instinctual and egotistical demands. That is not to say that witches believe the material aspect of humankind is evil, but, rather, that the striving for evil inherent in the instinctually ordered flesh must be controlled and directed by the will in such a manner that its needs are satisfied, but not at the price of others' well-being and existence. Wicca seeks to be a polarized, or balanced, religion in which its adherents recognize that all emotions carried to an excess cause an imbalance.

The popular and enduring confusion of witchcraft and Satanism can be traced to two primary causes: the ignorance of those educators and journalists responsible for dissemination of public information and the practice of evangelical Christian clergy of linking the ancient craft of the wise with devil worship. Oberon Zell once observed that practitioners of the old religion/Wicca/neo-paganism often find themselves in the awkward position of having a public image that was not created by them, but by their persecutors. In Zell's thought, such an injustice would be much as if the Nazis had succeeded in eradicating Judaism to the extent that, generations later, the common opinion of what the Jewish faith was all about was derived solely from the anti-Semitic propaganda of the Third Reich—just as the opinion of what Wicca is all about has been largely derived from the tortured testimonies of those who were put on trial for witchcraft by the **Inquisition.** Zell's analogy makes the point that today's Wiccans may no longer be tortured or burned alive at the stake, but they still suffer from persecution of character at the hands of unknowing, indifferent, or biased journalists, clergypersons, and educators.

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People of Wicca

Those who follow the Wiccan path are a diverse group of individualists who pride themselves on being members of a religious philosophy that is flexible and adaptive to the needs of contemporary society. Athough there is the sometimes fiery debate as to the true historical roots of the faith, most Wiccans believe that none of them can dictate to any other just exactly what it is that they must believe. In other words, rather than one great book of Wiccan beliefs, an ancient *Book of Shadows* dogmatically outlining creeds and ecclesiasticisms, there are many books by many men and women who carefully explain the belief structures, rites, and rituals of their particular expression of the craft.

While there were no doubt hereditary witches who quietly practiced the old ways, there was little said publicly about witchcraft in Great Britain and Europe until the beginning of the twentieth century—perhaps because of the grim historical records of the **Inquisition** and its terrible trials for heresy and witchcraft that tormented the collective unconscious of the religiously minded. Texts about witchcraft were published by Christian scholars, and portrayed the craft as devil worship or demonic possession. Then, in 1897, Charles Godfrey Leland (1824–1903), an American who moved to England in 1870 to study gypsy love, published *Aradia: The Gospel of the Witches*, which detailed the rites and beliefs of the old religion that centered upon Diana, the goddess of the moon, and her daughter, Aradia. Although the book presented the Sabbats, rituals, spells, charms, and practices of witchcraft from the viewpoint of its ancient practitioners, the book went largely unnoticed by either scholars or the general public.

However, a little over 20 years later, Dr. Margaret Alice Murray (1863–1963), an Egyptologist on staff at the University College in London, began researching the thesis that witchcraft was actually the remnant of an ancient pre-Christian fertility religion that had nothing to do with the Christian concept of a devil that the witches had allegedly worshipped and brought upon them the wrath of the church during the time of the burning, the Inquisition. Although Murray's work underscored the research of Leland, she seemed to have been unaware of his groundbreaking studies. However, it was her book, *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* (1962), that established a doctrine that would be maintained for many years—Wiccans were members of an ancient pre-Christian religion that once thrived and flourished openly and had then survived underground for many centuries.

Zia Rose performing a Wicca ceremony. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

Today's practitioners of Wicca come from a complete spectrum of men and women.

Gerald Brosseau Gardner (1884–1964) is considered the father of all contemporary expressions of Wicca, and he became a well-known practitioner of the craft due to the many books that he published on the subject after the laws against practicing witchcraft were repealed in England in 1951. Gardner claimed to have been initiated into the famous New Forest Coven in 1939 by a traditional and hereditary witch named Dorothy

ISRAEL REGARDIE (1907–1985)

At the time of his death on March 10, 1985, Dr. Francis Israel Regardie was considered by many occultists to be the last living adept of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a magical tradition that had numbered among its members William Butler Yeats (1865–1939), **Aleister Crowley** (1875–1947), and Dion Fortune. Regardie had demystified many esoteric mysteries surrounding the occult and presented understandable texts on practical magic.

By age 19, he began to correspond with Aleister Crowley. In 1928, he accepted the position of Crowley's personal secretary, hoping that the magician would tutor him in the mystic arts; however, Crowley left him to independently study magic. When Crowley's publisher declared bankruptcy, Regardie lost his job.

Although the Golden Dawn had ceased to exist as a functioning magical society as early as 1903, it continued to exist in various descendant orders, such as the Stella Matutina and the Alpha et Omega. In 1932, Regardie's distillation of the teachings of the Golden Dawn was published in *The Tree of Life,* and at once he was embroiled in controversy with those occultists who associated him with Crowley. While some demanded he never again dare to mention the name of the society, others, such as Dion Fortune, invited him to join the Order of Stella Matutina. In 1937 Regardie published four volumes entitled simply *The Golden Dawn*. It was Regardie's belief that the heritage of magic was the spiritual birthright of every man and woman and that the principles of such magical systems as the Golden Dawn should be made available to all who wished to pursue the ancient wisdom teachings.

Regardie's work *The Philosopher's Stone* (1937) was written from the perspective of Jungian symbolism. In 1941, he took up practice as a lay analyst, and in 1947, he relocated to California where he taught psychiatry. Regardie retired from practice in 1981 and moved to **Sedona, Arizona,** continuing to write until his death.

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Clutterbuck. In 1954, Gardner published *Witchcraft Today*, which continued the thesis espoused by Margaret Murray that witchcraft had existed since pre-Christian times but had gone underground to escape persecution. According to many researchers, Gardner almost singlehandedly revived—some say reinvented—the worship of the Mother Goddess and combined it with elements from several other metaphysical schools. Gardnerian witchcraft influenced many practitioners, including the colorful **Sybil Leek** (1923–1983), who, like so many after her would do, modified Gardner's rituals and teachings to fit her own style of Wicca.

The person responsible for the introduction and growth of modern witchcraft in North America was **Raymond Buckland** (1934–), an Englishman who had emigrated to the United States in 1962. In 1963, Buckland traveled to Perth, Scotland, to be initiated into Wicca by Gardner's high priestess Lady Olwen and to meet Gardner. In 1966, Buckland established a museum of witchcraft in Long Island, New York. A prolific author of more than 30 books on Wicca and related subjects, Buckland founded Seax-Wica, a new branch of the craft, in 1973.

Gavin (1930–) and **Yvonne Frost** (1931–) formed the first Wiccan Church in 1968 and in 1972 gained federal recognition of witchcraft as a religion. In 1985, they convinced a federal appeals court that Wicca was a religion equal to any other.

Today's practitioners of Wicca are scientists, engineers, radio personalities, law enforcement officers, television stars, politicians, and the complete spectrum of active and productive men and women. There are associations, centers, festivals, gatherings, and hundreds of websites to satisfy both the serious and the curious regarding the practice of Wicca.

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Margot Adler (1946–)

Margot Adler is the author of *Drawing Down the Moon: Witches, Druids, Goddess-Worshippers and Other Pagans in America Today* (1986) and *Heretic's Heart: A Journey through Spirit and Revolution* (1997). She received her B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley in 1968, has a master's degree from Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, and was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard in 1982. In the early 1970s, Adler hosted three free-form radio shows on Pacifica Radio—*Hour of the Wolf*, *Unstuck in Time*, and *The Far Side of the Moon*. All merged cutting-edge ideas in science, psychology, feminism, ecology, parapsychology, and spirituality.

Margot Adler is the granddaughter of reknown psychiatrist Alfred Adler.

Granddaughter of reknowned psychiatrist Alfred Adler (1870–1937), Margot Adler is currently the New York Bureau Chief and Correspondent for National Public Radio, where she has been a reporter since 1979. Her pieces air on *All Things Considered*, *Weekend Edition*, and *Morning Edition*. She also hosts a debate show on the U.S. Constitution that takes place before a live audience in Philadelphia. The show, *Justice Talking*, airs on many public radio stations.

A practicing pagan since 1971, and a priestess of Wicca since 1973, Adler co-led a Gardnerian coven and a New York pagan group for many years. In the 1990s and into the new millennium, she has led ritual workshops around the country, and speaks frequently on earth-based spirituality and other topics related to paganism, Wicca, and God-

dess spirituality. Many of her workshops involve ecstatic singing, chanting, and seasonal celebrations.

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PHILIP EMMONS (ISAAC) BONEWITS (1949–)

Philip Emmons (Isaac) Bonewits, priest, magician, scholar, author, bard, and activist, is best known for his leadership in modern Druidism and for his serious scholarship in the fields of the occult, metaphysics, and witchcraft. Born in Royal Oak, Michigan, the Bonewits family moved to Southern California when Isaac was nearly 12. His mother, a devout Roman Catholic, emphasized the importance of religion and hoped that Isaac might enter the priesthood. With an I.Q. tested at 200, Isaac went back and forth between parochial and public schools, largely due to the lack of programs for very bright students.

Bonewits's first exposure to real, rather than stage, magic came at age 13, when he met a young woman whose abilities as a practitioner of **voodoo** and as a diviner of the future convinced him that her abilities were genuine. After attending a Catholic high school seminary in ninth grade, Bonewits realized that he could not fulfill his mother's hope that he would become a Catholic priest. He graduated from public school a year early, spent a year in junior college, and enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley in 1966. It was at this time that he truly began practicing magic, creating his own rituals based on those that he was able to find in books.

Bonewits entered Berkeley as a psychology major but through the individual group study program was able to fashion his own course of study. Robert Larson, Bonewits's roommate, introduced him to Druidism and initiated him into the Reformed Druids of North America. Bonewits was ordained as a Druid priest in October 1969. In 1970 he graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in magic and thaumaturgy, the first person to do so at a Western educational institution. The media attention revolving around Bonewits's degree resulted in his obtaining a book contract, and in 1971 *Real Magic* was published, presenting his insights on magic, ritual, and psychic abilities.

In 1973 Bonewits moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, where he married folksinger Rusty Elliot, and where he assumed the editorship of *Gnostica*, a neopagan journal published by Carl Weschcke of Llewellyn Publications. The job lasted less than two years, but Bonewits remained in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area for about another year and established a Druid grove called the Schismatic Druids of North America. During this same period, Bonewits combined interests with a number of Jewish pagans and created the Hasidic Druids of North America.

In 1973 he stated publicly that the alleged antiquity of Wicca could not be supported by historical data. Bonewits asserted that the craft as it was practiced in the twentieth century did not go back beyond **Gerald B. Gardner** and **Doreen Valiente**—no earlier than the 1920s. Although such views were controversial at the time, by 1983 many scholars within the field began to acknowledge that neopagan Wicca may well be a new religion, rather than the continuation of an old one.

In 1974–75, Bonewits founded the Aquarian Anti-Defamation League (AADL), a civil liberties organization for members of minority and alternative belief systems. Bonewits and his wife divorced in 1976, and he decided to return to Berkeley, where he was elected archdruid of the Reformed Druids of North America. After disagreements with longtime members, Bonewits left the organization, and the Druidic publication that he had established, *The Druid Chronicler* (later *Pentalpha Journal*), soon folded without his involvement.

In 1979 he married Selene Kumin, but that relationship ended in 1982. In 1983 he

Neo druids gathered around Stonehenge. (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

was initiated into the New Reformed Order of the Golden Dawn, and in that same year he married actress Sally Eaton. Bonewits and Eaton became heavily involved in the California revival of the Ordo Templi Orientis, or "O.T.O.," best known for its most important historical figure, **Aleister Crowley.** In 1986 Bonewits and Eaton separated.

Bonewits worked for a few months as a computer consultant in Kansas City, then moved to New York with his intended fourth wife, Deborah Lipp, a Wiccan high priestess, whom he married in 1988. The couple conducted a Gardnerian Wiccan "Pagan Way" group in New York and New Jersey, and in 1990 their son Arthur Shaffrey Lipp-Bonewits was born at their home in Dumont, New Jersey.

In that same year, Bonewits began showing symptoms of Eosinophilia Myalgia Syndrome. Bonewits became unable to work or to perform archdruidic duties, resulting in his loss of employment in 1992 and his assumption of the archdruid emeritus title on January 1, 1996. Although Bonewits began to recover from the more debilitating effects of the disease in 1997, the long bouts of convalescence had caused damage to his marriage with Deborah, and in 1998 they separated. Bonewits has resumed a schedule of writing and lecturing and remains a potent force in the neopagan community.

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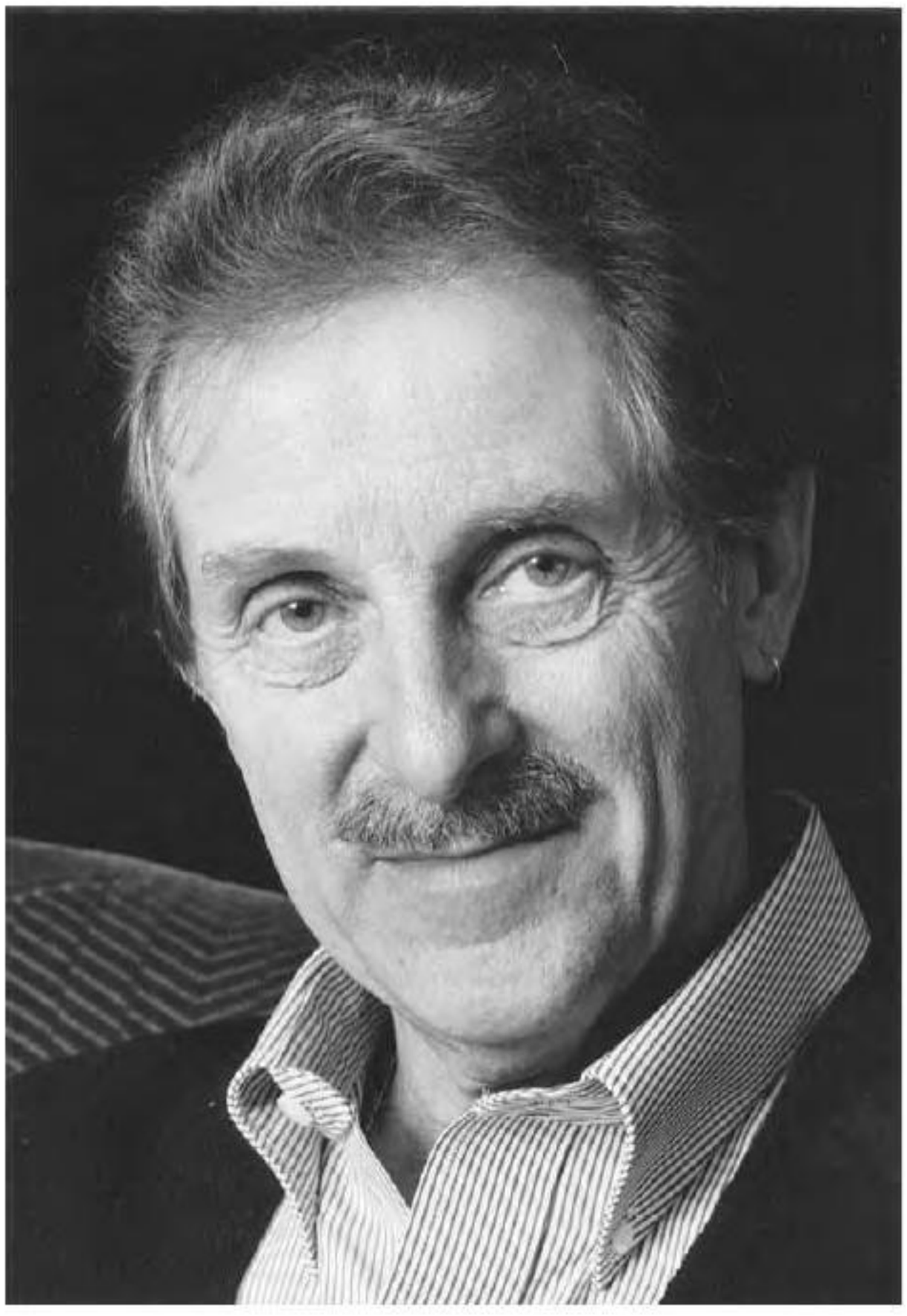
Raymond Buckland (1934–)

Born in London on August 31, 1934, Raymond Buckland emigrated from England to the United States in February 1962 and was responsible for the introduction of contemporary witchcraft into the United States at that time. Buckland's father was Stanley Thomas Buckland, married to Eileen Lizzie Wells. His father was a higher executive officer in the



Raymond Buckland. (JANE ROSEMONT)

British Ministry of Health. In his spare time Stanley Buckland wrote, and had published, plays, short stories, poetry, and music, and he influenced and encouraged Raymond in the same pursuits.

At the age of 12, Buckland was introduced to Spiritualism by his father's brother, George, a Spiritualist. This led Buckland, an avid reader, to investigate that subject and to move on to such related subjects as **ghosts, ESP, magick, witchcraft, voodoo,** and the occult generally. Over time his interest focused on witchcraft.

Buckland was educated at Nottingham Boys High School, then at King's College School, Wimbledon. He holds a doctorate in anthropology from Brantridge Forest College, in Sussex. He served in the Royal Air Force from 1957 to 1959. His first job was as an engineering draftsman; then, after his stint in the R.A.F., he went to work for a London publishing firm. He taught himself to play the trombone and, for several years, led a Dixieland-style jazz band called "Count Rudolph's Syncopated Jazz Men," in his spare time playing regularly at the Piccadilly Jazz Club, Baker Street Jazz Club, and other venues.

In 1955 Buckland married Rosemary Moss and they had two sons—Robert and Reginauld. The family emigrated to the United States in 1962, settling in Brentwood, Long Island, New York. Buckland went to work for BOAC (now British Airways), which enabled him to travel extensively. He stayed with the airline for 10 years.

The Buckland family—nominally Church of England—was not particularly religious, but Buckland's reading drew him to witchcraft. He was greatly influenced by **Margaret Murray's** books *The Witch Cult in Western Europe* (1921) and *God of the Witches* (1952) and by **Gerald Gardner's** *Witchcraft Today* (1954) and *The Meaning of Witchcraft* (1959). Entering into a mail and telephone correspondence with Gardner, Buckland eventually was introduced to Gardner's high priestess, Lady Olwen (Monique Wilson), who initiated him into Wicca in Perth, Scotland, in December 1963. Buckland had finally got to meet Gardner just prior to that, before Gardner left for what was to be his final voyage to Lebanon. Buckland had become Gardner's spokesman in the United States, with Gardner forwarding to Buckland any mail he received from the U.S.

Buckland's craft name was Robat. With his wife, who became the Lady Rowen, they established the first contemporary witchcraft coven in the United States, building and expanding on it slowly and cautiously. With Gardner's books going out of print, Buckland took it upon himself to write his first book on the craft, *Witchcraft from the Inside*, which was published by Llewellyn Publications in 1971. Buckland then dedicated his life to straightening the misconceptions of witchcraft, speaking on the subject and writing articles. Initially he tried to remain anonymous but a newspaper reporter went back on her word and published

his name and address. Despite the resulting physical and verbal attacks on him and his family, Buckland continued his work.

Inspired by Gerald Gardner's museum, Buckland gathered artifacts over the years and, in 1966, opened America's first museum of witchcraft and magic, first in the basement of his home, then in an old Victorian building in Bay Shore, Long Island. The museum was successful; being featured in numerous national magazine and newspaper articles, and was the subject of a television documentary. At various times a selection of artifacts was loaned to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and to other museums.

Buckland had his first article published when he was 12 years old. In 1969 *A Pocket Guide to the Supernatural*, his first book, was published by Ace Books. By the mid-1970s, with the breakup of his marriage to Rosemary, Buckland handed over leadership of the Gardnerian coven to a couple on Long Island and moved, with his museum, to Weirs Beach, New Hampshire. There he married his second wife, Joan Taylor.

By 1973 Buckland had determined that Gardnerian Wicca did not totally fulfill his religious requirements. He founded a new branch of the craft, taking nothing from Gardnerian (because of his oath to that tradition) but writing all new material. He based it on a Saxon background and called it Seax-Wica, or Saxon witchcraft. Contrary to reports by various misinformed writers, Seax-Wica was *not* started as a joke but as a serious branch of witchcraft—a branch to which Buckland then dedicated himself. Today the Seax-Wica tradition is found worldwide. Buckland moved from New Hampshire to Virginia Beach, Virginia. Aware that many people were unable to join the craft because of geographical location, among other reasons, Buckland started a correspondence course that he ran successfully for four years. The course was focused on Saxon witchcraft; a non-secret tradition.

In 1982 Buckland met Tara Cochran and, separating from Joan, married her in 1983. They lived for a couple of years in Charlottesville, Virginia, before moving to San Diego, California. The museum was placed in storage, where it remained until it was eventually passed on to Monte Plaisance, who reopened it in the French Quarter of New Orleans in 2001. In San Diego the correspondence course had to be phased out, since Buckland felt it took away too much of his writing time.

In 1992 the Bucklands moved to a small farm in Ohio and, after more than a quarter of a century of coven work, Buckland gave it up to work, with Tara, as solitaries. After 30 years of public activity, he retired from active involvement in the craft, settling for only occasional lectures, workshops, and book-signings. For his solitary practice, he drew mainly on Seax-Wica rites, together with aspects of PectiWita (a Scottish tradition inspired by Aidan Breac and developed by Buckland). In Ohio Buckland's writing developed to include novels, a number of divination decks, and saw a return to Spiritualism with the publication of *Doors to Other Worlds* (1993) and *The Truth about Spirit Communication* (1995).

In 1966 Raymond Buckland opened America's first museum of Witchcraft and Magic.

A prolific author, by 2001 Buckland had more than 30 books published, with more than a million copies in print and translated into 12 foreign languages. He has written a number of screenplays, numerous newspaper and magazine articles, and has appeared on many radio and television talk shows in the United States, Canada, England, and Italy. Buckland served as technical advisor for the Orson Welles movie *Necromancy* (1972) (*The Witching* on video), appeared in small character roles in movies, and has lectured at many colleges and universities across the United States. Among Buckland's best-known titles are *Practical Candle-burning Rituals* (1970), *The Tree: Complete Book of Saxon Witchcraft* (1974), *Doors to Other Worlds* (1993), *Scottish Witchcraft* (1991), *The Witch Book* (2001), and the *Buckland Romani Tarot* (2001). Other books are *Advanced Candle*

Magic (1996), *Anatomy of the Occult* (1977), *The Book of African Divination* (1992), *Buckland Gypsies' Domino Divination Deck* (1995), *Coin Divination* (1999), *Gypsy Dream Dictionary* (1998), *Gypsy Fortunetelling Tarot Kit* (1998), *Here Is the Occult* (1974), *The Magick of Chant-O-Matics* (1978), *Mu Revealed* (pseudonym: Tony Earl; 1970), *Practical Color Magick* (1983), *Ray Buckland's Magic Cauldron* (1995), *Secrets of Gypsy Fortunetelling* (1988), *Secrets of Gypsy Love Magick* (1990), *The Truth about Spirit Communication* (1995), *Witchcraft from the Inside* (1971; 1995), *Witchcraft...the Religion* (1966), and two novels: *The Committee* (1993) and *Cardinal's Sin* (1996). He also produced the video *Witchcraft Yesterday and Today* (1990).

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GAVIN FROST (1930–) AND YVONNE FROST (1931–)

In 1968, Gavin and Yvonne Frost formed the first Wiccan church, the Church of Wicca, and continued lobbying for their cause until, in 1972, they gained federal recognition of witchcraft as a religion. In 1985, their persuasive arguments convinced a federal appeals court that Wicca was a religion equal to any other recognized as such in the United States. The Frosts' School of Wicca, also established in 1968, became the first craft correspondence school and continues to publish *Survival*, the longest-lived Wiccan newsletter in circulation. The School of Wicca has brought more than 200,000 people to the craft and has handled as many as one million requests for information in a single year. Authors of the controversial *Witches' Bible* (1975), the Frosts have coauthored 22 books and have appeared on hundreds of national television and radio shows to promote Wicca. Since 1972, Gavin and Yvonne have lived under a vow of poverty, turning over all their material possessions to the Church of Wicca.

It was in his final year at the University of London (King's College) shortly after the close of World War II that Gavin grew interested in the prehistoric peoples of the British Isles and in the reconstruction of their spiritual beliefs. At London University there were several people of the English upper middle class or lower aristocracy who wanted to form a witchcraft coven. Through contacts with Thomas Lethbridge, an authority on witchcraft who worked at the university, Frost and his friends got in touch with a group of witches in Penzance, who agreed to initiate a few students if they met certain conditions. Frost was among a group of four who were blindfolded and taken out to a place they later identified as Boskednan, a Nine-Maidens Circle. (The breath of nine maidens heats the celtic goddess Cerridwen's cauldron of inspiration.) They went through an initiation similar to the initiation that would appear many years later in *The Witch's Bible* and it was on that occasion when Frost got the scar on his wrist, the spirit-through-fire scar that is still visible. Roots of that coven's practice have always intrigued Frost because they seemed to owe nothing to **Gerald Gardner**'s work and because the order of service (the same as that shown later in Gavin and Yvonne Frosts' *The Good Witch's Bible*) did not resemble that of most other groups.

After earning an honors degree, Frost was requested to work for the Department of Atomic Energy and offered the opportunity to work on a doctorate in pure research. He completed his doctoral thesis on research into the separation of potassium and sodium ions by filtration, and moved on into research on the detection and classification of alpha waves. Then an old school friend contacted him and asked him to work on research in the infrared spectrum. Frost and his significant other, Dorothy Whitford, moved to de Havilland Aircraft in Hatfield near London. Here the research concentrated on investigation of long-wave infrared radiation for the British equivalent of the Sidewinder missile. Much of the testing of that missile was carried out on Salisbury Plain, and it was necessarily done at night. This gave Frost daytimes to explore nearby ancient monuments

such as Stonehenge, and time to talk with local historians on what may be called the pagans of Stonehenge.

Gavin and Dorothy married and elected to emigrate to Montreal to work on the Canadian missile program. Upon arrival they learned they would immediately be assigned to Quebec City, site of the Canadian Missile Research Institute. Frost declined, joining instead Canadair's Training and Simulator group. His son Christopher was born in October 1954 in Montreal, and his daughter Sandra in April 1957, also in Montreal.

On one assignment Frost visited Chile when an F-86 had landed on a jungle strip near a remote mountain village, and its engine refused to start. The group needed about four days to locate the problem and get the plane flown out of there. In those four days in the village, Frost got his first taste of religion and healing as practiced by shamans. The villagers could not believe that an outsider, especially a Caucasian, would have any interest in their procedure or would be receptive toward it. But Frost saw many parallels in what they were doing to what he had been taught in the coven in England and had put on his mental shelf with the move to Canada.

When Frost moved to California, he became senior project engineer on the radar system in the F-104. This gave him the opportunity to travel extensively world-wide and achieve high-level contacts in many countries. When the opportunity arose to become the firm's European representative, Frost took it and moved his family to Munich, Germany.

Although the hours and work expectations were still high, there was more free time in Munich to investigate the fascinating subject of German sorcery. Gavin Frost studied for initiation with a group of German sorcerers in Geisel-gasteig, the old Bohemian artists' colony south of Munich, but because Dorothy had no interest in the occult or in writing for a living, the family was beginning to fragment. Upon their return to the States, Gavin and Dorothy divorced.

It was here that Gavin Frost and Yvonne Wilson began the long process of establishing the spiritual path they called Wicca as a religion.

Yvonne Frost. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

Yvonne's parents moved from rural Kentucky to California in 1930, and nine months later in March 1931 she was born in Los Angeles, the oldest of four siblings. She grew up in the hard-shell Baptist matrix, trying hard to conform and cause no trouble, but she felt bewildered inside. As the eldest of four children, she lived in silent obedience, wondering why she did not fit in. Qualifying for Mensa, the international high-IQ society, helped explain the feelings of alienation.

A 10-year marriage ended in divorce, and Yvonne began eight years of living as a self-supporting single woman. She enrolled part-time in a junior college and earned an Associate in Arts in 1962 with the highest GPA in her class. Yvonne also started to explore spiritual options. Buddhism was popular then, in the early 1960s, but she could not get comfortable with it. **Spiritualism** entered her awareness, with its dark-

Gavin Frost. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

ened rooms, psychic development, **mediumship,** and Native American **spirit guides.**

In a Spiritualist seance in 1965, a voice came to her through the medium's trumpet: "Can I be your little girl?" Single as she was, Yvonne was taken aback. Still she managed to answer, "Yes. You come when it's time." Bronwyn Frost was born in 1969. In an **apport seance** Yvonne's spirit guide at that time, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, brought her a green cabochon stone. She had it set into a bracelet but has never been able to get it identified.

THE *Frosts live under a vow of poverty, turning over all their material possessions to the Church of Wicca.*

Yvonne's career at that time was in aerospace, and Gavin Frost was her boss's boss. She formed her first impression of him when she saw how fellow workers yielded plenty of room to Dr. Frost as he strode the firm's halls. During Gavin's stint in Munich, he began work on a novel entitled *Pagans of Stonehenge* and asked her to edit it for him at long distance. Thus began Yvonne's career as a coauthor.

"One thing led to another," Yvonne Frost recalled. "We two became an item. I became interested in Gavin's path. The teachings of Spiritualism and Buddhism overlapped some aspects of the Craft, so learning the Craft was a natural step. After his divorce we moved together to St. Louis. There his work as international sales manager implied even more travel and longer hours away from home. I used my time to type all the School's lectures and the draft of *The Witch's Bible*." (1972)

Yvonne said that Gavin's witnessing Bronwyn's birth brought him an epiphany. He gave up his career in aerospace, though he worked intermittently for a year or so as a consultant, and committed his life and energies to the Craft. "No more gold credit cards, no more first-class flights world-wide, no more captain of industry and management matron for the two of us," Yvonne said. "We traded all this in for a vow of poverty and full-time commitment to living and teaching the Craft."

Continuing her remembrance, Yvonne observed, "In retrospect, our shared life begins to show a pattern. A couple of years remodeling a derelict building in St. Charles, Missouri; three years of raising pigs on unimproved rural Missouri acreage and an abandoned schoolhouse; 20 years in New Bern, North Carolina (site of the First Amendment guaranteeing religious freedom in this nation); all these chapters served to fill in gaps in our respective learning. What we did not already know about humility from the discomforts of rehabbing buildings and from raising pigs, we have learned well and thoroughly from the pagan/Wiccan community and the negativity of its reception. After the theological work, my greatest accomplishment is the establishment of the Church of Wicca as a federally recognized church, not only with regard to its tax-exempt status, but also in federal appeals court. The church's official letter of determination arrived from the IRS in 1972, making ours the first Wiccan Church (despite the resentful claims of others) to earn federal recognition. The key to such recognition of Wicca—the Craft— as a religion has been its well-defined theology."

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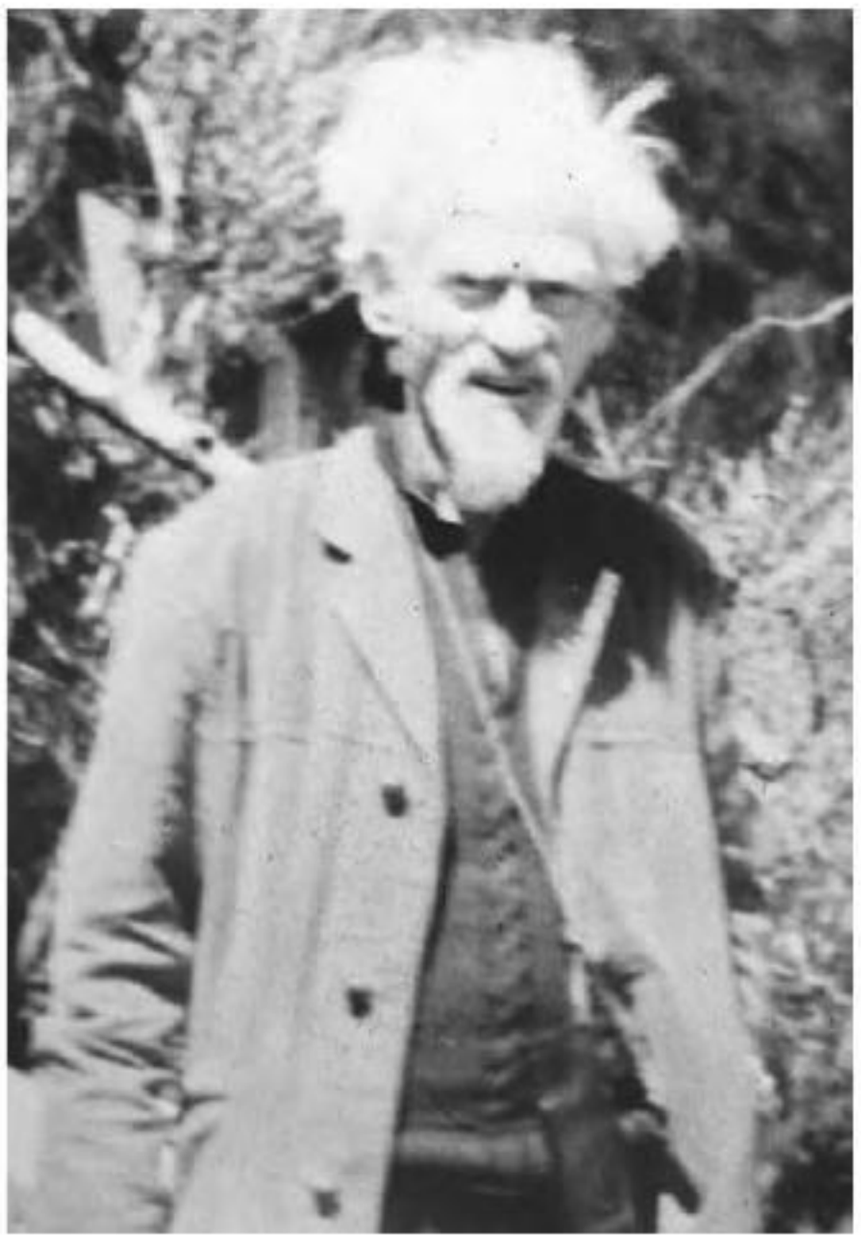
Gerald Brosseau Gardner (1884–1964)

Gerald Gardner is regarded as the founding father of all modern expressions of witchcraft/Wicca. Born in Lancashire, England, on June 13, 1884, Gardner spent a great deal of his adult life as a British civil servant and as a plantation manager in Southeast Asia. Although Gardner would later claim to have had an interest in the occult of great duration, he did not really begin to explore **Spiritualism** and the arcane until he had returned to England after his retirement shortly before World War II. There, in the autumn of 1939, he discovered witchcraft and, Dorothy Clutterbuck, a hereditary witch, high priestess of a New Forest coven, initiated him into a secret group of Wiccans. Throughout his writings, Gardner would always refer to the magical religion as Wica, rather than Wicca, as the word is spelled in common usage today.

In his book *The Meaning of Witchcraft* (1959), Gardner wrote that when he found Wicca, he knew that he had discovered something interesting, but he was nearly through the initiation when it struck him that the Old Religion did truly exist and that he had become a part of the great circle that had existed since time immemorial. To be a Gardnerian witch would thenceforth be to become a witch who had undergone an initiation that could hearken back to Gerald Gardner and through him to an unbroken lineage that had been hidden and kept secret by sacred oaths and the solemn practice of holy rituals.

At first, when Gardner published *High Magick's Aid* (1949), a fictional account of witches under the pseudonym of Scire, traditional witches became nervous and upset that he was beginning to reveal too much to the general public. Then, when the witchcraft laws were repealed in Great Britain in 1951 and Gardner wrote *Witchcraft Today* (1954), a nonfictional treatment of modern witchcraft, he incurred the wrath of many traditional members of Wicca. Gardner argued that he did not reveal any secrets protected by the oath that he had taken during his initiation, but he feared that because so many of the traditional witches were growing very old, new members had to be encouraged to keep the craft alive. He announced his intentions to publish more books about Wicca and to become an outspoken spokesperson for witchcraft. From that time on, Gardner began to develop his own tradition that might be described as a combination of ritual and ceremonial magick, French Mediterranean witchcraft, and the incorporation of the concepts and ideas of such fellow witches as **Doreen Valiente.**

Gardner became the major spokesperson for contemporary witchcraft and the pagan community, and in 1960 he was invited as such to a reception at Buckingham Palace. He died on February 13, 1964, on the *S.S. Scottish Prince* while returning from a trip abroad.



Dr. Gerald Brosseau Gardner (1884–1964). (RAYMOND BUCKLAND/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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SYBIL LEEK (1923–1983)

Sybil Leek was a witch, an astrologer, and a psychic who was born in England into a highly unusual family. Her maternal grandmother was a psychic lady and a follower of the Old Religion. Her father was an intellectual and well versed in metaphysics, but more inclined to a scientific investigation of a field of inquiry. Sybil's mother was a theosophist with an inborn affinity toward all children. Added to these were an assortment of aunts, cousins, and other extended family members.

Under the combined tutorial care of her family, Leek managed to escape the British public school system for many years. Each member of the family taught the child his or her particular specialty, as well as a diversity of other things. Leek learned about herbs, witchcraft, astrology, the general field of the occult, and the mystical Kabbalah. This unorthodox rearing was far from one-sided, however. Before the age of nine, young Sybil had "read through" the major classics. She had read the Bible, the works of Shakespeare, and many other volumes of Eastern religious and non-Western philosophies. Most of all, though, Leek learned from her grandmother, who taught her the Craft of the Wise. Once her preliminary instruction was completed, the young initiate journeyed to France, to the *Gorge du Loup* where Leek was initiated into the world's oldest religion.

SYBIL *Leek was the first person to be filmed in mediumistic trance.*

In her book *Diary of a Witch* (1969), Leek described briefly the oath of fidelity that every witch solemnly gives on the night of his or her initiation:

"It is accepted as being binding forever, and no initiate can take it lightly. She accepts wholeheartedly all the tenets of witchcraft—the acceptance of the Supreme Being, the knowledge that good and evil are equal parts of a human being, and that she must personally strive to outbalance evil with good. She must not debase the arts which she has been taught, and at all times she must be conscious of the need to be discreet, not only in her own life but with regard to any other members of the coven."

Shortly after Leek returned to England the family moved to the New Forest, a large area that roughly extends from Southampton northward to the borders of Salisbury and nearby Stonehenge, and westward to Dorset. It was in this area that Leek widened her lore of herbs, nature, and human psychology.

Since the age of 15, Sybil Leek had been in and out of various media jobs, and when she began moonlighting as a roving reporter for Southern Television it was her task to provide material for a series using the magazine format of small documentaries, interviews, and highlights of the day. The show's producers were particularly interested in Leek's contacts with the Gypsies of the New Forest, and she was able to present several interesting and informative vignettes about her nomadic friends.

It was in December of 1963 that Sybil Leek's media relationship caused her to be, probably, the first person to be filmed in mediumistic trance. The incident began when parapsychologist Bennison Herbert, who wished her to accompany him to a twelfth-century mansion that was allegedly haunted, contacted Leek. Almost immediately after the group entered the old house, Leek began to feel herself slipping away from the laughing joviality of the others. The group reached an upstairs room of the old stone building and settled around a large table. Within moments Leek was in a deep trance. Sights and sounds beyond the normal senses surrounded the entranced psychic. She felt someone come in through the door, then felt seized from behind. Leek, enraged, shouted at the image of the ghostly woman standing in the doorway. The struggle ceased as the heavy table at which the group

was seated suddenly rose into the air and traversed the room. Then, with vented fury, the table repeatedly threw itself at the heavy stone wall, chipping the surface. A door slammed and something was heard running down the steps. Leek came out of her trance and was told what had happened by Herbert, who had taken notes on all the strange happenings.

At this point the BBC crew could no longer contain themselves. They hastily set up their lights and cameras, hoping to catch more of the same phenomena. The crew was not disappointed. The table began to move once more, traveling across the room to fling itself with renewed vigor at the ancient stonework. An incredulous solid man, weighing 220 pounds, tried to sit on the airborne table, only to be tossed off as if he were a featherweight. The table assaulted the wall with such force that it chipped a two-inch hole through the surface. The footage received wide distribution throughout the south of England and generated tremendous interest. The tables were shown in almost complete levitation and the mark on the wall was quite visible.

After achieving a great deal of fame as the Witch of New Forest, Sybil Leek came to the United States, where she teamed up with psychic investigator Hans Holzer (1920-) on a series of ghost-hunting expeditions. The two were often followed by an entourage of local, and sometimes international, media, eager to sniff out a good story. Frequently, movie cameras would roll while Leek was in a heavy trance state, but this never deterred the medium from obtaining solid material, which Holzer would then try to substantiate.

Leek never knew where their next jaunt was going to take them. Holzer usually investigated the cases brought to his attention, first affirming that the material represented a solid psychic case, worthy of being investigated. He would give Leek none of this information, to ensure that her trance information could never be accused of being the result of suggestion.

In addition to Leek's many talents as a psychic and her deep immersion in the Old Religion, she had yet another major field of interest that was with her all of her life. As she states in the opening lines of *My Life in Astrology* (1972): "Astrology is my science; Witchcraft is my religion." For Sybil Leek, astrology lessons began when she was eight years old. From her grandmother, she learned the basics of astrology, with personality traits and psychology stressed; from her father, she learned the painstaking technical aspect of casting a chart.

In her younger days the world of astrology was a glamorous one. Every summer the family would vacation in the Riviera, and Leek's skills were in great demand among the celebrities and nobility that would gather on the beaches. Among her notable clients were the elder Aga Khan, Queen Marie of Rumania, and author Somerset Maugham. Although Leek had nostalgic feelings for that particular time, her later life was to show her an even more exciting use for her astrological skills.

Sybil Leek was determined to aid in the understanding of witchcraft. Unfortunately, she found some of the gravest misunderstandings in her adopted country of the United States. The press persistently confused witchcraft with black magick and Satanism, but Sybil Leek was instrumental in bringing a greater awareness of witchcraft to those persons who wished to form traditional covens, and she never ceased using her wit and celebrity to advance the truth about Wicca, the craft of the wise. She became a major force on the psychic scene, and her rich and varied life consistently led her to prove the deeper meanings and interrelationships between all areas of metaphysics, and her vast experience prepared her admirably for the research and study to which she devoted herself.

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Margaret Alice Murray (1863–1963)

For decades, Margaret Murray's *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* (1921) was the defini-

tive work on witchcraft and undoubtedly inspired such individuals as **Gerald Brosseau Gardner** to revive the Craft in the modern era. Murray's thesis was that witchcraft hearkened back to ancient, pre-Christian goddess worship and continued forward in unbroken lineage to contemporary times. The witch craze that seized Europe in the period from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries and that led to the persecution and deaths of thousands of those women who practiced witchcraft was nothing more or less than the attack of the patriarchal establishment on an ancient, woman-centered religion. In her opinion, based on her extensive research, the practice of witchcraft had nothing to do with the worship of Satan, an entity of evil that had been created by Christianity.

Although Murray shall probably always be known in the popular mind as the author of two seminal books on witchcraft, the aforementioned *The Witch-Cult in Western Europe* and *The God of the Witches* (1952), among her peers at the University College in London she was a respected scholar and specialist in Egyptian hieroglyphics. Because it was difficult in her day for a proper Englishwoman to become an archeologist, she first obtained a degree in linguistics, which led in turn to the study of Egyptian hieroglyphics and Egyptology. In the late 1890s, her work had been noticed by the eminent archeologist Sir Flinders Petrie (1853–1942), who permitted her to join him in his excavations at Abydos in Egypt. Because she distinguished herself on this expedition, she was invited to join the staff at the University College.

Murray was known as an ardent feminist, and her passion for the political advancement of women may well have influenced her interpretation of the European witchcraft trials as being organized campaigns of terror against those women who still practiced the old goddess-centered religions. Since her books on the history of witchcraft created little uproar among the academics of her day, there was no taint of sensationalism that prevented her from becoming a fellow of Britain's Royal Anthropological Institute in 1926. In 1931, Murray published *The Splendor That Was Egypt*, a book centered on Egyptology, her special field of interest. From 1953 to 1955, she served as president of Britain's Folklore Society. Remarkably, in 1963, at the age of 100, Murray published her autobiography, *Centenary*, and *The Genesis of Religion* (1963).

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M. MACHA NIGHTMARE

As her contribution to the emerging pagan culture, M. Macha NightMare (also known as Aline O'Brien), priestess and witch, chose to develop her skills as a collaborative ritualist and author. Early in her journey on the path of witchcraft, NightMare joined in the formation of Reclaiming Collective, a network of people who sought to bring together activism with earth-based spirituality and healing. She also participated with the collective in teaching the Craft and in performing public **sabbats** in San Francisco. The collective evolved into a Craft tradition, and eventually dissolved itself in 1997 and reemerged as a much larger and more inclusive entity.

With **Starhawk,** Macha NightMare coauthored *The Pagan Book of Living and Dying: Practical Rituals, Prayers, Blessings, and Meditations on Crossing Over* (1997), and she is the author of *Witchcraft and the Web: Weaving Pagan Traditions Online* (2001). In addition to her books, her articles have appeared in many periodicals, and she has spoken on behalf of the craft to electronic and print media.

NightMare holds elder and ministerial credentials through the Covenant of the Goddess (CoG), the oldest and largest nondenominational organization of witches in the United States. A member since 1981, she is a former

national first officer and has served the covenant in many other capacities. She is on the teaching faculty of Cherry Hill [Pagan] Seminary in Bethel, Vermont, where she also serves on the Pagan Pastoral Counseling Advisory Panel.

Macha NightMare is a member of the Biodiversity Project Spirituality Working Group, which seeks to increase biodiversity awareness, preservation, and activism within religious communities. She also works with the Sacred Dying Foundation in educating funeral professionals and hospice workers about pagan beliefs and practices regarding death and dying. To keep current on pagan research, she participates in the Nature Religion Scholars Network.

Macha NightMare's matron is Kali Ma, and her magical practice, inspired by feminism and a concern for the health of the planet, is formed of Celtic, Hindu, and Tibetan practices, the sacred art of tantra, and the magic of enchantment. When the opportunity presents itself, NightMare travels the so-called "broomstick circuit," where she enjoys immersing herself in the diverse community that constitutes contemporary American witchcraft.

She resides in Marin County, California.

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Starhawk

A feminist and peace activist, Starhawk (also known as Miriam Simos) is one of the foremost voices of ecofeminism, and she travels widely in North America and Europe giving lectures and workshops, drawing on her 25 years of research and experience in the Goddess movement. Her book *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess* (1979, 1989) is currently regarded as the definitive work on modern, feminist witchcraft. Starhawk holds an M.A. in psychology from Antioch West University. She consulted on the films *Goddess Remembered* and *The Burning Times*, directed by Donna Read and produced by the National Film Board of Canada. She also cowrote the commentary for *Full Circle*, the third film in the same Women's Spirituality series. Many of Starhawk's works have been translated in German, Danish, Italian, Portuguese, and Japanese.

From organizing in her high school during the days of the Vietnam War, Starhawk has been active in social change movements for more than 30 years. She has participated in and helped with training and organizing antinuclear actions at Diablo Canyon, Livermore Weapons Lab, Vandenberg Airforce Base, and the Nevada Test Site, among others. She traveled to Nicaragua with Witness for Peace in 1984 and has made two trips to El Salvador to do ongoing support work for sustainability programs. She works on countless environmental and land use issues and was a founder of the Cazadero Hills Land Use Council in Western Sonoma County. Her focus in recent years has been the antiglobalization movement, training for and taking part in the anti-WTO action in Seattle, the anti-IMF/World Bank actions in Washington, D.C., and doing trainings in Europe for the actions in Prague.

STARHAWK is one of the foremost voices of ecofeminism.

Starhawk continues her collaboration with filmmaker Donna Read, working on an hour-long documentary on the life of archaeologist Marija Gimbutas. They have formed their own film company, Belili Productions.

Starhawk works with Reclaiming, a network of people who bring together activism with earth-based spirituality and healing, offering classes, intensives, public rituals, and training in the Goddess tradition of magical activism. She writes a regular column for the

Reclaiming Quarterly, and she is also a columnist on the Web for www.beliefnet.com and for www.znet.com.

She lives part-time in San Francisco, in a collective house with her partner and friends, and the rest of the time in a little hut in the woods where she practices the system of ecological design known as permaculture.

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DOREEN VALIENTE (1922–1999)

One of the most influential individuals in the shaping of modern Wicca was born Doreen Edith Dominy in Mitcham, South London, on January 4, 1922, and spent her childhood in the west of England, an area noted for its rustic beauty and its connection to the folklore of the past. As an adult, she recalled that from a very young age she took to running about while riding on a broomstick. Although she did not consciously know why she had done so, she did remember that it upset her conventionally religious parents, who were opposed to any portrayal of witchcraft, whether or not it derived from childish display.

When Valiente was only seven, her first mystical experience happened one night while she was staring intently at the moon. She perceived at that time that what ordinary people embraced as the world of reality was but the facade behind which something much more real and potent lay waiting for those who would seek "the world of force beyond the world of form." At the age of 15, she walked out the door of the convent school to which she had been sent and refused to return.

At the age of 19, she married Joanis Vlachopoulos, a 32-year-old able seaman serving with the merchant navy. Six months later, in the summer of 1941, her husband was reported missing. Details are sketchy, but since World War II was in progress, it is assumed that Vlachopoulos was killed when his ship was destroyed by a Nazi torpedo. In 1944, Doreen married Casimiro Valiente.

In the summer of 1952, the year after the Witchcraft Act of 1735 was repealed, Doreen Valiente met a witch of the New Forest Coven who introduced her to **Gerald Brosseau Gardner.** On Midsummer's Eve 1953, she received the first degree of initiation into Wicca by Gardner, who at that time was operating a witchcraft museum on the Isle of Man. Although Gardner claimed that his *Book of Shadows* had been compiled by remnants of the Old Religion that he had pieced together for his Gardnerian tradition, the astute Doreen, whose witchcraft name was "Ameth," recognized passages from other works, such as **Aleister Crowley**'s *Gnostic Mass (1942)*.

Far from being humiliated or angered by his student's recognition that his *Book of Shadows* was much a pastiche of many traditions of witchcraft, with rites and rituals copied from ancient lore, as well as a few bits and pieces from **Freemasonry** and Crowley, Gardner invited her to improve, if she could, upon his fragments of the old and the new. Valiente accepted the challenge and replaced nearly all of the Crowley and Masonic excerpts with the thoughts and inspirations that she had received from her own mystical experiences since childhood. The reconstruction of the *Book of Shadows* achieved by Valiente gave the practitioners of Wicca a practical and workable system which has been followed by many witches ever since. Gardner and Valiente eventually parted company over his claim that his "Old Laws" should be heeded above her revisions, but Valiente continued to doubt the authenticity of some of the laws that Gardner claimed were derived from ancient traditions.

Healing Powers of the Curandero

The curandero works among the Hispanic people of California, Texas, Mexico, and many areas of South America as a master of the many skills involved in folk healing. Whether male or female, they acquire their abilities through two basic methods: By serving as an apprentice under the guidance of an experienced curandero or by receiving a spiritual vision that gives the knowledge upon them. To be a curandero is to have received a gift from God. The three common types of curanderos are the herbalist, the yerbero; the midwife, the partera; and the massage therapist, the sabador.

After serving an apprenticeship and proving themselves endowed with the requisite skills of healing, the curanderos treat a wide variety of illnesses brought to them by their patients. Among other native healers in the Hispanic culture, however, the curanderos are the only ones to have the skills necessary to remove illnesses or physical maladies inflicted by negative witchcraft.

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Although they later resumed their friendship, it was never again at the level which it had once attained.

When her husband passed away in 1972, Doreen Valiente began to devote herself to writing about witchcraft as she knew and understood it. After her *An ABC of Witchcraft* (1973) and *Natural Magic* (1975), she became recognized as an authority on magic and witchcraft. Her last days were spent in a nursing home, and after she had passed her magical legacy on to John Belham-Payne, she died on September 1, 1999.

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Witchcraft

Since the Middle Ages, witchcraft, the "Old Religion," or **Wicca,** the "ancient craft of the wise," all of which are different names for the same nature-based religion, has been unjustly, and for the most part purposely, interwoven with **Satanism** until, in popular thought, the two comprise a tapestry of confusion and misidentification. Wicca, in its contemporary expression, has evolved into

what its followers term "neo-paganism," a concept reviewed in another section. The Old Religion, that which in the Middle Ages came to be known as witchcraft, is thought to have had its genesis in the later Paleolithic period, a time when early humans faced the elements and their environment with little more than their hands and a few crude tools of bone and stone to aid them in the struggle to survive. Like the other creatures around them, Stone Age humans had to adapt themselves constantly to changes in the weather, climate, and food supply. Having greater powers of perception, humankind's responses to these changes involved more than an instinctual change of habits or location. The human species could also wonder about the whys and wherefores of these things, and because of the remarkable facility of human imagination, these early men and women could ponder how these things might change for the better or worse in the future. As consciousness of humans increased, their world became more wonderful and more terrifying.

Primitive humans were primarily hunters. They needed the meat obtained from their prey, and they needed the animal skins for clothing. From the teeth and bones of the slaughtered animals, they fashioned simple tools and weapons. When the hunting was bad, they knew that their own existence was threatened. Why was the hunt successful at times and not at others? Perhaps there was a spirit who decided these things. If so, perhaps that spirit could be persuaded to control the hunt in favor of the human hunter.

In his classic work *The Golden Bough* (1890), Sir James George Frazer points out two factors influencing the nature of primitive religion:

1. the older concept of a "view of nature as a series of events occurring in an invariable order without the intervention of personal agency"; and
2. the later development that the "world is to a great extent worked by supernatural agents, that is, by personal beings acting on impulses and motives."

From the first concept arose the earliest rites of primitive religion consisting of sympathetic magic, which is based on the belief that something that resembles something else is able to become or attract that which it resembles, or a given cause always produces a certain effect. An example of such rites is the shaman's lighting of the ceremonial fire each morning to ensure the sun's rising. If the shaman lights his fire each morning, then the god who lights the great fire in the heavens must see and follow suit.

By a similar process Stone Age humans sought to ensure the success of the hunt. In *Witchcraft from the Inside* (1997), **Raymond Buckland** writes:

> One man would represent the God and supervise the magick. As a God of Hunting, he was represented as being the animal being hunted. His representative, or priest, would therefore dress in an animal skin and wear a headdress of horns.

This God of the Hunt, then, is the Horned God pictured on the wall of the Caverne des Trois in southern France. At Le Tuc d'Audoubert, near the Caverne des Trois, archeologists found the clay figure of a bison. The figure shows a number of marks where spears were thrust into it during a ritual of sympathetic magic performed to ensure a successful hunt. According to Buckland: "A model of the animal to be hunted was made . . . and under the priest's direction, was attacked by the men of the tribe. Successful in 'killing' the clay animal, the men could thus go about after the real thing confident that the hunt would go exactly as acted before the God."

It is interesting to note the association of horns with divinity, a condition that finds expression in numerous strange and seemingly unassociated places. It is not difficult to associate the horned headdresses worn by the shamans of various tribal societies with the concept of a God of the Hunt. The headpieces of many ancient rulers, including the pharaohs of Egypt, include horns either of realistic or stylized design. Although the religion of the biblical Israelites was represented as distinctly antipagan, their sacrifices were offered on horned altars. The two bronze altars in Solomon's (10th century B.C.E.) tem-

Stregeria: Old Religion or New?

Followers of the order of Italian witchcraft known as Stregeria claim that their tradition has maintained an unbroken lineage that goes back before the days of the Roman Empire.

According to the ways of the strege, the Goddess of the Old Religion, whether known as Diana, Aradia, or Demeter, has always been the benefactress of the outcast, the lonely, the people of the night. When the new religion of Christianity achieved dominance in Italy, the strege revered Mother Mary as an expression of the Goddess Diana.

Throughout Italy, Sicily, and Malta, there are many strege passing as devout church members, including a few Roman Catholic priests, who accept the Blessed Virgin Mary because they know she is just another incarnation of the Goddess Diana. One day, the strege believe religious tolerance will progress to the stage where they will once again have a public temple to the Goddess. More than one scholar of the mass conversions of the pagan populace of Europe during the Middle Ages has commented on the fact that the common folk simply went underground with their worship of Diana, or made the motions of giving reverence to the Virgin Mary, while secretly directing their true devotion to the Goddess.

"Christianization forced the Old Religionists underground in the twelfth century, but the sculptors paid tribute to their goddesses Demeter and Persephone by creating the Madonna and female Jesus. In ancient times people worshipped at the Temple of Demeter in Enna, Sicily, where they celebrated her daughter Persephone's resurrection from the underworld to become Goddess of souls and immortality. To this day the Sicilians worship the female deity more than the male, and every city has its sainted patroness."

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ple were equipped with horns, as was the altar at the shrine of the **Ark of the Covenant** in Jerusalem before Solomon. Most curious of all, however, is Michaelangelo's (1475–1564) famous statue of Moses (14th–13th century B.C.E.), which depicts him with horns, thereby causing his head and face to bear a remarkable resemblance to Cerrnunos, as the Celts named the Horned God.

Because of the importance of human and animal fertility, the Horned God was soon joined by a goddess, whose purpose it was to ensure the success of all reproductive activities. She was also the goddess who oversaw the birth of human and animal progeny. At a later date, when primitive religious thought had evolved to the point of belief in some form of continuation after death, the goddess oversaw human and animal death as well.

WITH the advent of agriculture, the goddess was called upon to ensure crop fertility.

With the advent of agriculture, the goddess was called upon to extend her powers to ensure fertility of the crops. From this point on, the figure of the goddess began to overshadow that of the Horned God. A population that did not have to keep on the move increased rapidly, and soon a portion of the human tribes began to move out of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, the so-called cradle of civilization, and spread northward to what is now Europe and Asia. To the west, the fertile valley of the Nile proved an attractive site to agricultural peoples. And as humankind moved, their gods moved with them.

The population of medieval Europe had descended from the central Asian plateau. Centuries ago, they had strained against the barriers that the Roman legions had set against them until they had finally broken through and flooded the continent. Christianity and "civilized" ways were unknown to them at first, and they brought their own gods, customs, and rituals into the land. At the dissolution of the Roman Empire, the civilizing force in Europe became the Roman Catholic Church, and even though the ecclesiastical institution made great inroads into the pagan culture, it could not completely wash away the old rituals and nature worship.

Surviving the Roman Empire socially in the Middle Ages was the oppressive feudal system. Once-proud warriors were reduced to the role of serf farmers, and although they resented such a docile status, they were forced by necessity to accept it. Partially because of the frustrations of the common people and partially because of the tenacity of long-conditioned customs, the celebration of nature worship and various adaptations of the ancient **mystery religions** came to be practiced in secret. On those occasions when such seasonal nature celebrations were witnessed by members of the Christian clergy, the gatherings were condemned as expressions of witchcraft and were named "black sabbats," to distinguish the ceremonies as the complete opposite of the true and holy Sabbath days. The Horned God was deemed to be Satan, and the goddess believed to be Diana, goddess of the moon and the hunt.

For the serfs, the observance of the old nature worship was an expression of their conscious or unconscious yen to throw off the yoke of feudalism. The rulers had imposed the Christian God and the Christian ethic. The nobility and high church officials realized that such celebrations could only lead eventually to a rebellious and uncontrollable populace. The popularity of the pagan celebrations rose to its greatest height in the period of 1200 to the Renaissance. During this period, Europe was devastated and depopulated by famines, the ill-fated Crusades, and the black death.

Raymond Buckland feels that it is the naturalness and simplicity of the Old Religion that continues to hold great appeal for the individual who has become alienated by the pomp and ceremony and exclusivity of orthodox religion, as well as the small size of the "congregation." A coven of witches consists of no more than 12 members, the high priest or high priestess bringing the number up to the traditional 13.

"Witchcraft is very much a religion of participation," Buckland said. "Rather than being a spectator sitting in a pew at the back of a church, you are right there in the middle of things, participating."

It was in their enjoyment of the excitement and vigor of the Old Religion that the peasants could allow themselves the luxury of experiencing pleasure without the interference of the church, which sought to control and repress even human emotions. But it was that same expression of seeing the divine in all of the creator's works that brought the wrath of the church down upon the witches in the terrible form of the Inquisition.

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Familiars

The concept of certain spirit beings who assist a magician or a witch undoubtedly hearkens back to the totem animal guides that attended the ancient **shamans,** for the familiars express themselves most often in animal forms. The black cat, for instance, has become synonymous in popular folklore as the traditional companion of the witch. Attendant upon such a sorcerer as the legendary Cornelius **Agrippa** is the image of the black dog or the dark-haired wolf.

The ancient Greeks called upon the *predrii*, spirit beings who were ever at hand to provide assistance to the physicians or magicians. In Rome, the seers and soothsayers asked their familiars or *magistelli* to provide supernatural assistance in their performance of magic and predictions. In many lands where the Christian missionaries planted their faith, various saints provided an acceptable substitute for the ancient practice of asking favors or help from the witches' familiar. Interestingly, many of the saints of Christendom are identified by an animal symbol, for example, the dog with St. Bernard; the lion with St. Mark; the stag with St. Eustace; and the crow with St. Anthony. However, in those regions where the country folk and rural residents persisted in calling upon their familiars, the church decreed the spirit beings to be demons sent by Satan to undermine the work of the clergy. All those accused of possessing a familiar or relying on it for guidance or assistance were forced to recant such a devilish partnership or be in danger of the torture chamber and the stake. While the much-loved St. Francis of Assisi was often represented symbolically by a wolf, if any of the common folk identified the wolf as their personal totem or guide, such a declaration would be taken as proof that they were witches who had the ability to shapeshift into a werewolf.

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The Inquisition—The Time of the Burning

The Inquisition came into existence in 1231 with the *Excommunicamus* of Pope Gregory IX (c. 1170–1241), who at first urged local bishops to become more vigorous in ridding Europe of heretics, then lessened their responsibility for determining orthodoxy by establishing inquisitors under the special jurisdiction of the papacy. The office of inquisitor was entrusted primarily to the Franciscans and the Dominicans, because

of their reputation for superior knowledge of theology and their declared freedom from worldly ambition. Each tribunal was ordered to include two inquisitors of equal authority, who would be assisted by notaries, police, and counselors. Because they had the power to excommunicate even members of royal houses, the inquisitors were formidable figures with whom to reckon. In 1257, the church officially sanctioned torture as a means of forcing witches, sorcerers, shapeshifters, and other heretics to confess their alliance with Satan.

THE *Inquisition came into existence in 1231.*

The Inquisition became a kind of hideous industry. It employed judges, jailers, torturers, exorcists, woodchoppers, and experts to destroy the evil ones who were threatening the ruling powers. "Witch persecutors…were craftsmen with a professional pride," Kurt Seligmann wrote in *The History of Magic* (1948). "A hangman grew melancholic when a witch resisted him unduly. That was akin to a personal offense. In order to save face he let the accused die under the torture, and thus his honor was not impaired, for the blame for the killing would then rest on the devil.…The business became so prosperous that the hangmen's wives arrayed themselves in silk robes.…For every witch burned, the hangman received an honorarium. He was not allowed to follow any other profession, therefore he had to make the best of his craft."

It was not long before the torturers had discovered a foolproof method for perpetuating their gory profession. Under torture, nearly any witch could be forced to name a long string of her "fellow witches," thereby turning the trial of a single individual into an ordeal for more than a hundred. One inquisitor boasted: "Give me a bishop, and I would soon have him confessing to being a wizard!" Another declared that the Holy Inquisition was the only alchemy that really worked, for the inquisitors had found the secret of transmuting human blood into gold.

The Jesuit Friedrich von Spee (1591–1635) became an opponent of the witchcraft trials in 1630 when the wise Duke of Brunswick brought him and a fellow priest into a torture chamber. As the duke and the two fathers, champions of the cause of the Inquisition, stood beside a confessed witch, who was being tortured further for her increased good of soul, the German nobleman asked the priests if, in their consciences, they could say that the Holy Tribunals were doing God's work. When the Jesuits answered loudly in the affirmative, the duke asked the poor woman on the rack to look carefully at his companions. "I suspect them of being witches," he said. With this, he indicated that the wretch be stretched another notch on the rack. At once she began screaming that the two devout fathers were agents of Satan, that she had seen them copulating with succubi and serpents and had dined with them on roasted baby at the last Sabbat.

Later, in an anti-Inquisition work, Father Spree declared: "Often I have thought that the only reason why we are not all wizards is due to the fact that we have not all been tortured. And there is truth in what an inquisitor dared to boast, that if he could reach the Pope, he would make him confess that he was a wizard."

By the late sixteenth century, the power of the Inquisition was beginning to wane. In 1563, Johann Weyer (Weir) (1515–1588), a critic of the Inquisition, managed to publish *De praestigus daemonum* in which he argued that while Satan does seek to ensnare and destroy human beings, the charges that accused witches, werewolves, and vampires possessed supernatural powers were false. Such abilities existed only in their minds and imaginations. However, as if to provide an antidote to Weyer's call for a rational approach to dealing with accusations of witchcraft, in 1580 the respected intellectual **Jean Bodin,** often referred to as the Aristotle of the sixteenth century, wrote *De La demonomanie des sorciers*, a book that argued that witches truly possessed demonic powers and caused the flames once again to burn high around thousands of heretics' stakes.

With the spread of Protestantism through Europe, Pope Paul III (1468–1549) established

the Congregation of the Inquisition (also known as the Roman Inquisition and the Holy Office) in 1542 which consisted of six cardinals, including the reformer Gian Pietro Cardinal Carafa (1475–1559). Although their powers extended to the whole church, the Holy Office was less concerned about heresies and false beliefs of church members than they were with misstatements of orthodoxy in the academic writings of its theologians. When Carafa became Pope Paul IV in 1555, he approved the first *Index of Forbidden Books* (1559) and vigorously sought out any academics who were prompting any thought that offended church doctrine or favored Protestantism.

Although organized **witchcraft trials** continued to be held throughout Europe and even the American colonies until the late seventeenth century, they were most often civil affairs and the Inquisition had little part in such ordeals. However, the Holy Office continued to serve as the instrument by which the papal government regulated church order and doctrine, and it did try and condemn Galileo (1564–1642) in 1633. In 1965, Pope Paul VI (1897–1978) reorganized the Holy Office and renamed it the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

For many years and in dozens of books and articles on witches and Wicca, the number of innocent people executed for the practice of witchcraft during the four centuries of active persecution has been estimated as high as nine million. In 1999, Jenny Gibbons released the results of her research in the autumn issue of *PanGaia* in which she verified that overall, approximately 75 percent to 80 percent of those accused of witchcraft were women, but to date (circa 1999) an examination of the official trial records of the witchcraft trials indicate that less than 15,000 definite executions occurred in all of Europe and America combined. The period of the heaviest persecutions of witches occurred during the 100 years between 1550 and 1650, Gibbons reported, and the total number of men and women accused of witchcraft who were actually hanged or burned probably did not exceed 40,000.

Wiccan author and scholar **Margot Adler** has noted that the source of the oft-quoted nine million witches put to death was first used by a German historian in the late eighteenth century who took the number of people killed in a witch hunt in his own German state and multiplied by the number of years various penal statutes existed, then reconfigured the number to correspond to the population of Europe. "It serves no end to perpetuate the miscalculation," Adler commented. "It's time to put away the exaggerated numbers forever."

By the late sixteenth century, the power of the Inquisition was beginning to wane.

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Sabbats

The Sabbat is a day of ascendancy for witches. In the European countrysides during the Middle Ages, the eight festival observances took on immense importance as thousands of peasants, common people, and members of the lesser nobility attended the seasonal celebrations. The Sabbats mark the passage of the year as it moves through its seasons: Samhain begins the year for those who follow the ways of witchcraft, and it occurs near October 31.

Before gathering in the forest for a **Sabbat,** many witches applied "flying ointment" on their bodies. According to ancient lore, this ointment enables the witch to fly through the air, often accompanying the goddess Diana through the night sky. This ointment was made from atropa belladonna, commonly known as deadly nightshade and contains certain alkaloids, which produce vivid hallucinations.

Unfortunately individuals accused of witchcraft were arrested by the Inquisition and tortured. The priests and witch-hunters were not satisfied with accounts of merely flying to the gatherings in the forests. They wanted to hear how the witches encountered the devil, sold their souls to him, and plotted evil against all god-fearing villagers.

In his *The Black Arts* (1967) Richard Cavendish repeated the account of a woman who wished to test a recipe for witches' flying ointment. She rubbed on the ointment, uttered the appropriate spells, and in front of several witnesses, fell into a disturbed sleep.

Flying High with the Witches

When she awakened, she insisted that she had been with Lady Venus and the goddess Diana, although she had not left the room.

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Yule marks the Winter Solstice and is celebrated near December 21, the longest, darkest night of the year. Candlemas, observed on February 2, is the festival of the Goddess Brigid. The Spring Equinox happens around March 21 and is a powerful time of magic. Beltane, May 1, celebrates love and oneness. The Summer Solstice, occurring around June 21, is also a time of power and strength of the deities of nature. August 1 recognizes Lammas, a time when fruit ripens and there are signs that harvest is near. The Fall Equinox, near or on September 21, celebrates a balance between light and dark, night and day.

In the Middle Ages, the Christian influence, so visible during the day, seemed to vanish at night as great groups of people gathered around a statue of the Horned God and began professing their allegiance to the great deities of nature. To staunch Christians, this horned image was an obscene representation of Satan, a black, grotesque figure that was fiendishly lit by the roaring fire in front of it. In the flickering light, the torso of the figure appeared to be human while the head, hands, and feet were shaped like those of a goat and covered with coarse, black hair. The altar beneath the image of the Horned God was constructed of stones, and the ceremony performed was intricate.

Although there was plenty of food and beer, many scholars of witchcraft believe that the high priests and priestesses took advantage of the entranced state of most of the worshippers and spiked the drinks with belladonna or other drugs. The crowd was then easily whipped into an intoxicated frenzy, which tended to free the inhibitions of the celebrants. At the peak of the collective emotions, the crowd acted as a single person and began almost automatically to dance the hypnotic witches' round. As the

dance continued, the cathartic influence of the entire celebration magnified the energy of each individual until all of them forgot their own personality in expression of worship of the Horned God and the Goddess.

The Sabbat dance, or, as it is commonly known, the witches' round, was performed with the dancers moving in a back-to-back position with their hands clasped and their heads turned so that they might see each other. A wild dance such as this, which was essentially circular in movement, would need little help from the drugged drinks to bring about a condition of vertigo in the most hearty of dancers. The celebration lasted the entire night, and the crowd did not disperse until the crowing of the cock the following morning.

Reports of regular celebrations of the various Sabbats came from all over Europe. An estimated 25,000 attended such rituals in the countrysides of southern France and around the Black Forest region of Germany. As rumors of even larger gatherings spread throughout the land, the nobility and the churchmen decided to squelch such expressions out of existence with the use of the hideous machinery of the Inquisition. Even the most innocent amusements of the serfs were taken away. In the face of such large-scale persecutions, the mass meeting celebrations of the Sabbat were made impossible. But even though great pressure was brought to bear on such outward manifestations of the rituals, the Sabbats were still performed in modified versions in the private fields, orchards, and cellars of the peasants.

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Witchcraft Trials

In the period from about 1450 to 1750, somewhere around 40,000 to 60,000 individuals were tried as witches and condemned to death in central Europe. Of that number, as high as three-quarters of the victims were women.

Numerous scholars have pointed out that beginning in the fourteenth century, the close of the Middle Ages, the Christian establishment of Europe was forced to deal with an onset of social, economic, and religious changes. It was also during this time (1347–49) that the Black Death, the bubonic plague, nearly decimated the populations of the European nations and greatly encouraged rumors of devil-worshippers who conspired with other heretics, such as Jews and Muslims, to invoke Satan to bring about a pestilence that would destroy Christianity and the West. During most of the Middle Ages, those who practiced the Old Religion and worked with herbs and charms were largely ignored by the church and the **Inquisition.** After the scourge of the Black Death, witchcraft trials began to increase steadily throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The first major witch-hunt occurred in Switzerland in 1427; and in 1428, in Valais, there was a mass burning of 100 witches. In 1486, the infamous "hammer for witches," *Malleus Maleficarum*, the official textbook for trying and testing witches written by the monks Sprenger and Kramer, was published.

THE *first major witch-hunt occurred in Switzerland in 1427.*

In the early decades of the sixteenth century, when the Protestant Reformation began to restructure nearly all of Europe politically as well as religiously, witches were largely overlooked by the rulers of church and state who now struggled with the larger issues of the great division within Christianity. Then, after

a time of relatively little persecution, the period of the great witchcraft craze or hysteria that many practicing witches and students of witchcraft today refer to as the "Burning Times," occurred from about 1550 to 1650.

Although organized witchcraft trials continued to be held throughout Europe and even the English colonies in North America until the late seventeenth century, they were most often civil affairs. About 40 people were executed in the English colonies between 1650 and 1710, and half of these victims perished as a result of the **Salem trials** of 1692. Persecution of witches and the trials held to punish them had been almost completely abolished in Europe by 1680. One last wave of the witch craze swept over Poland and other eastern European countries in the early eighteenth century, but it had dissipated by 1740. The last legal execution of a witch occurred in 1782 in Glarus, Switzerland—not far from where the witch craze had begun in 1428. The last known witch-burning in Europe took place in Poland in 1793, but it was an illegal act, for witch trials were abolished in that country in 1782.

THE *last legal execution of a witch occurred in 1782 in Glarus, Switzerland.*

The Inquisition or the Church itself had little part in any witchcraft trials after the latter part of the seventeenth century, but the Holy Office continued to serve as the instrument by which the papal government regulated church order and doctrine.

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ENGLAND

The first record of a witch being burned at the stake in the British Isles was the execution of Petronilla de Meath at Killkenny, Ireland, on November 3, 1324. But from that time until the witch craze ended in the eighteenth century, Ireland would neither try nor burn any more witches. England did not really succumb to the witch craze that seized Central Europe. There was no law against witchcraft in England until 1542—and that law was repealed in 1547. Perhaps because the nation had a strong central government, as opposed to the independent city states which at that time created constant political turmoil within so many of the European countries, England did not tolerate wholesale witch burnings. The few burnings that did occur took place on the borders where different religious faiths were in conflict and the people were more disposed to see Satan in the other person's manner of worship.

The first recorded execution of a person associated with witchcraft occurred in 1441, but the convicted woman, Margaret Jourdemaine of London, was put to death not because she was a witch, but because she had been found guilty of murder. In 1563, perhaps in reaction to the witch craze in Europe, a new law against witchcraft was passed, and a 63-year-old widow named Agnes Waterhouse was condemned to death in 1566 for bewitching a man to death.

Torture could not be used against accused witches in England; therefore, only about 20 percent of those suspected of dealing with the devil were executed. The single period during which something approaching the witch hysteria on the European continent blighted England occurred during the English Civil War during

the 1640s when the central government's power collapsed and opposing factions struggling for dominance were more likely to accuse their opponents of trafficking with the devil.

The last witches executed in England—Temperance Lloyd, Susanna Edwards, and Mary Trembles, all of Bideford, Devon—were all hanged on August 25, 1682. The death penalty of witches in England was abolished in 1736. Estimates of the number of witches put to death in England are about 400, and approximately 90 percent of those condemned were women.

Alleged murders by witchcraft and subsequent trials for witchcraft have not disappeared from the world scene, and the fear of cursing, hexing, and causing death by witchcraft remains very powerful in many nations.

In 1998, in scenes reminiscent of the Salem witch hunts, mobs in Indonesia attacked and killed 153 people who were accused of practicing sorcery. In an eight-year-period, from 1990 to 1998, more than 2,000 cases of witchcraft-related violence, including 577 murders, were recorded in the northern corner of South Africa.

In June 2001, the London *Sunday Times* reported that the president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, feared that he and his government had become the victims of black magic directed at them by powerful *Sangomas* (witch-doctors). In August 2001, a teenaged girl in Nigeria confessed to taking part in the ritual killing of 48 people after being initiated into a secret witchcraft cult. Three men were arrested by police in that African nation after they were found in possession of a human skull that they were using in Black Magick rituals.

The Washington Post reported on November 28, 2001, that Black Magic murders in the state of Maranhao in northeastern Brazil had claimed the lives of at least 26 boys. Although as many as one in six Brazilians practice a form of religion that combines Roman Catholicism with the ancient beliefs of African and Amazonian magic, such as Tambo de Mina, Umbanda, and **Macumba,** the priests of those religions denied any part of the mutilation deaths of the young boys. Authorities remained convinced that Black Magic witchcraft was somehow behind the murders.

In December 2001, the Romanian Parliament announced that it was passing new laws to regulate the thousands of witches practicing in their country. It was suggested that politicians be given special advice on how to deal with the witches after the finance minister sufferred a broken leg the day after he introduced a special tax on witches.

THE law against witchcraft in England was repealed in 1547.

Although the widespread horror of the Inquisition being visited upon innocent individuals and hauling accused men and women into torture chambers has receded into a shameful chapter in human history, trials for witchcraft have by no means been relegated to the Middle Ages.

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France

When an overview of the witchcraft trials in France is made in an effort to derive an accurate picture of the extent of the persecutions of

those alleged to be witches, the issue becomes clouded because of two great heretic hunts that had far-reaching repercussions. The first was the crusade launched against the heretical Cathars in the south of France in 1208, and the second was the trial of the Knights Templar for heresy and witchcraft in 1312. From the beginning of the thirteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century, neither the church or civil courts nor the common people were able to make clear distinctions between Cathars, heretics, and witches.

In 1246, Montsegur, the center of the Albigensian (as the Cathars were also known) resistance fell, and hundreds of the sect who had for so many years withstood the only crusade ever launched against fellow Christians were burned at the stake. In that same year, the headquarters of the Inquisition was established in Toulouse. In 1252, Pope Innocent IV (d. 1254) issued a papal bull that placed the inquisitors above the law and demanded that every Christian—from the aristocracy to the peasantry—assist in the work of seeking out witches and heretics or face excommunication. In 1257, the church officially sanctioned torture as a means of forcing witches and heretics to confess to their evil ways.

In 1305, the Knights Templar, who had for centuries been the bulwark of Christianity against those who would destroy or defame it, were themselves accused of invoking Satan, consorting with female demons, and worshipping black cats. While many clergy, including the pope himself, were reluctant to believe such charges against the Knights Templar, it soon became apparent that the order had become too wealthy and powerful to fit suitably into the emerging political structure of France and the aspirations of its king, Philip the Fair (1268–1314).

After years of persecution, many knights scattered and went into hiding throughout Europe and England. Those valiant Templars who insisted upon presenting a defense were finally brought to trial in 1312; and in spite of 573 witnesses for their defense, at least 54 knights were tortured en masse, burned at the stake, and their order was disbanded by Pope Clement V (c. 1260–1314).

Perhaps because of such large numbers of Cathars having been executed at Montsegur and other cities in the Albi region of southern France, along with reports of the mass burning of the Knights Templar, exaggerated accounts of mass executions of witches passed into the literature of the witch craze in Europe and remained there for centuries. For example, there are many reference books that document the burning of several hundred witches in Toulouse between 1320 and 1350. In one single terrible day during that time, according to the old texts, 400 women were burned at the stake. Historians have since determined that such mass executions of witches at Toulouse never occurred. Such claims are exaggerations or fictions.

The old records also reveal that the witch-hunters in France were not as gender biased as their counterparts in other European nations. Of the 1,300 witches whose appeals were heard by the French parliament, just over half were men. Also, contrary to popular supposition, in countries such as France, where the Catholic Church was firmly entrenched, the inquisitorial church courts were much more lenient than the civil courts in handing out death sentences to accused witches. Overall, in such Catholic nations as France, Italy, and Spain, the church courts executed far fewer people than the local community-based courts or the national courts. According to some statistics, in the period from 1550 to 1682, omitting the numbers of Cathars and Knights Templar executed, France sentenced approximately 1,500 accused witches to death.

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GERMANY

From the perspecive of the papacy, it seemed that witchcraft had become particularly virulent

in Germany, and in 1484, Pope Innocent VIII (1432–1492) became so distressed with conditions in that country that he issued the papal bull *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus*. As an additional antidote to demonism, the pope authorized two Dominican inquisitors Henrich Institoris (also known as Kramer) (1430–1505) and Jacob Sprenger (1436–1495) to prepare a kind of guide book for those witchhunters who sought to battle Satan in the Rhineland. Their collaborative work, *Malleus Maleficarum*, "A Hammer for Witches" (1486), soon became the official handbook for those who conducted witchcraft trials throughout nearly all of Europe. While some members of the laity, the civil courts, and even the clergy had begun to question the actual power of witches, *Malleus Maleficarum* strongly refuted those arguments that suggested that the reality of the hellish works of those individuals who claimed an alliance with Satan existed only in troubled human minds.

According to *Malleus*, those angels who fell from heaven were intent upon destroying the human race—and anyone who believed otherwise believed contrary to the true faith. Therefore, any person who had consorted with demons and who had become witches must recant their evil ways or die.

The country that gave birth to the Protestant Reformation was also the center of the witchcraft trials in Europe, condemning to the stake 48 percent of all those who were accused of consorting with demons, perhaps as many as 26,000 victims. Oddly enough, although much political and religious restructuring was occurring in Germany, the country was not tolerant toward divergent ideas and beliefs. In southwestern Germany alone, more than 3,000 witches were executed between 1560 and 1680. Perhaps the reasons for such heavy persecution of suspected witches lay in the distrust that the warring Christian factions—the Roman Catholics and the newly emerging Protestant sects—had toward one another, and their religious zeal prompted them to accuse a variety of scapegoats as servants of Satan.

In 1630, Prince-Bishop Johann Georg II Fuchs von Dornheim, the infamous *Hexenbischof* (Witch Bishop), constructed a special torture chamber which he decorated with appropriate passages from scripture. He burned at least 600 heretics and witches, including a fellow bishop he suspected of being too lenient.

THE *witchcraft trials in Germany ended in 1684.*

While the Protestant states in Germany abandoned the persecution of witches a generation before those states under Roman Catholic dominance, the uncompromising nature of the Lutheran and Calvinist doctrines contributed to the continuation of the witchcraft trials until around 1660. The witchcraft trials in Germany ended in 1684. Of the approximately 26,000 accused witches condemned to death from around 1550 to 1684, 82 percent were women.

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SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

The Salem, Massachusetts, witchcraft trials of 1692 provide a classic example of what scholars mean when they refer to the "witch craze" or "witch hysteria" that swept through Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Because of the accusations of a small circle of prepubescent girls, an entire community became crazed and caught up in the fear that many of their neighbors were serving Satan in secret. The witch hysteria in Salem village resulted in the deaths of 24 men and women, who were hanged, were crushed to death, or died in prison.

The reign of terror that seized the village of Salem in Massachusetts Bay Colony in

Salem village witchcraft trials in the 1690s. (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

1692 remains perhaps the single most celebrated of all witch hunts. Playwright Arthur Miller's (1915–) moving stage treatment of the nightmare at Salem, *The Crucible* (1953), receives periodic revivals on Broadway, and in 1996 Miller wrote the screenplay for the motion picture version, starring Winona Ryder, Daniel Day-Lewis, Paul Scofield, and Joan Allen. In her study of the witchcraft trials *The Devil in Massachusetts* (1961), Marion L. Starkey made the following observation: "No definitive history of the Salem witchcraft trials has ever been written or is likely to be, for it would take a lifetime and would be encyclopedic in dimension."

The madness began innocently enough in the home of the Rev. Samuel Parris when his slave Tituba began telling stories of **voodoo** and restless spirits to his nine-year-old daughter Betty and her cousin Abigail Williams, 11. While it is certain that the Puritan preacher would have either scolded or beaten Tituba for filling the girls' heads with such spooky tales, Abigail and Betty cherished these secret times with the slave woman and kept quiet about the nature of their conversation. Soon the exciting storytelling sessions in the Parris household were attracting older girls, such as 16-year-old Mary Walcott and 18-year-old Susanna Sheldon, who wanted Tituba to tell their fortunes and predict their future husbands, as well as tell them ghost stories. Although Rev. Parris and the other preachers fulminated from the pulpits about the dangers of seeking occult knowledge, the girls of Salem ignored such warnings in favor of having a thrilling pastime that could help them through a long, cold winter.

Then came the fateful afternoon when Ann Putnam, a fragile, highly strung 12-year-old, joined the circle in the company of the Putnams' maid, 19-year-old Mercy Lewis. Ann was much more widely read than the other girls and was blessed with a quick wit, a high

intelligence, and a lively imagination. She soon became Tituba's most avid and apt pupil. Together with her literate mother, Ann had read far more than the other girls in the circle, and she was quite familiar with the imagery in the Book of Revelation with its dragons, horned beasts, devils, and damnation. It seems that while part of Ann's psyche was thrilled with the forbidden knowledge Tituba shared with them, another aspect was conflicted with guilt that they were flirting with devilish enchantment.

Undoubtedly most of the other girls were also conflicted with conscience and the fear of discovery. As the days passed, little Betty seemed distracted from her chores, subject to sudden fits of weeping, often noted to be staring blankly at the wall. Shortly thereafter, Abigail went far beyond weeping and blank stares. She got down on all fours and began barking like a dog or braying like a donkey. Mary Walcott and Susanna Sheldon fell into convulsions. Ann Putnam and the family maid, Mercy Lewis, also began to suffer seizures. Something evil seemed to have come to Salem.

About four years previously in the north end of Boston, four children in the John Godwin family had fallen into such fits, babbling blasphemies, ignoring the prayers of the clergy. It took the famous preacher Cotton Mather (1663–1728) to quiet the work of an alleged witch, an Irish washerwoman named Glover, and restore the children to normalcy. The memories of this horrid event, including the hanging of Witch Glover, were much alive in the minds of the Salem clergy when they began to ask the girls who it was who was tormenting them.

To no one's surprise, Tituba was the first name from the possessed childrens' lips. Nor did anyone doubt the naming of Sarah Good, considered by the townsfolk to be a bit of a tramp with a foul-smelling pipe, who had been suspected of spreading smallpox through witchcraft. But when the children named Sarah Osburne a witch, the village was shocked. Osburne was a property owner, who lived in one of the most substantial homes in Salem. Nevertheless, warrants were issued for all three women.

And from such a dramatic beginning, the list of names of the devil's disciples who were tormenting the girls grew steadily longer. The wealthy merchant Philip English; Goodwife Proctor, the wife of successful farmer and tavern keeper, John Proctor; Martha Cory, the wife of another prosperous farmer, Giles Cory. Sarah Good's four-year-old daughter, Dorcas, was also put in chains as an accused witch. Two magistrates, John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin, were sent out from the General Court of Massachusetts Colony to hear testimony that described tales of talking animals, dark shapes, red cats, and a tall man, who was undoubtedly the devil himself.

When 71-year-old Rebecca Nurse was arrested for witchcraft against her neighbors, the townsfolk realized that if she could be named as a witch, no one was safe from such accusations. Nurse was considered a veritable saint by the village, a woman noted for her piety and simplicity of heart. Although the jury initially acquitted her, the judge ordered the jury to reconsider and she was found guilty. She was hanged on Gallows Hill on July 19, 1692.

In 1711, the Massachusetts legislature passed a general amnesty that exonerated all but six of the accused witches.

Several hundred people in and around Salem were accused of witchcraft, even the wife of Massachusetts governor William Phips. Such an absurdity provoked Phips into taking a stand against any further imprisonments and he forbade any more executions for witchcraft in Salem. Because of the governor's actions, the nearly 150 men and women who were still chained to prison walls were set free and many who had been convicted of witchcraft were pardoned.

In 1711, the Massachusetts legislature passed a general amnesty that exonerated all but six of the accused witches. In 1957, the state legislature passed a resolution exonerating Ann Pudeator, who had been hanged.

Finally, on November 1, 2001, acting Massachusetts governor Jane Swift approved a bill that cleared all the accused witches hanged in Salem in 1692 and 1693. The bill exonerated the final five who had not been cleared by the previous amnesty resolutions—Susannah Martin, Bridget Bishop, Alice Parker, Margaret Scott, and Wilmot Redd.

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SCOTLAND

Although torture was forbidden to be used as an instrument to obtain confessions from witches in England, it was allowed in Scotland where half of all those accused of witchcraft from 1537 to 1722 were burned at the stake, a total of 1,350 to 1,739 victims—at least three times as many as were hanged in England—with women comprising 86 percent of that number.

IN *1583* The Discovery of Witchcraft *was written.*

The first recorded execution of a witch in Scotland occurred in July 1537 when Janet Douglas, also known as Lady Glamis, was burned at the stake in Edinburgh. Lady Glamis died not because she was the victim of a trial inspired by the witch craze of Europe, but because she had been found guilty of using her abilities as a witch to murder.

In 1583, Englishman Reginald Scot (1538–1599) wrote *The Discovery of Witchcraft*, which was his answer to the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) and what he considered the abuses being conducted against accused witches in Scotland, where torture was freely used to wring confessions out of those unfortunate enough to have gone to trial. Scot considered the witch-hunters to be sexually obsessed madmen who took delight in inflicting sadistic tortures on their victims. A person being put to torture could be made to confess to any charge, Scot argued. And if the witches were really so powerful, he questioned why had they not enslaved the human race centuries ago?

Scot's book so infuriated King James VI of Scotland (1566–1625) that he himself wrote a treatise on the reality of demon worship and the power of witches entitled *Demonologie* to refute *The Discovery of Witchcraft*. A few years later, when he ascended the throne of England, one of King James' first official acts was to order the public burning of Scot's book.

The last witch in the whole of the British Isles to be executed was Jenny Horn of Sutherland, Scotland, who was burned at the stake in 1722. Horn had been tried together with her daughter, who, the jury decided, was a victim of her mother's witchcraft, rather than an accomplice.

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SPAIN

In 1478, at the request of King Ferdinand V (1452–1516) and Queen Isabella I (1451–1504), papal permission was granted to establish the Spanish Inquisition and to maintain it separate from the Inquisition that extended its jurisdiction over all the rest of Europe. The

The Power of the Grimoires

Grimoires are books of ceremonies, rituals, and spells that are to be used in ceremonial magic composed in Europe from the fifteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The texts provide rules regarding symbols, chants, and spells, and describe how to utilize them to perform effective magical effects.

The most famous of all Grimoires is the *Key of Solomon,* allegedly prepared by the king himself. In the first century C.E. the historian Josephus (c. 37–c. 100) refers to a book of incantations for summoning spirits written by Solomon. Black magicians circulated the text throughout Europe in the twelfth century; the Inquisition condemned it as a dangerous text in 1559.

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Spanish Inquisition was always more interested in persecuting heretics than those suspected of witchcraft. It has been estimated that of the 5,000 men and women accused of being witches, less than 1 percent were condemned to death. The Spanish Inquisition was concerned with trying the Marranos or conversos, those Jews suspected of insincerely converting to Christianity; the converts from Islam, similarly thought to be insincere in practicing the Christian faith; and, in the 1520s, those individuals who were believed to have converted to Protestantism. The support of Spain's royal house enabled Tomas de Torquemada (1420–1498) to become the single grand inquisitor whose name has become synonymous with the Inquisition's most cruel acts and excesses. Torquemada is known to have ordered the deaths by torture and burning of thousands of heretics and witches.

The Spanish Inquisition seemed to take special delight in the pomp and ceremony of the *auto-de-fe*, during which hundreds of heretics might be burned at one time. If an *auto-de-fe* could not be made to coincide with some great festival day, it was at least held on a Sunday so that the populace could make plans to attend the burnings.

The ghastly event began with a procession of the penitents led by Dominican friars. Behind them marched the wretched victims of the Inquisition, barefooted, stumbling, hollow-eyed with the pain and nightmare of their ordeal.

As in Spain, the same lack of concern regarding the practice of the Old Religion and the folk customs of the herbalists and *strega* (witches) was also the prevailing attitude in Italy, another nation in which the Roman

Catholic Church was strong and was not weakened by the Protestant Reformation. The clerical tribunals in either nation levied few death sentences toward witches, but many scholars have estimated that the neighbors had killed many men and women suspected of witchcraft. Some researchers have stated that as many as 25 percent of those executed for witchcraft in those countries were lynched by mobs who carried out the fatal sentences that they felt the Inquisition had failed to deliver.

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WITCHHUNTERS

In 1484, Pope Innocent VIII (1432–1492) so deplored the spread of witchcraft in Germany that he issued the papal bull *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus* and authorized two trusted Dominican inquistors, Henrich Institoris (Kramer) (c. 1430–1505) and Jacob Sprenger (c. 1436–1495), to squelch the power of Satan in the Rhineland. In 1486, Sprenger and Kramer published their *Malleus Maleficarum*, "A Hammer for Witches," which quickly became the "bible," the official handbook, of professional witch hunters. *Malleus Maleficarum* strongly refuted all those who claimed that the works of demons exist only in troubled human minds. The Bible clearly told the account of how certain angels fell from heaven and sought to bewitch and seduce humans, and Sprenger and Kramer issued a strict warning that to believe otherwise was to believe contrary to the true faith. Therefore, any persons who consorted with demons and became witches must recant their evil ways or be put to death.

In his *Witchcraft* (1960), Charles Williams wrote that if one were to judge *Malleus Maleficarum* as an intellectual achievement, the work of Sprenger and Kramer is almost of the first order. While one might suspect a book that detailed horrible tortures to be administered to unfortunate men and women to be the efforts of half-mad, sexually obsessed individuals, Williams said that "there is no sign that they were particularly interested in sex. They were interested in the Catholic faith and its perpetuation, and they were, also and therefore, interested in the great effort which it seemed to them was then in existence to destroy and eradicate the Catholic faith."

Williams believed that Sprenger and Kramer proceeded with great care in the *Malleus Maleficarum* to examine the nature of witchcraft and to analyze the best methods of operating against its menace. The two devout Dominican priests took extreme measures to correct error, to instruct against ignorance, and to direct cautious action.

The judges of the great tribunals examined, tried, and tortured female witches at a ratio of 10–1, 100–1, or 10,000–1, depending upon the authority cited. Only in the Scandinavian countries were men accused of being witches and sorcerers at an equal or larger percentage than women.

Once an accused woman found herself in prison through the testimony of someone who had allegedly seen her evil powers at work, she might well be as good as dead. At the height of the witchcraft mania in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, an accusation was equivalent to guilt in the eyes of many judges. Sadly, a neighbor woman jealous of the "witch's" youth and beauty, a suitor angered by her rejection, or a relative who sought her inheritance, may have brought the accusation of witchcraft. And no lawyer would dare defend such an accused witch for fear that he would himself be accused of heresy if he pled her case too well.

The common justice of the Inquisition demanded that a witch should not be condemned to death unless she convict herself by her own confession. Therefore, the judges would order her torture to force her to confess so that she might be put to death. In a vicious and most perplexing paradox of justice, the learned men held that even though the accusation of nearly anyone was enough to land a

woman in prison as a witch—and if she got as far as prison she was thereby considered guilty—all the testimony counted for naught unless the witch confessed her guilt. No one, under common justice, could be put to death for witchcraft on the evidence of another's testimony. What is more, the witch must confess without torture by the court. Therefore, in order to fully comply with the law, the judges turned the accused witches over to the black-hooded torturers so they, themselves, would not be the ones torturing the accused. Once the witch had confessed, she was now eligible to be reconciled to the church, absolved of sin, and burned at the stake. Confession or not, of course, the accused witch found her way to the flaming pyres. The difference, in the eyes of Mother Church, was whether the woman went as guilty but penitent or guilty and impenitent.

Although recent scholarship has argued that the oft-cited figure of nine million innocent women and men condemned to torture and death for witchcraft durng the Inquisition should be lowered more reasonably to a maximum of 40,000, that number is still frighteningly representative of a ghastly miscarriage of justice toward human beings who were persecuted and killed in the name of religion.

Sometime in the 1550s, a highly respected doctor, Johann Weyer (Weir) (1515–1588), who believed in the power of Satan to deceive Earth's mortals, became a critic of the Inquisition and its claims that mere humans could really attain such supernatural powers as those which the tribunals ascribed to witches. Perhaps, he argued, Satan had tricked these unfortunate individuals into believing that they could work such magic in order to cause them to worship the dark forces, rather than God. In 1563, against strong opposition, Weyer published *De praestigus daemonum* in which he presented his arguments that while Satan sought always to ensnare human souls, the supernatural powers attributed to witches existed only in their minds and imaginations.

In 1583 Reginald Scot (1538–1599) wrote *The Discovery of Witchcraft*, which serves as a kind of answer or rebuttal to Sprenger's and Kramer's "Hammer for Witches." He said if witches were really as all-powerful and malignant as the Inquisitors claimed, why had they not enslaved or exterminated the human race long ago?

Pope Innocent VIII (1432–1492). (CORBIS CORPORATION)

Unfortunately for many decades, the voices of Weyer and Scot were those of only a few sane men, desperately crying out in the wilderness of the incredible sexual mania that provided the fuel for the witchcraft persecutions. The reign of terror conducted by the witchhunters in Europe and Great Britain continued until the early part of the seventeenth century.

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witches and shapeshifters were merely people with unsound minds.

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JEAN BODIN (C. 1529/30–1596)

Before he became obsessed with ridding the world of the evils of witchcraft, the brilliant Jean Bodin (Baudin or Bodinus) had been hailed as the Aristotle of the sixteenth century. When he was but a youth, Bodin was noticed by academics as rising young intellectual, and soon he was known throughout Europe as a formidable scholar of history, political theory, and the philosophy of law. Bodin became a celebrated jurisconsult and a leading member of the Parliament of Paris. In 1576, he wrote *The Six Books of the Republic*, a work that remains studied in the twenty-first century. Bodin portrayed a kind of ideal society in which humankind was governed by natural laws, a moral code given through conscience and God. In general, Bodin idealized the potential of humankind as becoming steadily noble and less beastlike. Scholars ponder what became of the utopian politician when Bodin sat down to write *Demonomanie des Sorciers* and became one of the men most responsible for keeping the fires of the **Inquisition** burning brightly.

The *Demonomanie* was first published in Paris in 1581 and again in 1616, 20 years after Bodin's death, as *Fleau des demons et des Sorciers*. In the first and second volumes of this monumental work, Bodin offered his proofs that spirits communicate with humankind, and he itemized the various means by which the righteous might distinguish the good spirits from their evil counterparts. Those men and women who seek to enter pacts with Satan in order to achieve diabolical prophecy, the ability to fly through the air, and the power to shapeshift into animal forms are dealing with evil spirits. Bodin acknowledged that he was well aware of spells by which one might summon incubi or succubi for carnal pleasure.

The third volume details methods by which the work of sorcerers and witches might be destroyed, and the fourth volume lists the characteristics by which witches, shapeshifters, and other servants of Satan might be identified. The massive work concludes with a refutation of Johann Weyer (1515–1588), a medical doctor and author of *De praestigiis daemonum* (1563), who, Bodin determined was in grave danger of committing heresy by arguing that those men and women who claimed to be

HENRI BOGUET (1550–1619)

When he presided at witchcraft trials, Henri Boguet, an eminent judge of Saint-Claude in the Jura Mountains, was known for his cruelty, especially toward children. He had no doubt that Satan gifted witches with the ability to change shape into a variety of animal forms, especially the wolf, so that they might devour humans, and the cat, so they might better prowl by night. The craze of witch-hunting may have been first formulated by the clergy, but by 1600 such jurists as Boguet, **Jean Bodin,** and **Pierre de Lancre** had eagerly assumed the mantles of determined inquisitors.

In his book *Discours des Sorciers* (1610), Boguet recounted his official investigation of a family of werewolves and his observation of them while they were in prison in 1584. According to his testimony, the members of the Gandillon family walked on all fours and howled like wolves. Their eyes turned red and gleaming; their hair sprouted; their teeth became long and sharp; their fingernails turned horny and clawlike. In another case recounted in his book, Boguet told of eight-year-old Louise Maillat, who in the summer of 1598 was possessed by five **demons,** who identified themselves as Wolf, Cat, Dog, Jolly, and Griffon. In addition, the little girl was accused of shapeshifting into the form of a wolf.

Boguet devoted a chapter in his *Discours des Sorciers* to the carnal connection of demons with witches and sorcerers and expressed his conviction that the devil could become either a man or a woman to deceive

people into his fold. Under his interrogations, Pierre and his son George, of the Gandillon family of werewolves, also confessed to having sexual liaisons with the devil. Boguet was also fascinated by the accounts that witches gave under torture concerning the festivals of the Black Sabbats and condemned them as mocking the high Christian festivals. In his records, Boguet noted that such Sabbats most often occurred on Thursday nights at the stroke of midnight and lasted until cock-crow. He also managed to wring confessions out of witches that they did, indeed, fly to such Sabbats astride sticks and brooms. He also got witches to confess that the Sabbats began always with the adoration of Satan, who appeared sometimes in the shape of a tall, dark man and at other times in the form of a goat.

The eminent jurisconsult, judge of the province of Burgundy and president of the Tribunal of St. Claude, was dreaded by all those who might one day find themselves standing before his judgment. He was fanatical, cruel, and implacable in his sessions of interrogation, and his *Discours des Sorciers* ran into 11 editions and became for a time the authoritative text for French bailiwicks. Boguet pronounced or ratified about 600 death sentences against witches. And while this learned man's wisdom was relied upon to determine the remarkable powers of witches and sorcerers, the level of his scientific acumen in other matters might be evaluated by his understanding that rotten sticks eventually turned into snakes.

Delving Deeper

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Matthew Hopkins (16??–1647)

It was once suggested that Matthew Hopkins, the witch-finder general, had become infallible in his ability to track down witches because he himself had employed a bit of sorcery and managed to steal one of Satan's address books so that he might copy down the names of the devil's disciples. Although Hopkins served England in the self-appointed capacity of "witch-finder" for a period of only two years, his name remains synonymous with the overzealous persecution of those men and women suspected of witchcraft. From 1645 to 1647, Hopkins and his two eager assistants, John Sterne and Mary Phillips, scoured the counties of eastern England searching for those who had Satan's mark upon them.

Little is known of the early life of Hopkins until he appeared on the scene as one who received payment for finding witches on behalf of various villages whose townspeople suspected evidence of Satan's disciples in their community. He was the son of James Hopkins, a minister of Wenham in Suffolk, and there are records to indicate that he became an unsuccessful lawyer in Ipswich. After moving to Manningtree circa 1644, he apparently appointed himself to the position of a witch finder and added the title "general" for its prestige value. Records suggest that Hopkins may have owned or been shown associated with the Thorn Inn in the adjacent parish of Mistley, and it is here in the inn that he began holding his first witchcraft trials. With his knowledge of English law and his earnest belief in the power of witchcraft to work evil on the simple and unsuspecting Christian villagers, Hopkins undoubtedly felt that he had all the qualifications necessary to become a professional witch-hunter. It is known that both Hopkins and his assistant Stearne were Puritans, and those who knew them stated that they were men of deep religious convictions.

EITHER guilty or innocent, of course, the accused witch was eliminated as a real or a potential emissary of Satan on Earth.

Hopkins seemed to have a general knowledge of some of the European literature on witchcraft—enough, at least, to have become convinced that all witches received a **familiar,** an imp often disguised as a cat or some other

Matthew Hopkins, Witch Finder General. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

animal, after they had signed a pact with Satan. Hopkins believed the familiar sustained itself by feeding upon the witch's blood, and if such an act of unholy nourishment could be observed, it would immediately prove the guilt of a suspected witch.

Because torture as an aid to interrogation was forbidden in England, Hopkins devised a system of watching, searching, and swimming to test those individuals who had been accused of practicing witchcraft. The suspect would be stripped naked, covered with a loose-fitting gown, and forced to sit on a chair in the middle of a bare room. Then witnesses would watch the accused witch for hours, day and night, for several days if necessary. All this time, the alleged witch must be kept awake, sitting on the stool, forbidden to lie down, so the witnesses could detect a familiar if it should creep up to feed on its host. If the accused should begin to slump forward in sleep, he or she was immediately pushed erect and walked around the room to force him or her to remain awake. Since this process would often be continued for days, the suspect's feet might become bloody and bruised from the walking. While such an exhaustive and cruel regimen might not technically have been considered torture, its brutal effects produced the same results from its hapless victims.

In *The Discovery of Witches*, a pamphlet Hopkins published in 1647, he wrote that on one occasion he and Stearne witnessed six imps attempting to sneak into the room where a witch was being watched. One was a whitish thing, not quite as large as a cat; another was something like a dog with sandy spots; and a third resembled a greyhound with long legs. It seemed the other three got away before the two witch-hunters got a good look at them. On this particular occasion, six townspeople whom Hopkins had gathered as volunteers in the watching part of the ordeal swore that they, too, had seen the imps approaching the witch, and their testimony was often used by Hopkins to silence those skeptics who might doubt the reality of demonic familiars.

The "swimming" part of Hopkins's three-part test was a foolproof method of determining the guilt or innocence of a witch. Hopkins would have the witches bound in a painful position with their right thumb to their left big toe and their left thumb to their right big toe, then he would order them thrown into a river or a deep pond. If the witches sunk and drowned, they were innocent. It was clear that they possessed no supernatural powers, after all. If they somehow managed to stay afloat, however, they were judged guilty of witchcraft and men with long poles would push them under the water until they drowned. Either guilty or innocent, of course, the accused witch was eliminated as a real or a potential emissary of Satan on Earth.

Hopkins died on August 12, 1647. John Stearne attempted to carry on in the witch finder's footsteps for about another year, but the witchcraft craze was dying out in England.

DELVING DEEPER

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Pope Innocent III (1160 or 1161–1216)

Alarmed with the growing perceived influence of Satan in the Europe of the Middle Ages, Pope Innocent III actively began to chastise heretics as soon as he ascended to the papacy in 1198. The first burnings for heresy may have taken place in about the year 1000 in Ravenna, but the first actual recorded burning occurred at Orleans in 1022, followed by others at Monforte in 1028. Such executions for heresy by burning at the stake were sporadic and few until 1197 when Pedro II of Aragon (c. 1184–1213) ordered the burning of heretics who had relapsed in their promises to repent of their sins of doubt and questioning. In 1198, Pope Innocent declared such individuals as traitors against Christ and condemned them to death by burning.

In 1208, the Cathar sect—also known as the Albigensians—had become so popular among the people in Europe that Pope Innocent III considered them a greater threat to Christianity than the Islamic warriors who were pummeling the Christian knights on the Crusades. To satisfy his concern, he ordered the only crusade ever launched against fellow Christians by attacking the Cathars who resided in the Albi region of southern France.

In the opinion of Pope Innocent III and many of the church hierarchy, the Cathars were teaching the rudiments of witchcraft. Although the Cathars centered their faith in Christ, they perceived him as pure spirit that had descended from heaven on the instructions of the God of Good to liberate humankind from the world of matter. According to the Cathars, because Christ was pure spirit, he did not die on the cross and the teachings of the church were false. The Cathars rejected all the Catholic sacraments, and they taught that the God of the Old Testament was the lord of matter, the prince of this world—all terms which the Catholic Church reserved for Satan. Not only did the Cathars believe that the God revered as the Creator by the Church was really the devil, the Cathars instructed their followers that most of the patriarchs and prophets mentioned in the Old Testament were really demons.

The Cathars somehow managed to hold out against the armies massed against them until Montsegur, their final stronghold, fell in 1246. Hundreds of the remaining Cathars were burned at the stake—men, women, and children—but Innocent III did not live to see his triumph over the heretics, for he died in 1216. Before he died, however, Innocent III enacted a papal bull that allowed a judge to try a suspected witch or heretic even when there was no accuser and granted the judge the power to be both judge and prosecutor.

THE *Cathars rejected all the Catholic sacraments.*

Delving Deeper

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Pierre de Lancre (1553–1631)

By his own boast, witch trial judge Pierre de Lancre tortured and burned more than 600 men and women accused of consorting with demons. In his books *Tableau de l'Inconstance des mauvais Anges* (1613) and *L'Incredulite et Mescreance du Sortilege* (1622), de Lancre defended the belief in demons, black magic, and witchcraft. In his considered opinion, even to deny the possibility of witchcraft was heresy, for God himself in the Holy Bible had condemned magicians and sorcerers. De Lancre, however, was not a member of the clergy, and his concerns were social, rather than theological. He believed that sorcerers and witches were a well-organized anti-social force that sought to overthrow the established order.

It was customary for the judges of the witchcraft trials to denounce Jews as heretics and sorcerers. De Lancre was no exception, once stating that God had withdrawn his grace and promises from the Jewish people. He claimed also to have it on great authority that

many Jews were powerful magicians who had the ability to shapeshift into wolves by night.

De Lancre, as so many of the trial judges, became rather fixated on the details that the witches provided of their carnal encounters with demons. The more questions he asked about these sexual matters and the more torture the witches suffered, the more lurid the accounts became. De Lancre decided that Incubi and Succubi, those demonic seducers of men and women, had as their mission the infliction of a double injury to their victims, attacking them in both their body and their soul.

When men or women accused of being sorcerers protested that the devil had not picked them up and flown them anywhere, Judge de Lancre decreed that those sorcerers who walked to the Sabbats held in the forests were just as guilty as those who were carried to such sites by Satan. De Lancre warned his fellow members of the tribunals to be wary of toads, for they could likely be **familiars** of the witches. One witch whom he tried and who confessed at length, described a number of toads that had attended a Sabbat in the Basses-Pyrenees region dressed in black and scarlet velvet with little bells attached to their coats and trousers.

In 1609, the Parliament of Bordeaux sent de Lancre to Labourd in the Bayonne district to administer punishment to the sorcerers who had infested the region. In short order, de Lancre deduced that Satan deceived a number of Roman Catholic priests into administering Black Masses to the witches in the area. Two priests, an elderly man of 70 and a young man of 27, were executed almost immediately upon de Lancre's arrival. The horrified bishop of Bayonne arranged for his five clergy members accused of sorcery to escape prison. He also interfered with the judge's orders of imprisonment for three other priests and arranged for them to escape and flee the countryside.

When he was not sentencing men and women to their horrible deaths, de Lancre was known to his Christian contemporaries as a sensitive and talented writer of idyllic pastoral accounts of country living. When he at last retired to his country estate, he turned all of his attention to writing and the construction of chapels, fountains, and grottos to beautify his lavish grounds.

DELVING DEEPER

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

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."

apothacary 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.

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.

conjurations The act of reciting a name, words or particular phrases with the intent of summoning or invoking a supernatural force or occurrence.

enchantments Things or conditions which possess a charming or bewitching quality such as a magical spell.

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.

evocation The act of calling forth, drawing out or summoning an event or memory from the past, as in recreating.

Gnostic From the Greek, *gnostikos*, meaning "concerning knowledge." A believer in Gnosticism, or relating to or possessing spiritual or intellectual knowledge or wisdom.

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.

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.

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.

neo-paganism Someone who believes in a contemporary or modernized version of the religions which existed before Christianity, especially those with a reverence for nature over the worship of a divine or supreme being.

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.

shape-shifter A supposed fictional being, spirit or something that is capable of changing its appearance or form.

wizard A variant of the fifteenth century word *wisard*, meaning "wise." Someone who professes to have magical powers as a magician or sorcerer, or a male witch. In general, someone who is extremely knowledgeable and clever.

Chapter 7

Prophecy and Divination

Since the beginning of human history, men and women have sought out glimpses into the future. Soothsayers and seers have attempted 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 utilized today by prophets and diviners who seek to answer the demands of those who wish foreknowledge of their earthly destiny.

Chapter Exploration

Astrology

Automatic Writing

Cartomancy/Tarot
Telling Fortunes with Modern Playing Cards

Dowsing

Graphology

I Ching

Kabbalah

Necromancy

Numerology

Palmistry

Prophets and Diviners
Edgar Cayce
Delphic Oracles
Jeane Dixon
Irene Hughes
Olof Jonsson
Nostradamus
Mother Shipton

Scrying/Crystal Gazing/Crystalomancy

Tea Leaf Reading (Tasseography)

INTRODUCTION

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. Unlike the beasts around them, however, humans lived most of their lives in the knowledge that one day they would die, and that accidents and awful circumstances could snuff them out at any time. In addition, under certain circumstances, an unforeseen financial loss could be nearly as dreadful as a mortal wound. It was humanity's attempts to alleviate these fundamental anxieties regarding a fearful future that caused it to seek foreknowledge of tomorrow from the earliest times.

Divination, the method of obtaining knowledge of the unknown or the future by means of omens, has been practiced in all societies—barbarous and civilized. Ancient humans lived in a world of dualism, an arena of constant combat between positive and negative forces. Humans, the only creatures who react to their environment emotionally as well as physically, felt themselves surrounded by powerful and mysterious forces over which they had no control. Hoping to influence the supernatural beings whom they believed controlled their destiny, or at least to appease the beings' wrath, humans sought to know the will of the gods.

The ancient Chaldeans read the machinations of the gods in the star-filled heavens, as well as in the bloody livers of sacrificed fowl. When the king of Babylon went forth to war, he wrote the names of cities on his arrows, put them back into the quiver, and shook them. He then removed an arrow and attacked first the city whose name was written thereon. The children of Israel sought the word of the Lord in the jewels of the Ephod; and Jonah deemed it a just verdict when the casting of lots decreed that it was he who was the cause of the storm. 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.

The writings of **Hermes Trismegistus** were considered by the alchemists as a legacy from the master of alchemy and were, therefore, most precious to them. The alchemists, who were concerned with the spiritual perfection of humans as well as the transmutation of base metals into gold, recorded their formulas and esoteric truths in allegorical form. The Hermetics believed that the nature of the cosmos was sacramental, and Hermes' dictum that "that which is above is like that which is below" was the essence of universal truth. In other words, the nature of the spiritual world could be discovered through the study of the material, and earthly humans, created of the "dust of the ground," comprised the prima materia of the heavenly, just as the base elements of the earth comprised the raw materials for gold.

In Greece, where the world of matter was held in subjugation to the powers of mind, arithmetic was used as a means of divination. Numbers were assigned to the gods and goddesses, and when the right number was evoked, the corresponding deity answered.

The Roman emperors, considered somewhat divine themselves, could consult the gods, but it was generally forbidden for commoners to do so. Although up until the fourth century most of the Roman emperors were openly opposed to magic and divination, prescience was widely known in the land of the Tiber. Astrologers, both native and from Chaldea, were much in demand, and other diviners practiced augury utilizing the entrails of slaughtered animals. Although diviners and soothsayers were sometimes banished and sometimes executed, it was usually because they had failed to see what Caesar wanted them to see or because they had seen more than Caesar wanted them to see, not merely for the practice of their art.

It remained for the emperors who were converts to the new religion, Christianity, to declare the *religio paganorum* (the religion of the country people) to be forbidden practices and to pave the way for full-scale persecution. Although pagan temples were destroyed and

images and books of the adepts burned, magicians continued to meet in secret and to perform their rites of divination.

Although the practice of occult arts was suppressed by Christianity, it was never completely excised. The mystical Neoplatonists put together a system of magic whose workings were attributed to supernatural agencies and beings, which were carefully differentiated from the demons Christianity sought to banish from the minds of men and women. Because intellectual activity was thought to be bound up with the influence of these demons, Europe descended into an abyss of ignorance and religious absurdity that history accurately terms the Dark Ages (about 476 to 1000).

But the tree of forbidden knowledge was not so easily cut down. In the East, where the Crescent overshadowed the influence of the Cross, Arab intellectuals preserved knowledge of the occult as well as significant portions of other classical thought and ancient lore. From Muslim-dominated Spain, this knowledge trickled back into Europe, where it was combined with alchemy and the Hermetic Mysteries.

The objects of divination may change, but not their function. Many of the ancient forms of divination are alive and flourishing in the Western world today. Many of them will be examined in this chapter along with examples of how they might be experienced. Instructions of some of the methods of divination and prophecies are included to encourage understanding of the techniques, not belief in their powers.

ASTROLOGY

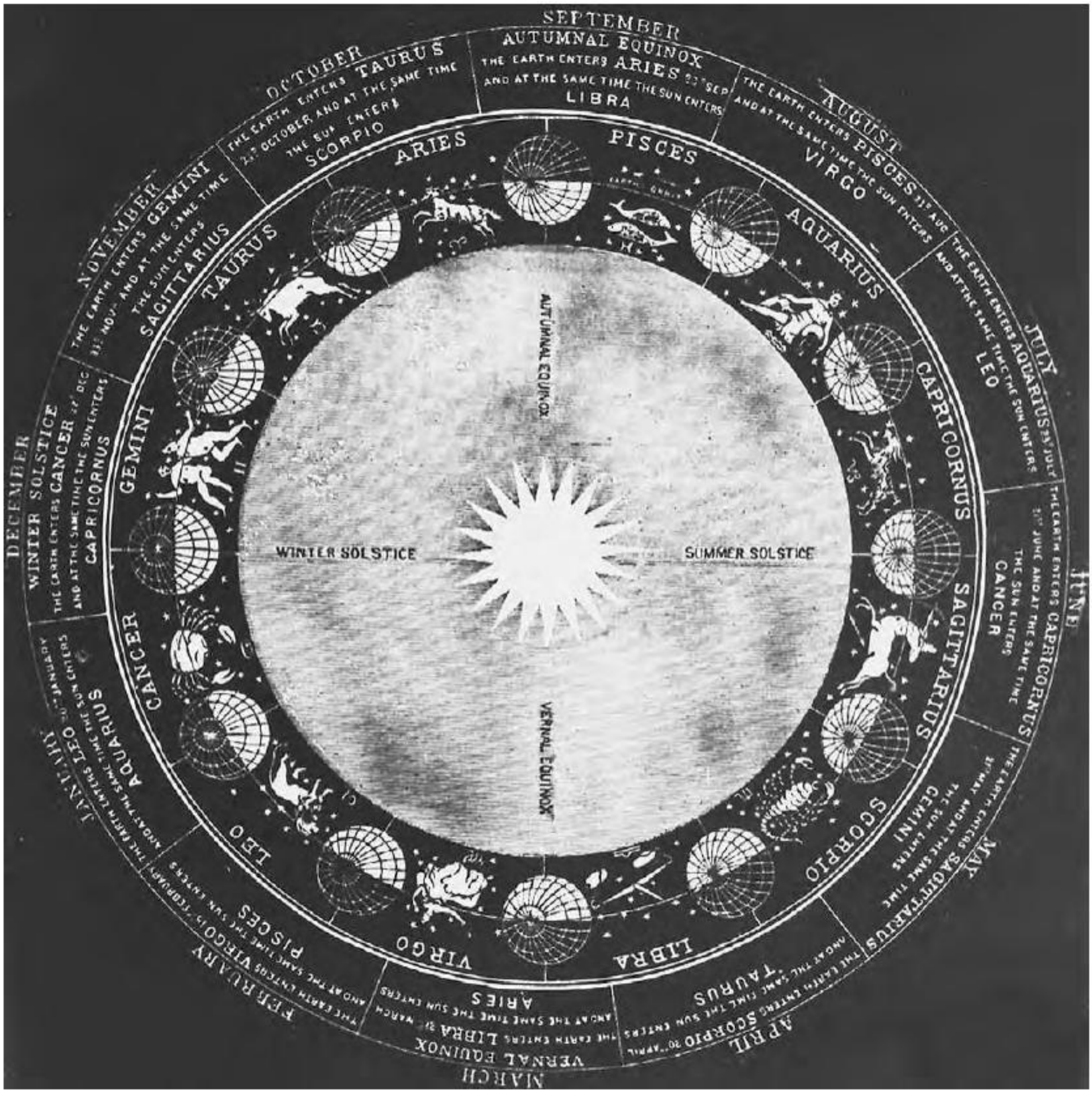
The earliest humans soon learned that the fertility of the soil was dependent upon the favor of the Sun, as well as that of the rains, both of which were bestowed from the heavens. On the other hand were the adverse effects of lightning, wind, and hail, as well as floods. These phenomena were quite mysterious, as well as wonderful or dreadful, as the case might be. Then, as now, people felt themselves at the mercy of these powers; and, since these good and bad energies all seemed to originate in the skies above, it was most logical that they should come to regard the heavens as the seat of the great gods. From this conviction evolved a theory of complete accord between phenomena observed in the heavens and occurrences observed on Earth.

ANCIENTS held the celestial bodies in great regard.

There is no doubt that the ancients held the celestial bodies in great regard, perhaps even in veneration. The Book of Job in the Old Testament affirms that "the morning stars sang together" when the foundation of Earth was laid. Later, Job was asked, "Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on Earth?" (38:33). It is clear, also, that the ancients believed that the stars influenced the turn of events here on Earth. In Judges (5:9) it is recorded that Barak, commander of the Israelite army that was faced with a decisive battle with the Canaanite forces under Sisera, took heart when he was told by the prophetess Deborah, "From heaven fought the stars, from their courses they fought against Sisera." Deborah was not the only seer who had knowledge of the stars. Amos (5:8) speaks of God as "He who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into morning." In Malachi 4:2, the righteous are promised that the "sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings (rays)."

Babylonian priests developed and perfected a system of interpreting the phenomena observed in the heavens for the purpose of determining the will of the powers of heaven. The Greeks enlarged the scope of astrology to include all the known sciences.

Empedocles, a Greek philosopher of about 450 B.C.E., developed the idea that the universe is composed of four basic elements: fire, water, air, and earth. Following the conquest of Babylonia by Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.E.), it was found that Chaldean astrologers had divided the signs of the zodiac into four triangles of three each and called the



Astrological signs of the zodiac. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

groupings by the same names as were Empedocles's four elements. Aries, Sagittarius, and Leo were termed fire signs; Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces, water; Libra, Aquarius, and Gemini, air; and Capricorn, Taurus, and Virgo comprised the signs of earth.

In essence, astrology deals with the relationship between the positions of the Sun, Moon, and planets and the life of an individual. Astrology has its philosophical root in the premise that each individual is a universe in miniature and mirrors within himself or herself the astrological pattern found in the heavens at the time of the individual's birth. From the standpoint of astrology, this means that the nature or personality of all individuals is determined by the pattern of the heavens at the time of their birth, plus their reactions to the stimuli found in their environment during growth and maturity.

The quality of personality that determines how individuals react to their environment is

called temperament. Hippocrates (c. 460–c. 377 B.C.E.) described four kinds of temperament: sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic. The four temperaments of Hippocrates were symbolized by linking choleric to fire and sanguine to air. Water was the symbol of the phlegmatic temperament, and earth was that of the melancholic. The choleric and sanguine modes of reaction were characterized by easy excitability and quick alteration of interest, the interests being feeble in the former and intense in the latter. Conversely, the phlegmatic and melancholic temperaments were characterized by persistent but slow excitability of interest, the interest being feeble in the phlegmatic and in the melancholic, intense. (In usage today, only the negative aspect of these temperaments are common. Thus choleric today means easy to anger; melancholic, depressed; sanguine, over optimistic; and phlegmatic, too slow.)

Although different schools of astrology may designate different calendar dates for some of the signs, there is seldom a difference of more than a day or two. The interpretations of the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual characteristics of the individual signs may also vary widely, but there are some general observations regarding the personalities of individuals born under the various Sun signs:

Aries, the Ram, March 21 to April 20, is a fire sign. The name comes from the Greek god of war. Individuals born under this sign have some aggressive traits about them that makes them dominant in friendship, partnership, and marriage. If they are deprived of their desire to dominate, they are liable to become discontented and difficult to get along with. Their views about life are definite, and they have little use for airs and graces. Aries people are a robust lot with a strong resistance to disease of any kind. However, once they do succumb to illness, they are inclined to run high temperatures. Neuralgia and migraines may also hinder them.

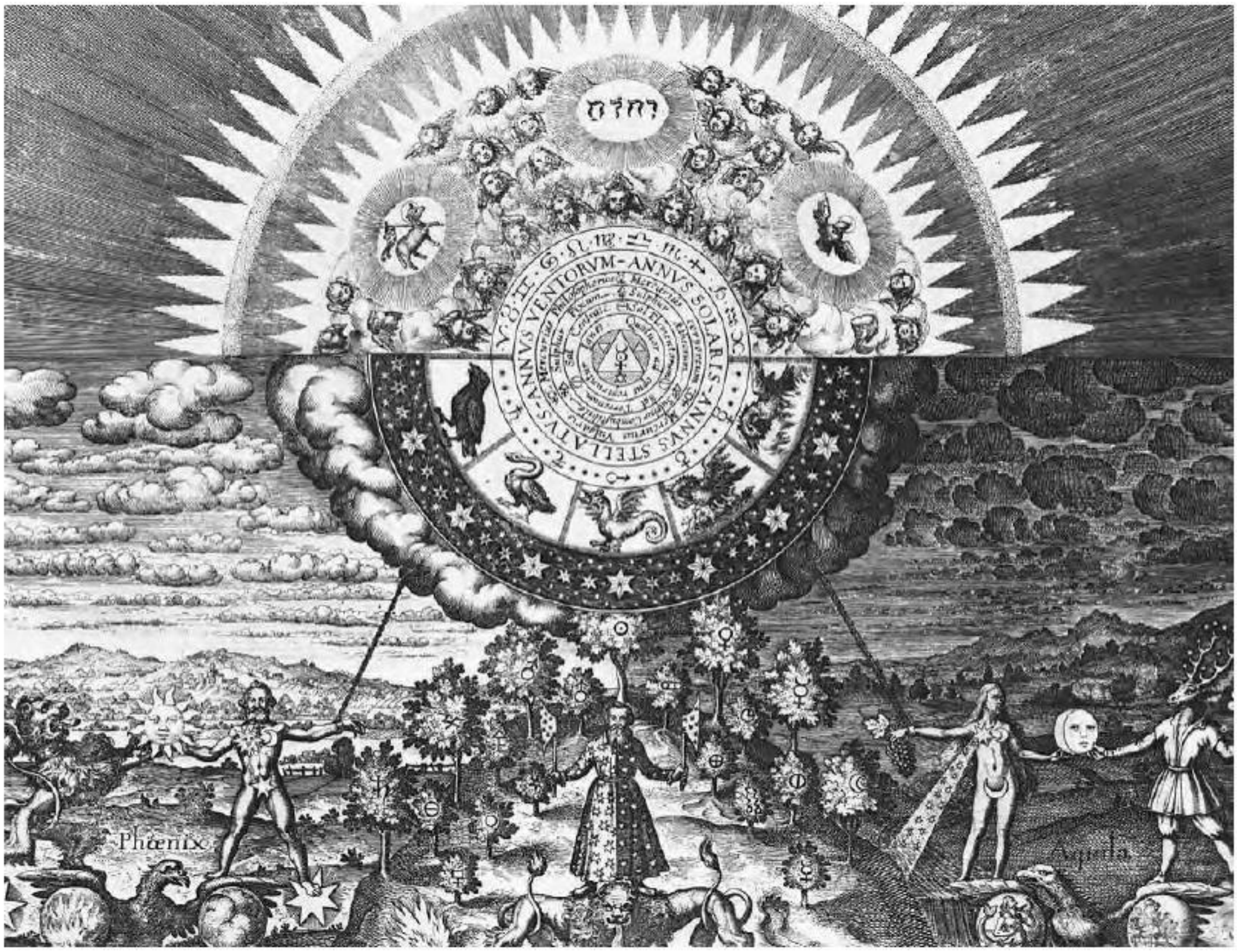
Taurus, the Bull, April 21 to May 21, is an earth sign. The word comes from the Latin meaning "bull." Taurus people like to have things their own way, but they are not quite as aggressive and as dominant as those under the Aries sign. They are passionate in nature, and love means much to them. They also make splendid mothers or fathers. Taureans are generally not bookish types; they prefer life itself to fiction. Although Taureans are inclined to be generous, they will fly into a rage if they learn that they have been deceived.

Gemini, the Twins, May 22 to June 21, is an air sign. According to the ancient Romans, the sign of Gemini represents the twin sons, Castor and Pollux, who were born to Leda, the queen of Sparta, after Jupiter seduced her, the king of the gods. The twins were high-spirited, strong, and inseparable. Geminis are among the most intelligent citizens of the Zodiac; but they have a dual nature, and they frequently have difficulty in choosing between two courses of action. They are active, and they love freedom, change, and variety. In matters of health, nerves are liable to plague Geminis, and they often prefer to live close to meadows and woods where they are able to gain vigor from the wind and the rains.

THE four kinds of temperament are sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic, and melancholic.

Cancer, the Crab, June 22 to July 22, is a water sign. The ancient Chaldeans named Cancer after the crab, because of its backward or oblique movement, which brought to their mind the sun's immobility during the summer solstice as it enters this sign. Cancers have great imaginations, and they glory in fantasies of love and romance. Cancers hate to be flustered, and they like to take their time over important decisions. Cancer people usually strive to be cheerful and avoid depressions. Because of their natural affinity for water, whenever possible they make their homes on the coast or close to a lake or a large body of water.

Leo, the Lion, July 23 to August 23, is a fire sign. Leo, the fifth sign of the Zodiac, represents the lion, king of beasts, and according to Roman astrologers, the savage lion of Nemea, slain by Hercules. The typical Leo is a rather impressive person who dearly loves to



Astrological chart.
(CORBIS CORPORATION)

be in the limelight. Leo people generally have plenty of energy and strongwill power, and they make trustworthy and loyal friends. Leos cherish high ideals and love means a great deal to them. Because they tend to be adaptable, they make good marriage partners. Leo people are excellent and convivial hosts, who love to entertain others with big parties.

Virgo, the Virgin, August 24 to September 22, is an earth sign. Virgo was named in honor of the Greek goddess of Astraea, goddess of innocence and purity, who was placed among the stars. A typical Virgo is cool, calm, and collected and never loses his or her head in emotional matters. Virgo people belong to the intellectual class of individuals, and it is not an easy task for anyone to sway them once they have made a decision. On the negative side, they tend to be overly critical of others. They are quick to give vent to their opinions, and they can indulge in biting sarcasm if so moved.

Libra, the Scales, September 23 to October 23, is an air sign. Libra is the only symbol of the zodiac that does not represent either an animal or a human. Long associated with harvest time and the fair measurement of crops, the scales may hearken back to ancient Egypt and the belief that the god Anubis weighed the souls of the dead to determine their worthiness. Libra people are often attractive and conform to the idealistic picture of the model man or woman. However, Libras tend to be rather moody and thin-skinned, and they hate anything painful or ugly. Luxury has a great attraction for them; and with their tendency to avoid the unpleasant aspects of life, many Librans live to a ripe old age, having the ability to recuperate from illness more quickly than those born under other signs.

Scorpio, the Scorpion, October 24 to November 22, is a water sign. Diana, the moon-goddess of the Romans, commanded Scorpio to kill the hunter Orion when Eos, goddess of the dawn, fell in love with him. After his death, Jupiter set the scorpion and Orion, still armed with his armor and sword, in the stars. Scorpios are definitely possessed of a passionate nature, and they are highly successful in winning the affections of those whom they desire. Scorpio people do not tolerate contradiction, and they can become exceedingly bitter once they are aroused to fury. On the other hand, they can be devoted friends and marriage partners once they have been made to feel secure. Scorpios are blessed with great reserves of strength, which they may draw upon in emergency situations.

Sagittarius, the Archer, November 23 to December 21, is a fire sign. Sagittarius is represented by Chiron, the wise centaur, a half-human, half-horse creature, who taught the ancient Greeks and Romans philosophy, music, and medicine. Freedom and change are the watchwords of Sagittarius people. They often find their minds divided, and they hate to have to make a choice between two courses—thus they usually end by trying to get the best of both. Impulsiveness is second nature to them, and movement and change are essential to their peace of mind. Sagittarians are often able to retain their physical youth into advanced maturity, and they are relatively free of health problems as well.

Capricorn, the Goat, December 22 to January 20, is an earth sign. Capricorn was named first in honor of the ancient Babylonian god, Ea, a part-goat, part fish entity, who emerged from the sea to bring learning and culture to the valley of Mesopotamia. The Romans transformed Ea to Pan, a half-goat, half-human god who ruled the woodlands and the fields. Capricorns are individuals of deeply rooted habits who tend to become industrious and economical individuals with great powers of endurance. Although generally kind, Capricorn people tend to be somewhat moody, often brooding over imagined slights and injuries. Capricorns are liable to feel sorry for themselves, and they may develop into super pessimists unless they are careful. A Capricorn needs to keep things carefree and light.

Aquarius, the Water Bearer, January 21 to February 19, is an air sign. Aquarius hearkens back to ancient Egypt and the god Hap, who represented the Nile River, the sustainer of all life. Aquarians are difficult to describe, for they are often moody, untidy, and rather eccentric—while at the same time being highly gifted and intellectual men and women, who contribute much to art, literature, and allied subjects. Aquarians do not fit into the general concept of conventional living, and they make for most interesting, albeit unusual, friends and companions. Aquarians must be free of mental and emotional tensions if they are to be healthy.

Pisces, the Fish, February 20 to March 20, is a water sign. Pisces, the fishes swimming in opposite directions, has been known by that designation since the astrologers of Babylonia named the constellation Two Fishes as long ago as 2000 B.C.E. Although Pisces people are industrious workers, they do not possess a great deal of stamina. It seems that fate often picks on Pisceans, and they are more liable to come into contact with suffering. For this reason, nursing, social work, medicine, and missionary work tend to attract Pisceans, and they are generally willing to make sacrifices for other people. Pisceans must always try to keep their own emotional life on an even keel in order not to disturb their health.

While many people associate astrology only with the brief summaries of the zodiacal signs in their daily newspapers and probably don't affix a great deal of serious attention to the advice provided by astrology columns, there are millions of men and women today who still regard the celestial bodies with the same veneration as did the ancients. Zolar, once described as "the dean of American astrologers," wrote in the preface to his book *It's All in the Stars* (New York: Zolar Publishing, 1962): "Astrology, in its purity, though forming a system of divination, is totally unconnected with either fortune telling or mediumship. It is a divine science of correspondences, in the study and application of which the intellect and intuition become

blended in a natural, harmonious manner. They commence to vibrate in unison. When this union becomes complete, the ignorant man becomes the prophetic sage."

Joseph Goodavage, author of *Astrology: The Space Age Science* (1966), began his book with the following declaration: "Over many thousands of years astrologers have deduced a connection between the motions of the planets and positions of the stars with every kind of terrestrial activity. Their ability to predict future trends—even actual events—has been repeatedly demonstrated."

The "Star Gospel," outlined in *The History of Creation and Origin of Species* (1967) by Reuben Luther Katter, attaches religious interpretations to the 12 signs of the zodiac. Katter stated that the Star Gospel, also called Adamic Theology, antedates the Old Testament by 2,500 years. The Star Gospel uses the same 12 zodiacal signs as does astrology, but begins with Virgo and ends with Leo. Katter stated that, according to tradition, Jacob and his 12 sons carried zodiacal tablets and banners into Egypt and carried them out in the exodus. Like astrology, the Star Gospel holds that the 12 signs stand for 12 positions of the Sun in relation to Earth.

THE *Chinese zodiac is comprised of a 12-year cycle.*

While Western astrology evolved from the Egyptians, Babylonians, Chaldeans, and Greeks, Chinese astrology developed independently of outside influences and was formed around the belief that the emperor was divine. Some scholars of astrology place the beginning of Chinese astrology during the reign of Emperor Fu Hsi around 2800 B.C.E. and attribute the naming of the 12 signs of the Chinese zodiac to a legendary Emperor Yao.

The figures of the Chinese zodiac bear no similarity to those of the West. Each sign is represented by a different animal and is composed of a 12-year cycle. The interpretations of these signs emphasize different animal characteristics from those typical of classic Western stereotypes. For example, while a rat fills a European with revulsion, the Chinese zodiac sees the rodent as hard-working and industrious. In addition, there are five elements—wood, fire, earth, metal, and water—rather than the four of Western astrology—earth, air, fire, and water. The animals of the Chinese zodiac are the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, rooster, dog, and boar. According to tradition, when the Buddha (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.) lay dying, he called upon the animals to come to bid him farewell. The first 12 to arrive were the ones who are immortalized in the Chinese zodiac.

Astrology has been an integral aspect of daily life in China for centuries and remains so today. Although Communist doctrine and its rationalistic leaders have attempted to stamp out the influence of astrology and to depict its tenets as nothing more than superstition, the average man or woman in China will still make major decisions based on the guidance received from astrology.

Throughout Western history astrologers have claimed an association with the movements of the planets, comets, and eclipses with every important event that has taken place. Among the more familiar are the appearance of comets at the birth and death of Julius Caesar (c. 100–44 B.C.E.); the advent of World War I (1914) heralded by solar and lunar eclipses; and the birth and death of Mark Twain (1835–1910) coincident with the appearance of Halley's comet. In addition, astrologers have proclaimed the influence of the "stars" on the lives of everyone from Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.E.) to President George W. Bush (1946–).

Many of the great philosophers who shaped the ideals and concepts of the West employed astrology as an aid in developing their thoughts. Individuals such as Pythagoras (c. 580–c. 500 B.C.E.), Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), and Ptolemy (127–151) were all astrologers. Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543), who gave science its first rational view of the universe, was a doctor, theologian, astronomer, and astrologer.

In the Middle Ages, **magi, alchemists,** scholars, and even the papacy embraced astrology. Pope Julius II (1443–1513) trusted his astrologers to set the date for his coronation; Pope Paul III (1468–1549) was guided throughout life by his horoscope; and Pope Leo X (1475–1521) established a chair of astrology at a major university. Church scholars began to associate the signs of the zodiac with the 12 apostles, and cathedrals throughout Europe were decorated with zodiacal symbols.

Ptolemy I.

Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), who built the first astronomical observatory in the Western world, practiced and defended astrology. Brahe's exact planetary figures allowed his pupil Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) to work out his great Laws of Motion. Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), who followed in Kepler's footsteps, used an eclectic mix of science and astrology to arrive at many of his theories.

Admiral George Dewey (1837–1917) and President Grover Cleveland (1837–1908)consulted astrologers throughout their lives. Psychiatrist Dr. Carl Jung (1875–1961) used astrology charts to assist him in diagnosis and treatment of his patients. John J. O'Neill, science editor of the New York *Herald Tribune*, the first science writer to win a Pulitzer Prize, began as a skeptic and ended up a believer in astrology. Astronomer Gustaf Stromberg (1882–1962) of the Mount Wilson Observatory believed in the charts of astrology as well as the science of astronomy. French psychologist and statistician Michael Gauquelin (d. 1991) spent more than 30 years investigating astrology, exhaustive research that led him to give verification to the importance of the planetary positions at a person's birth. British astronomer and Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society Percy Seymour (1901–1980) set forth his theory that astrology is neither magical nor mystical—but in fact—magnetic.

During World War II (1939–1945), Allied intelligence knew that Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) and a number of his inner circle of the Nazi High Command, such as his deputy Rudolf Hess (1894–1987) and S.S. chief Heinrich Himmler (1900–1945), took a keen interest in astrology. During the dark days of the blitz of London, someone in Great Britain's newly established Psychological Research Bureau (PRB) decided that if they had an astrologer in Britain who could make the same calculations that the Nazi astrologers would make, the Allies might be able to ascertain what Hitler intended to do next. Louis de Wohl (1903–1961), the son of an officer in the Royal Hungarian Army, a novelist by profession, was known to be an expert in the field of astrology who had studied the subject for more than 20 years. De Wohl was solicited by the PRB to chart a course in the stars that would help bring about the downfall of the Third Reich. His known opponents on the Nazi side were astrologer Karl Ernst Krafft (1900–1945), graphologist/astrologer Elsbeth Ebertin (1880–1944), and Wilhelm Wulff (1893–1984), Himmler's personal astrologer for the SS.

While de Wohl made some startling hits, such as predicting the date that Germany would invade Holland in 1940, overall he scored only an average number of accurate predictions. However, for whatever astrological accuracy he may have lacked, he more than compensated when he devised the ingenious plan of forging 50 astrological quatrains allegedly from the pen of **Nostradamus**

(1503–1566) in which the great seer predicted the downfall of the Third Reich. These astrological leaflets were then dropped over Germany with the desired demoralizing effect. De Wohl had done such a superb job of imitating the old French seer's unique style in the "newly discovered quatrains" that even Joseph Goebbels (1897–1945), Hitler's propaganda minister who earlier had employed a similar deceit to predict Nazi triumph, was fooled.

Former President Ronald Reagan (1911–) and First Lady Nancy Reagan (1921–) were devotees of astrology long before their tenure in the White House, as were other actors of their Hollywood set, such as Tyrone Power (1913–1958), Susan Hayward (1918–1975), Marlene Dietrich (1901–1992), Ronald Colman (1891–1958), and Robert Cummings (1908–). The Reagans continued to confer with astrologist Joan Quigley regarding important dates and meetings while in office. While some Americans were shocked to learn that their first lady was using the advice obtained from an astrologer to plan her husband's day-to-day schedule, citizens of India seemed to accept calmly the fact that Indira Gandhi (1917–1984), prime minister from 1966 to 1977 and 1980 to 1984, used astrology to assist in decision-making until her death by assassination in 1984.

CHURCH *scholars associated the signs of the zodiac with the 12 apostles.*

Many astrologers feel that the figure of a ship upon the ocean, with no visible paths to follow, no clearly defined turns or alternative routes, and with no landmarks on which to guide itself, is appropriate to describe the methods by which they may assist an individual in a situation that requires decision-making, for, in the majority of decision situations, there can be more than one alternative. The astrological diagram of the zodiac places each individual facing a moment of decision in the center of destiny, represented by a circle, universally known as the symbol of infinity, as well as perfection. The astrologer then draws radial lines from the individual's position to the circumference, or, poetically, the perimeter of eternity, thus symbolizing the unperceived number of possibilities accessible to him or her. Even if the individual is aware of only 12 of these, as might be illustrated by the houses of the zodiac, it is enough to cause him or her to wish for some sort of "navigator" to help interpret any directional signs that may be present. The art (or science) of astrology, as practiced by a competent astrologist, may serve as one star to be used in making a fix on the chart of destiny.

The astrologer and the celestial navigator have a number of things in common. Both look to the heavens for their points of reference; both make use of charts and tables developed during centuries of observation and recording. Both arrive at their conclusions through mathematical computation. The navigator charts a course, but does not establish a destination. The astrologer casts a horoscope, but does not determine character or destiny.

The role of astrology, so say the astrologers, is comparable to a ship's compass. The compass points the way to a predetermined destination, but it does not establish that destination. As a helmsman turns the ship's wheel to bring the vessel into accord with the compass, so the individual's free will must bring the vessel of his or her life into accord with the findings of astrology, if he or she is to benefit from them. By placing each individual at the center of the zodiac, astrology affirms that person's rightful place at the hub of the wheel of life, and it maintains that there is more in heaven and Earth than is conceived of through various philosophies of the five senses.

Modern astrology recognizes that human beings were not created to be mindless marionettes able to move and act only through the remote direction of forces they cannot comprehend, much less influence. At the same time astrology requires its adherents to accept responsibility for themselves and for their actions. In one sense it imposes an even greater responsibility, for having been made aware of their greatest potentials, according to the best knowledge and techniques available,

those who steer their lives by the stars can no longer plead their failures due to blind chance and the fickleness of fate.

According to the astrologer, free will includes the prerogative of individuals to avail themselves of the best advice and direction from any and all sources they deem creditable before embarking on any course, before setting foot on any path, before making any decision, great or small, and to follow through once he or she has decided. Astrology, as practiced today, not only affirms the pre-eminence of free will, but insists upon it; and, according to its adherents, astrology, rightly used, serves as a dependable compass, pointing the way across time.

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AUTOMATIC WRITING

On the evening of July 8, 1913, "Patience Worth," who claimed to be the spirit of a seventeenth-century Englishwoman, became a **spirit control** for Pearl Leonore Curran, a young woman in St. Louis, Missouri. Curran was not a practicing **medium,** nor did she have any interest in **Spiritualism,** yet during a period of three years, Patience Worth dictated through the process of automatic writing a stream of proverbs, lyric poetry, and plays, and a number of intricately constructed novels.

Curran's formal education had ended with the eighth grade. She seldom read, had never traveled, and was completely unfamiliar with literary people or people of a scholarly bent. At no time in her life had she ever given any indication of a latent creative gift. Yet, of one of the spirit-dictated novels, a reviewer for the *New York Times* wrote that the plot was fashioned with such skill, deftness, and ingenuity that such talent would be envied by many a novelist "in the flesh." In an anthology of the "best" poetry for the year 1917, Patience Worth had five poems selected, as against three of Amy Lowell's (1874–1925), three of Vachel Lindsay's (1879–1931), and one by Edgar Lee Masters (1869–1950)—all highly respected American poets, critics, and novelists.

Was Patience Worth a spirit or a secondary personality of Curran's? Whoever she was, the large body of literary works that bears her name was transmitted through the process of automatic writing, wherein a medium produces a script without the control of the conscious self—but allegedly under the control of a spirit entity.

The vast majority of those men and women who practice automatic writing on a regular basis do so because they believe that they receive spiritual and material guidance from intelligences in the spirit world or from a higher aspect of their own mind. Most of these individuals cherish this information as highly personal and seldom to be shared with others. Few practitioners of automatic writing seek to channel another "Patience Worth" and produce extensive literary works.

Those who practice automatic writing seat themselves comfortably at a table, a piece of paper before them, a pen or pencil held in their hand in the manner in which they normally write. The tip of the pen or pencil rests lightly on the paper. The writer's wrist and arm are kept loose, the wrist preferably in such a position that it does not touch the table at all. No direct light is allowed to shine on the paper. If necessary, it will be shielded with a piece of cardboard or something similar.

Automatic writers must learn to wait quietly and patiently and then give in to the slightest impulse to move the pen or pencil, keeping the paper smooth with the free hand. It is not necessary—and not even desirable—

Stella Horrocks in an automatic writing session. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

that the writers concentrate on their hand and what it is doing. If the writers do not wish to keep their eyes closed, they may even read a book while experimenting, just to keep their thoughts occupied.

With practice and patience, messages begin coming through. Those individuals who are successful at automatic writing say that it usually takes three or four sittings before the first intelligent results are achieved. They advise beginners that the length of the sittings should not be prolonged unduly, even after meaningful messages have begun to appear.

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CARTOMANCY/TAROT

Seeking to foretell the future through a deck of cards (cartomancy) is an old and time-honored practice and a favorite of many professional, as well as amateur, psychics and seers. The exact time and place in which playing cards originated is unknown. However, it is certain that the cards were originally used as tools of divining the future, not for playing games. Some authorities attribute the popularity of using cards to predict the future to the Gypsies, but it is difficult to separate such an assertion from the many stereotypes of the occult and the mysterious that have been visited upon these nomadic people.

Whether or not the origin of card reading can be attributed to the Gypsies, there is a loose consensus that it was wandering tribes of gypsies who brought the prototype of what is today considered a deck of cards to Europe some time in the fourteenth century. Although it is thought that the Gypsies came west from India by way of Persia, they often claimed that they were originally from Egypt. To make such an association with the ancient mysteries of the Nile added to their status with the Europeans and also increased the aura of the mysterious that they sought to create around themselves. Portraying themselves as diviners in the magical traditions of Egypt, the Gypsies began reading fortunes with picture cards called *atouts* that were popular in Persia. When the deck underwent a transformation in Europe, it was called *tarots*. These decks were similar to modern packs, but there were 78, rather than 52, cards, and the suits were not the familiar diamonds, spades, clubs, and hearts, but swords, cups, coins, and rods. Rather than king, queen, and jack, the tarot deck had 22 picture cards, and the king, queen, knight, and knave (or page) joined the "spot" cards from 10 down to one for each suit.

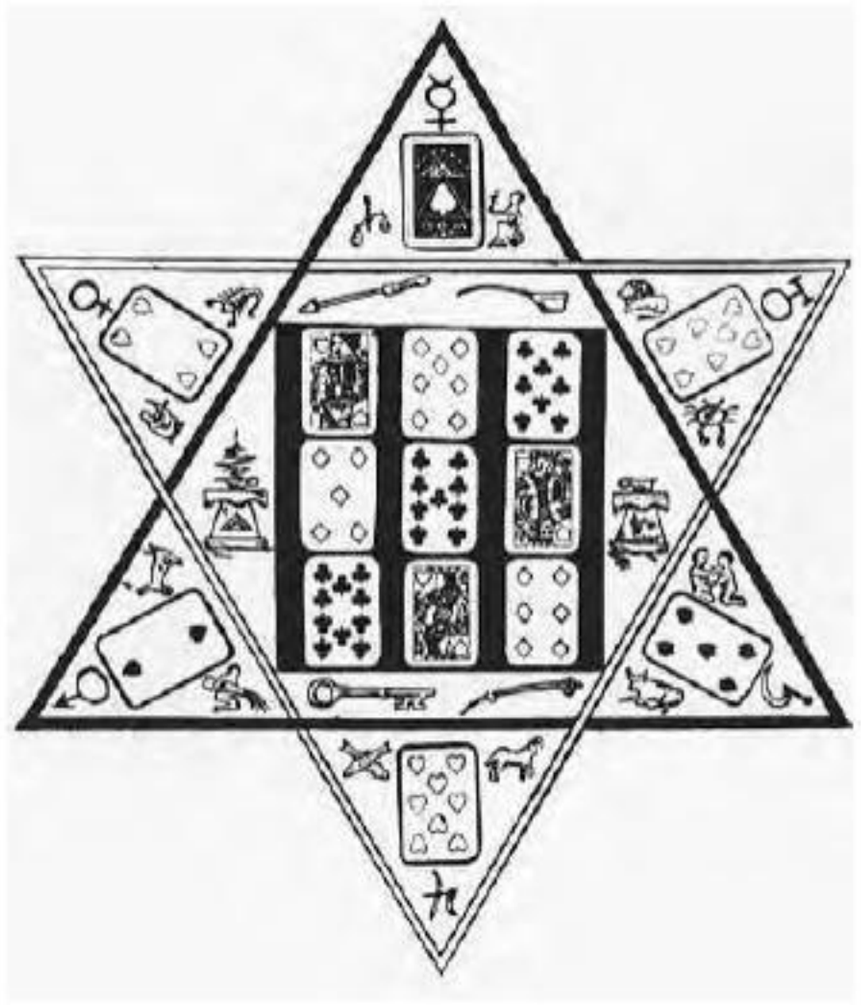
The theory perhaps closest to the true origin of the tarot cards as they appear today dates from the Renaissance (14th–17th century). Prior to this time, **Gnostics,** who are believed to have introduced the tarot into southern Europe, had to take their faith underground in order to escape persecution. To preserve their teachings, they recorded the fundamentals of their beliefs on a set of 22 plates that depicted the spiritual growth of humankind. Each plate, or card, in the 22 major mysteries (the Major Arcana) told the story of a single aspect of an individual initiate's inner spiritual progress to the state of complete perfection.

The Major Arcana follow humankind's spiritual pilgrimage toward the state of final perfection. The Minor Arcana trace humanity's journey through time. Essential to the

understanding of the tarot is the doctrine of reincarnation, which teaches that each soul must experience birth into both sexes and all five races before it can attain final perfection.

The tarot, which some authorities describe as one of the world's oldest books disguised as a pack of playing cards, has remained a popular method of divining the future. Combining esoteric wisdom with the Hebrew system of numbers, many individuals maintain that it is likely that the philosophy of the ancient **Kabbalah** was the spiritual ancestor of the philosophy of the tarot. Enthusiasts in the New Age Movement have rediscovered and embraced the teachings of the Kabbalah and the ancient Egyptian wisdoms believed to be instilled in the cards. Although many authorities have suggested that the tarot cards were adapted from the pages of the legendary Egyptian book of magic, the Book of Thoth—and certain of the imagery on the cards encourages these perceptions—such an assertion cannot be proved. What does appear to be authentic lore in regard to the tarot cards is the fact that the Gnostics, during a period of persecution, recorded the fundamentals of their beliefs on plates similar to the cards of the tarot's Major Arcana. Adepts of the Kabbalah formalized the figures and established 22 allegories to correspond to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, maintaining that each letter was itself a divine being with occult powers of its own.

In the tarot, the two constituents of the world, or the system of worldly things, are duly represented. The 22 cards of the Major Arcana are concerned directly with the individual. The trump cards allegorize the traits and qualities that combine into personality, the relative conditions of good and evil that constitute a concept of conventional morality, and the substances expressed by the ancients as the four elements comprising a human's physical organism. The tarot is established on the premise that each human being is his or her own macrocosm. Although comprising a distinctive universe in miniature, the individual still functions as a component of the cosmic macrocosm. In the world, humans must have a society, with institutions to perform collectively for them the functions they cannot accomplish as individuals. Again, the situation is the same in the realm of the tarot.



Cartomancy in hexagram used for predictions in the 1893 edition of *The Mystic Test Book*.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

IT is likely the Kabballah was the spiritual ancestor of the philosophy of the tarot.

Seeking to foretell the future through the tarot cards is an extremely ancient means of divination. Each card in the deck has acquired a traditional interpretation over the centuries, and the reader—or person telling the fortune—must become familiar with these meanings in order to give an accurate reading for the querent, the person seeking the foretelling of his or her future. There are many methods of placing or laying out the cards in the course of the reading. The reader may have the querent select a card at random to represent him or her in the reading and the resultant spread may revolve around that particular card. The reader may discover a particular spread or layout of the cards that seems to stimulate his or her psychic awareness and increase the ability to "tune in to" the querent. Some readers prefer to lay out the cards in the pattern of a cross, a circle, or several rows of cards placed in various representations of what the reader

French tarot cards. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

perceives as best providing him or her with a window to the querent's future.

Here are some basic meanings of the individual cards in the Major Arcana:

The Juggler or Magician (arcanum one) stands with one hand raised to heaven and the other pointing to Earth, thereby confirming the teaching of **Hermes Trismegistus** that what is in heaven is like what is below, that the little world (microcosm) within a human being contains the elements of the universe (macrocosm), and that the study of humankind can lead the adept to an understanding of all creation. The number one signifies the first principle, unity, and in every religion it is the number representing the Divine Being. One is also the number of the soul of nature, the soul of the elements, and the active, causative and creative force of the unseen universe.

The High Priestess (arcanum two) is the most holy card in the tarot deck. It represents humankind's innate ability to interpret the word of God, the highest form of intellectual activity. The High Priestess symbolizes the knowledge hidden in the subconscious of every human being, and her image offers the wisdom that in order to tap the wellspring of occult knowledge, one must search one's own subconscious. Number two stands for the mother principle and represents the expression of unity through woman (one and one).

The Empress (arcanum three) is the symbol of feminine instinct, a thought or solution that arises directly from the subconscious. The number three is the key that unlocks the door to intuition and is the driving energy that unites positive and negative, male and female. On the material level, the Empress card represents the human aspect of love and symbolizes the sexual conjunction of male and female.

The Emperor (arcanum four) warns that no one can compromise with his or her conscience. The Emperor of wisdom is activated by the fire of the vital force within all humans and regenerated by the alchemical slogan that all nature is regenerated by fire. The number four represents the primordial substance that is the origin of all the universe and is the numerical constituent of all manifestations in the third dimension.

The Hierophant, or Pope (arcanum five), stands for the search for truth and represents all organized religions, education, schooling, and any other kind of formal learning processes. The Pope, the interpreter of sacred mysteries, points the way to the pathways of silence and watchfulness and enables seekers to discover the inherent power of creative ability that lies dormant within them. Number five stands for the universal power of faith over human imagination, the faith to be creatively new.

The Lovers (arcanum six) represents marriage, the love of sibling for sibling, of parent for child, or the mystical bond that unites all those who are alike in soul. Number six signifies spiritual development, charity, and divine love and represents the duality of every problem in terms of both attraction and repulsion.

The Chariot (arcanum seven) driven by the king—its horses and wheels seemingly pulling away from each other, yet drawing the same vehicle—is an allegory of the struggle of the negative and positive forces that operate in all people during their journey toward the spiritual life. The Chariot symbolizes the victory of the inwardly united individual over the obstacles of life. Number seven represents the Fatherhood of God and divine realization.

Justice (arcantun eight), as it is expressed in the tarot's imagery, is not blindfolded. The ancients pictured Justice as a woman of mature age with large, open eyes; it is modern culture that has pictured Justice as blind. Justice also represents self-initiation into life's adversities, during which one looks inwardly and without bias at one's true self. The number eight signifies dualism, positive and negative, and the actions of unseen forces on matter.

The Hermit (arcanum nine) stands for every spiritual seeker in search of himself or herself. The Hermit pursues the lonely path of the awakened soul in his search for truth, guided by his lantern and protected by his staff. In essence, this card represents the experience of self-initiation and signifies wisdom and silence. Nine symbolizes astral light, the matrix of all visible forms of life.

The Wheel of Fortune (arcanum ten) is the card of victory, the sign of obstacles overcome by good fortune and by the active participation of the individual in the activities of the microcosm. The Wheel, or circle, is the symbol of completion, as every human is a closed system within himself or herself. A blind virgin cranked the Wheel, as all humans are controlled by unperceived psychic powers. Humans must learn to use their psychic abilities to control their life, rather than allow their life to be buffeted about in a blind manner.

The Force (arcanum eleven) symbolizes the inner strength by which one may overcome obstacles placed in the path of spiritual progress. Eleven is the number of the Aquarian Age, and represents universal energy—prana. Eleven also symbolizes spiritual will power, vitality, and/or intense strength.

The Hanged Man (arcanum twelve) represents taking on the new and giving up the old. This card allegorizes the prudent adept of arcanum nine (The Hermit), who has now freed himself from the Wheel of Life and Rebirth of arcanum ten. The adept has been elevated to glory through the equation and harmony between the higher and lower selves. Number 12 symbolizes sacrifice and signifies immortality and the elixir of life.

Death (arcanum thirteen) is interpreted as the giving up of old ways, the complete severance with the past, and the ending of friendships or close associations. Tarot card 13 also signifies discarding old ideas and modes of action. Death's sickle is a symbol of reaping, allegorizing the harvest of what humankind has endured in the physical state. The number 13 is neither lucky nor unlucky when considered by itself, and the number most often signifies a change for the better, a new birth.

Female tarot card reader displaying a prediction. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

Temperance or Patience (arcanum fourteen) signifies a time of waiting, a time for putting aside petty squabbles, a time for learning patience and understanding. Temperance, the Angel of Time, symbolizes hermetic harmony and equilibrium, the working unity of the male and female principles of nature and of humankind; and in humanity, the merger of soul and spirit. The number 14 symbolizes the descent of spirit into matter and represents the activity of humankind in the round of the seasons.

The Devil (arcanum fifteen) represents trouble. Being an individualist, the Devil upset the commandments of heaven, which enforced moral conduct, and so brought turmoil to the masses. He is the symbol of bad luck and of

destruction, the antithesis of good. Fifteen signifies destiny and represents the immense force or power in the mind of humankind.

The Tower of Destruction (arcanum sixteen), the Lightning-Struck Tower, depicts pandemonium, bedlam, and disruption. The struck tower symbolizes the dark night of the soul when the spiritually untested and immature seekers are confronted by a dramatic test of their faith. In this respect, the Tower of Destruction has also been referred to as the "Fall of the Angels." The number 16 symbolizes an ending, a move, or a change; therefore, this card can also signify the breaking up of a romance or a love affair.

The Stars (arcanum seventeen) represents good luck or hope. The seven small stars on the card symbolize the universe along with the charity and hope represented by the number seven. The water in the stream before which the woman kneels symbolizes patience, utilized in overcoming obstacles. Above the kneeling woman's head are seven stars, symbols of solar energy directing beneficent rays on the enlightened adept. Directly above the woman's head, the top star—the star of the **Magi**—indicates the challenge presented by youth in its attempt to revitalize the earth. The number 17 represents wisdom and immortality.

The Moon (arcanum eighteen) is the representation of unknown facts, of knowledge obscured, and an interference with the search for hidden knowledge. The Moon's magnetism preserves and generates life, and the dog pictured on the card undoubtedly belongs to Hecate, the goddess of the Moon's darker aspect, or to Diana, goddess of the chase. The Moon itself symbolizes the reflected rays of the subconscious, and the light falling from the Moon signifies the descent of spirit into matter. The number 18 is a sign of trouble, anxiety, failure, and hidden dangers in general.

The Sun (arcanum nineteen) stands for good luck. The Moon (arcanum eighteen) gives insufficient light to illuminate hidden subconscious knowledge, but the Sun brings clarity, resulting in understanding, comprehension, and happiness. It enables adepts to see the essence of their acquired knowledge and fosters further enlightenment. The Sun card symbolizes complete identification with life here and now, and the hope and possibility of a life, or lives, yet to come in a higher state of being.

On *The Judgment* (arcanum twenty), Gabriel's trumpet summons the adept to newness of life, to change. The Judgment is a positive card, bringing portents of goodness and happiness. The man pictured rising from the depths of the earth represents self-consciousness. The woman rising with him symbolizes the subconscious, and the figure of their child represents the regenerated personality of the adept made manifest. The card does not refer to a final or universal judgment, for the earth traveler is summoned to judgment many times by the cyclical workings of karma.

The World (arcanum twenty-one) is the last numbered card of the Major Arcana and presents an allegory of transmutation completed. The adept has reached the ultimate end of his or her journey and has achieved an innate knowledge of all that is good in the universe, which is symbolized by the wreath that surrounds the Virgin. The World card represents honesty and truth, as well as success, harmony, and attainment.

The figure of *The Fool* (arcanum 0), stands for an individual who becomes so involved in the occult sciences that he or she misses the path to spiritual development. The Fool also reminds everyone that they learn from their mistakes. It carries a small pack on a stick, symbolizing the karmic debts which all men and women must carry through life. The Fool warns the wise that the more they know the less they really know, once they have become aware of the vast unknown.

The 56 cards of the Minor Arcana symbolize the four basic component groups of medieval society. The pip cards, therefore, are divided into four suits, each bearing a symbol representing one of these groups. Batons, also known as rods, which once represented the peasant or serf class, have come to be the symbol of money and financial interests. Coins, the card of the merchant or tradesman class, symbolize enterprise and worldly glory. Cups, the symbol of love and happiness, is the tarot

representative of the clergy, while swords stand for the medieval nobility and allegorize hatred and misfortune.

Each of the four suits of the Minor Arcana has its own royal family. These are the king, queen, cavalier (knight), and knave (page, young male or female servant). In the world, a king is a man who rules a major territorial unit, one who holds a preeminent position and is a chief among competitors. It is the same in the tarot. The kings of batons, coins, cups, and swords each stand for a powerful male person with superior qualities, knowledge, and abilities in the category represented by his symbol. A queen, in the world and in the tarot, is the female counterpart of a king, and the same may be said for the queen of each respective suit with respect for gender. A cavalier, or knight, is a man upon whom a corresponding dignity has been conferred by a monarch, and in the tarot, represents a young man with qualities much like those of his parents, the king and queen of the same suit. All royal families have servants, and so it is with the rulers of the Minor Arcana suits. The knave in each suit represents either a young man or woman of humbler station than the cavalier, who is at times tricky, even deceitful.

Coins. Coins, or money, is the symbol of enterprise and worldly glory. The king of coins represents a man of refinement, wise in the ways of the marketplace. If the king of coins turns up in an inverted position, he will bring the negative qualities of doubt, fear, and danger.

The queen of money represents the hope of acquiring the ability to overcome obstacles. If inverted, she becomes a sign of evil.

The cavalier of coins symbolizes omens of disunion, discord, or quarrels. If this card turns up with the knight's head downward, its significance is reversed.

The knave, or servant of the house of coins, brings good news. If the knave is dealt upside down, he becomes a bearer of ill tidings.

The "spot" or numbered cards of the suit of coins are interpreted as follows: Ten brings the qualities of confidence, security, and honor. Nine signifies order, discipline, and an ability to plan. Eight is a sign of understanding. Seven promises success in life, gain for one's enterprises, and a general condition of advantage and profit. Six is read as a sign of a promising undertaking. The five of coins points to gain and riches. Card four predicts a successful enterprise. The three also points to a prosperous enterprise. Two is a happy omen of good fortune. The one signifies a beginning.

Cups. Of more vital concern than money in the lives of most people are love and happiness. The king of cups represents a just man of fair play. Likewise, the queen of cups evokes the image of a well-loved, motherly woman. The knight of cups symbolizes a fair young man who possesses the same qualities as the king and queen. The page symbolizes similar qualities of love and happiness. If any of these cards are dealt inverted, their meaning signifies aspects of distrust and unhappiness.

The ten of cups represents satisfaction in personal accomplishments. The nine means triumph. Eight insures the forthcoming fulfillment of a wish. Seven indicates the presence of fresh concepts or images. The six of cups reveals thoughts of past loves. Five portends a union, possibly marriage. Four indicates displeasure over a relationship. Three is a happy card, promising success. The two of cups symbolizes love, the result of one added to one. The one-spot alludes celebrations and good cheer.

Swords. The tarot cards bearing swords bring associations of power, authority, hatred, and misfortune. The king of swords represents a man of authority, one used to issuing orders and seeing to their execution even if they bring about grief and fear. The queen of swords allegorizes a woman who is malicious, spiteful, selfishly domineering. The knight of swords brings to mind the same dark thoughts as the king and queen. The valet of this ominous suit can be seen as a spiteful, malicious, and prying young man or woman. Inverted, these cards suggest more positive applications of wealth and power.

The ten of swords foreshadows tears, afflictions, and sorrow. The nine is a card of hope. The eight relates to general calamities, such as sickness or injury. The seven reverses the ill omens of its predecessor, with an upsurge of hope and confidence. Six denotes a voyage. Five is a card of sadness and mourning. The

four mirrors thoughts of stillness and periods of solitude. The three of swords is the card of severance and removal. The two stands for friendship. The ace is a herald of triumph.

Batons. The batons, also called rods or clubs, are symbols of the peasants or serfs of medieval society. The king of batons epitomizes the self-made man, a symbol of success through hard work. The queen of clubs is a loving woman, but very reserved. The knight of clubs indicates the presence of a helpful person. The valet who attends the royal family of finance is a man or woman of extremely sensitive nature. If any of these cards are inverted, they indicate individuals who may cause severe problems.

The ten of batons depicts gambling for high stakes. Nine indicates a loss of money. Eight brings good luck. The seven is a happy card of profit and gain. The six of batons is a portent of gifts, of gratification of desires. The five reveals thoughts permeated by avarice and greed. Four symbolizes gaiety and the pleasures money can buy. Three is a noble card, representing dignity transcending frivolous, impulsive actions. The two of clubs indicates a loss of money. The ace reveals a state of perfect contentment and triumph.

It is essential to remember that the meaning of any card of the tarot is colored by the interpretation the reader gets clairvoyantly. Although it may often appear that cosmic forces rule the tarot, and that the sequence of a shuffled and cut deck is not accidental, the cards must still be regarded as a device to free the reader's psychically sensitive subconscious and to serve as a generator of spontaneous thought. Its legendary powers exist within, not without, the human psyche.

TELLING FORTUNES WITH MODERN PLAYING CARDS

As with the tarot, each card in the modern deck of playing cards has acquired a traditional interpretation over the centuries, and the reader—or person telling the fortune—has become familiar with these meanings. The next step in the process is to interpret the drawing or placing of each card by the querent (or questioner)—the person seeking the fortune—in terms of certain of the cards next to which it appears in the layout or draw.

There are about as many methods of placing or laying out the cards as there are card readers. The reader may have the querent select a card at random to represent him or her in the reading and the resultant spread may revolve around that particular card. The reader may also through the process of trial and error develop a spread or layout that seems to stimulate his or her psychic awareness and increase the ability to "tune in to" the querent. Some readers prefer to draw—or allow the querent to draw—one card at a time and do a free-flowing interpretation. Others like the pattern of a cross, a circle, or several rows of cards placed in various representations of what the reader perceives as best providing a window to the querent's future.

Listed are some basic meanings of the individual cards in the traditional deck—minus the Joker (some readers use this card to represent the querent):

DIAMONDS: Diamonds represent the practical, material side of life, especially money. They can also stand for difficulties that will arise if insufficient energy is expended in the desire to accomplish financial goals.

The ace of diamonds signifies a beginning or an important message that brings money or a gift to the recipient. The king of diamonds represents a man who has achieved material wealth and success. The queen of diamonds is a woman who is noted for her flirtatious nature and her tendency to gossip about others. The jack of diamonds symbolizes a jealous friend or relative.

Regarding the "spot" or numbered cards of the suit of diamonds: Ten brings money—or possibly a journey that will result in financial success. Nine signifies a wish to wander and explore. Eight is a sign of financial success or a marriage that will take place. Seven warns of ill fortune in a financial enterprise. Six is read as an early marriage that is likely to fail. The five of diamonds points to gain and prosperity in business and in marriage. Four predicts that quarrels and disagreements lie ahead. The three points to disputes, quarrels, and poten-

tial lawsuits. Two is a happy card of good fortune in both love and business.

HEARTS: Hearts symbolize a strong emotional force that can nullify evil and indicate success in business, as well as in love.

The ace of hearts alludes to happiness in the home. The king of hearts is a just man, remembered for his fair play and his generosity. The queen of hearts evokes the image of a well-loved woman, a mother, faithful wife, or one's true love. The jack symbolizes a reliable and trustworthy friend or relative.

The ten of hearts promises success and good fortune in any project. The nine represents triumph, fulfillment, and success. When the eight turns up, it insures a happy occasion. Seven indicates false hopes. The six reveals a weakness to be overly generous and trusting. Five is a card of indecision. The four of hearts is the card of the bachelor or the spinster. The three is a card of cautions against becoming impetuous or easily angered. The two of hearts symbolizes success in love and in business.

SPADES: Although they have a reputation for being all bad, spades often signify warnings and cautions, rather than predicting actual dire consequences. Generally, though, when spades appear in a spread, they indicate bad luck, financial loss, illness, separation, divorce, even death.

The ace of spades is the card of misfortune, sometimes dramatically named the "death card." The ace may also signal the end of a relationship or a business situation. The king of spades represents a man whose unchecked ambitions may cause him to prove to be a danger. The queen of spades allegorizes a woman who is malicious, spiteful, selfishly domineering. The jack of spades can be seen as a spiteful and prying young man or woman, who only pretends to be a friend.

The ten of spades is an unlucky card that foreshadows tears, afflictions, and sorrows. The nine of spades is regarded as the absolute worst card in the pack and indicates forthcoming illness, loss of money, the infidelity of a loved one, or the failure of a business. The eight warns about false friends. The seven cautions one to avoid misunderstandings with friends and relatives. Six of spades is associated with discouragements, but the card also offers the hope of overcoming troubles through perseverance. Five is a lucky card representing business success and a happy marriage. The four of spades indicates a brief illness, temporary financial reverses, and warns against the petty jealousy of others. The three of spades is an unhappy card of severance and separation in love or marriage. The two indicates a complete separation from loved ones, the loss of a home, or a death.

CLUBS: While clubs most often symbolize friendship, they also warn of hypocrisy and treachery. Although clubs are generally good cards, they may advise caution in any life situation that involves placing too much trust in fair-weather friends.

The ace of clubs reveals a state of perfect contentment and triumph. It is a card of wealth, fame, and success in a chosen profession. The king of clubs represents a man who, though sometimes a rival, is a valuable friend. The queen of clubs is a woman who is occasionally temperamental, but who can always be relied upon to be loyal in love or in friendship. The jack signifies a generous, sincere, and constant friend whose devotion is never in question.

The ten of clubs is a strong good luck card. Nine indicates a loss of money and a variety of other troubles, including serious disputes with friends or family members. Eight of clubs warns against incurring bad debts. The seven is a happy card of profit and gain. The six of clubs is the partnership card, a sure portent of success based on a trustworthy friendship. The five is a marriage card, usually representing a happy future for both parties. Four symbolizes danger or a sudden misfortune or failure. Three is a sign of a second marriage and possibly a third. The two of clubs is an unwelcome card, indicating a loss of money or friendship.

How often may the cards be consulted by the querent? Most card readers answer that question by saying as often as the client wishes. Generally, repeat deals or readings should only be done to clarify questions left unanswered or unclear.

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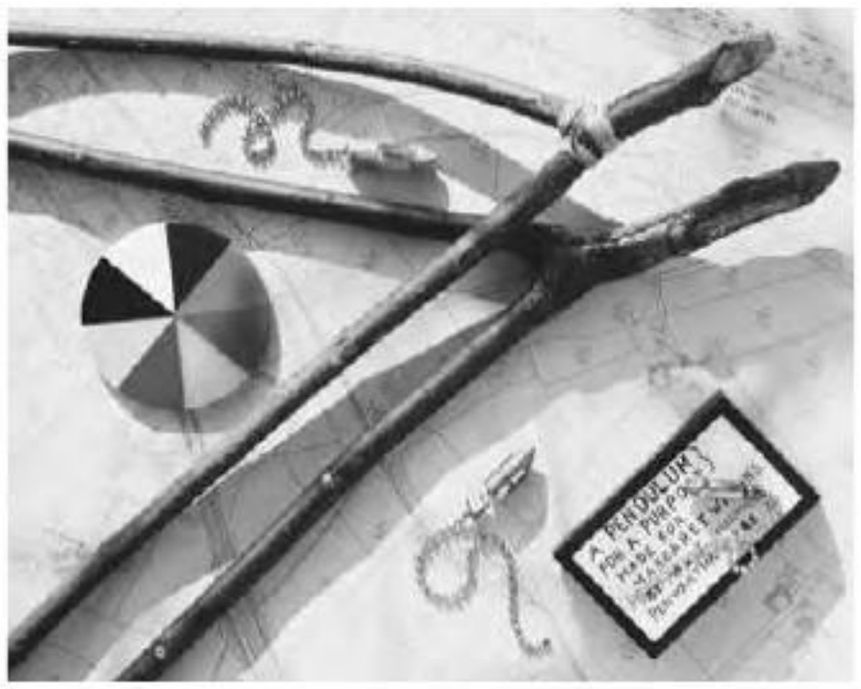

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Dowsing

Dowsing, scientifically known as radioesthesia, is the interaction of the mind of the dowser and the energy of the object of interest. Most dowsing is used to find water and minerals. It has been used to find lost objects, even people. The ability to find people, artifacts, or substances by use of maps, pictures, or physically being in a place are currently the most popular applications of dowsing.

DOWSING, *or radioesthesia, is used to find water and minerals.*

The method of dowsers seldom varies. They grasp the ends of a forked twig (peach, apple, maple traditionally work best, though some modernists say a bent metal coat hanger works just as well) with palms upward. As they begin their search for water, they carry the butt of the stick pointed upward. When they near water, they can feel the pull as the butt end begins to dip downward. When the dowsers are over the water, the twig has been bent straight down, having turned through an arc of 180 degrees. A stick of brittle wood will break under the grip of a dowser as the butt moves downward. Pliable twigs will twist themselves downward despite an effort to hold them straight.

Few manifestations of so-called psychic ability have been more hotly debated than that of dowsing. On the one hand is the pronouncement of the scientific community which declares that locating water by means of a forked stick is utter nonsense, and on the other side of the argument are those men and women who go ahead and locate water with their forked maple twigs, completely impervious to the ridicule visited upon them by the skeptics. They could not care less whether or not a laboratory technician believes that water cannot be found in such a manner. All they know is that it works and that they have been finding water in just that way for years.

Novelist Kenneth Roberts stated in his book, *Henry Gross and His Dowsing Rod* (1951): "Not all the derision of all the geologists in the world can in any way alter the unfailing accuracy of the dowsing rod in Henry Gross's hands. Not all the cries of 'hokum,' 'fanciful delusion,' 'hoax,' 'pseudoscience' can destroy or even lessen the value of Henry's dowsing...."

In 1953, UNESCO sponsored a committee of prominent European scientists in their study of radioesthiesa. Their carefully considered consensus was that "there can be no doubt that it is a fact." The Academie des Sciences of Paris has commented that "it is impossible to deny the existence of the power, although its nature cannot be determined." Five Nobel Prize winners have endorsed dowsing, and so has the Institute of Technical Physics of the Dutch National Research Council.

In Germany in 1987 and 1988, more than 500 dowsers participated in more than 10,000 double-blind tests conducted by physicists in a barn near Munich. The researchers who held

the so-called "Barn" experiments claimed that they had empirically proved that dowsing was a real phenomenon. However, subsequent analysis of the data by other scientists raise the argument that the results could reasonably be attributed to chance, rather than any kind of unknown psychic ability to find water or hidden objects.

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King Faria, a water witch, holds a divining rod made of weeping willow. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

GRAPHOLOGY

Graphology or handwriting analysis is based upon the interpretation of certain signs and symbols to be found in a specimen of handwriting. In the view of a graphologist, the complicated mental, physical, and psychic machinery known as human beings betray so much detail about themselves in their handwriting because the actual process of handwriting begins in the mind, with thought. All handwriting is first an idea that becomes a desire to communicate that thought to paper. Graphologists perceive handwriting analysis as a doorway to the subconscious. As such, not only conscious but subconsciously formed habit patterns and personality traits show up in an individual's handwriting.

Because handwriting reveals the inner person through his or her subconscious, graphologists believe that there are universal symbols that are evident in handwriting, beginning as early as a child's first attempts at writing. For example, if in a child's handwriting analysts were to observe angular patterns formed like the points of arrows or spears, they would have little difficulty recognizing such formations as likely symbols of aggression. There has been some conflict within the ranks of graphology on the question of whether or not pre-writing scribbles may indicate personality traits in children. A scribble, as defined by graphologists, is a spontaneous discharge of energy. It is not meant to convey a message, and children make them for the sheer joy of it. To children, scribbling is simply a means of expression. They leave on the paper, therefore, a record of their prevailing mood, whether joy or unhappiness. Likewise, if they are angry, they may sit down and make motions on a piece of paper resembling the slashing actions of a knife.

HANDWRITING *analysis is perceived as a doorway to the subconscious.*

Graphologists are convinced that handwriting analysis can reveal an individual's innermost thoughts, motivations, and desires. The handwriting of individuals with an advanced psychosis and extreme neurosis would differ from that of an "average" person. In psychosis, the analyst would see traits that are considered normal, but they would be exaggerated, amplified, carried to such lengths

that they would become, then, undesirable traits. For example, in the case of a schizophrenic, where the personality has separated itself from the everyday world and formed another world of its own, a graphologist would expect to see the handwriting symbols for imagination exaggerated to a tremendous degree. In the case of the extreme neurotic, the differences are again quantitative, rather than qualitative, dealing with a blown-up effect on one trait, and perhaps, a diminished, or totally absent, symbol trait which could balance the overemphasized qualities of the other.

Normal handwriting would, therefore, have to show the balance missing in neurotic or psychotic handwriting. A balanced handwriting would be the outward manifestation of a balanced mind. Leftward movement of the handwriting indicates a writer who has a tendency to live in the past and to be of a passive disposition. Rightward movement usually reveals a writer who is future-minded and somewhat aggressive.

The degree to which individuals have balanced their tendencies and personality traits is an invaluable clue to a prospective employer, and many companies and businesses have begun employing a graphologist on their staff. Graphologists maintain that an employer can get an indication as to how an individual will react under stress and determine whether or not a person in their employ would act in a violent, antisocial manner in moments of excitement in dealing with customers. To illustrate the above point, graphologists have shown how prospective embezzlers would give themselves away by their handwriting. The oval letters—the "o," the "a," and in certain cases, the oval formations on the small letters "p" and "d"—would be opened up at the bottom. It would appear as though someone had come along and erased the bottom of these letters, suggesting that the embezzlers want to fill up the holes with some money.

The above signs constitute a general rule and should not be regarded as universal or absolute. A cautious and discreet graphologist would be careful never to make a definite finding on the basis of only a few signs, but many handwriting analysts believe that company executives in charge of hiring could gain helpful information about prospective employees by looking for such signs as the following.

Small writing shows either the ability or the potential for a high degree of concentration. Narrow, peaked connecting strokes between words are an expression of withdrawal.

Introverted people are likely to sign their names far to the left of the main body of a piece of writing, continuing a general leftward trend.

Graphologists believe that even a glance at the white spaces to the left and right and above and below the written matter provides instant insight into the writer's personality. For example, if a left margin starts out narrow and widens as the lines of writing proceed down the page, the body of the writing should normally reveal, among other things, indications of enthusiasm, optimism, and generous spending habits. The left margin represents the beginning point for the writer's activities. If the lines of writing are begun far to the right of the page's left edge, the writer's pen had to make a considerable "leap" before tracing the first word. Individuals who begin writing in this way are also prone to "leap" enthusiastically into their undertakings.

If the left margin of the writing is overly wide, the writer may have erected a facade to conceal true feelings.

Since the hand must travel from left to right to execute a line of writing, a narrow left margin indicates a reluctance to move into the realm of action. The complete absence of a left margin may symbolize the writer's subconscious desire to return to an infantile state of dependency.

Individuals who set themselves apart from others because of snobbishness or pride leave inordinately wide left margins, but the graphologist must be careful, for such margins are also characteristic of the writing of shy persons.

If the left margin widens as the writing proceeds down the page, it is a sign of haste and a nervous nature. If, on the other hand, the left margin narrows as the lines descend, it shows that the writer suffers from fatigue, physical weakness, or perhaps, illness. Such a

margin is also the sign of psychological or physiological depression.

The right margin symbolizes destinations reached, goals achieved, and the writer's attitude toward the future. In contrast to the left margin, which corresponds to the false front individuals may use to hide their feelings, the right margin reveals a genuine desire to be close or distant to the other people they contact in the course of living life. A wide right margin shows that the writer actually prefers to remain distant, while a narrow right margin shows a genuine desire for close relationships.

The idea of graphotherapeutics began in the early part of the twentieth century when a number of psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors of medicine, and graphologists cooperated in a study of the reciprocal effects of personality and handwriting. They interpreted symbols in handwriting as having been formed by a sort of feedback process. Not only does the mind influence or shape handwriting, but handwriting can also shape the mind. The flow of electrical energy in the form of nerve impulses throughout the nerves and various nerve endings also returns to the mind along other neural pathways. Working under this premise, when people see what they know to be an undesirable trait appearing in their handwriting, they can change the trait by changing their handwriting.

When handwriting experts in police laboratories examine a suspected forger's signature or an alleged note left by a suicide victim, the first problem they face is to determine the writer's special characteristics. Even skilled forgers may not be able to see the subtle marks, pressures, slanting, and shading that an expert graphologist will perceive almost at a glance. The FBI Laboratory and laboratories of state and city police departments keep on file all extortion and ransom notes, all threatening and defamatory letters, and all messages that threaten bombings, arson, or personal attacks on individuals. As strange as it may seem, criminals of all kinds who once put their demands or threats in writing will most often do so again.

A famous case that demonstrates how graphology can be effective in solving crimes occurred on July 4, 1956, when Mrs. Morris Weinberger, a young mother of two, left her 33-day-old baby, Peter, in his carriage on the patio in the backyard of their home in Westbury, Long Island. Although she had been gone for only 15 minutes, when she returned she found the carriage empty and a ransom note that stated a demand for $2,000 and was signed, "Your Baby Sitter." In spite of her broadcast pleas for the return of their child, no further demands were issued by the kidnapper until July 10, when the Weinbergers received a telephone call and a second note.

Under the law at that time, the FBI could not enter a kidnapping case until seven days had passed. Once that time period had been observed, experts began immediately to study the kidnapper's notes. It was decided that the ransom notes had been written on a piece of paper that appeared to have come from a lined tablet designed for use in writing public records. Among distinctive aspects of the kidnapper's writing, there was a peculiarly looped capital "P," a rounded "A" with a short tail, and a capital "Y" that was strangely bold.

Six weeks after little Peter Weinberger had been taken from his carriage, a group of handwriting analysts managed to match the handwriting on the ransom note to that of a signature by a man who had received a suspended sentence. It was the 1,974,544th document that had been studied during the desperate search for baby Peter.

Tragically, the kidnapper, Angelo John LaMarca, who lived five miles from the Weinbergers, had thought he could solve his money problems by snatching a rich family's child. LaMarca had panicked on August 23rd and left the baby in a dense thicket to die. The kidnapper was found guilty of murder and died in the electric chair.

Although handwriting analysis may provide valuable leads that in some cases may lead to the discovery of the perpetrator of a crime and that person's subsequent arrest, the testimony of graphology by itself has not been accepted by appellate courts in the United States. In spite of the claims made by graphologists, the courts have ruled that it does not meet the requirements of the kind of science

Woman consulting with the book *I Ching* and using fortune sticks. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

that may be relied upon in a court of law. In those instances where a person's employment may have hinged upon a graphoanalytical evaluation, plaintiffs may sue an employer who used graphology in an employment decision.

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I CHING

The I Ching or Book of Changes has been used as a method of divination for more than 5,000 years, and in spite of its venerable age, modern enthusiasts insist that it is the most sophisticated method of predicting future events ever devised. Querents approach the I Ching with such questions as "What does the future hold for me?" "Should I marry now?" and throw coins. Each coin is assigned a number, so the results of the tosses are totaled to find the corresponding hexagram to learn the answers to the inquiries. The "book" consists of 64 hexagrams, each comprising six broken or unbroken lines. Although the text accompanying the I Ching does not refer to the two primal cosmic principles—the yin and the yang—in essence, the philosophical premise of the I Ching does hold that the

broken line and the unbroken line can represent any pair of polar opposites, such as male/female, light/dark, and so forth.

Those who believe in the wisdom of I Ching maintain that within the 64 sections there exist teachings for every possible situation that anyone will encounter throughout his or her life. Within the hexagrams are represented numerous archetypal situations in catergories such as "The Rise to Power," "Proper Relationships," "Negativity," and so forth. The hidden meanings of the hexagrams were divined by ancient Chinese sages who were in tune with the philosophy of the Tao, which views human beings as creatures of nature and teaches that instincts, feelings, and imagination should be allowed to have free reign. Taoism is in sharp contrast to Confucianism, which envisions humankind as rational and moral creatures who have responsibilities to their society. The essential philosophy of Taoism is that the natural world and the Tao are one.

Those who rely on the I Ching as their dependable window to the future explain that they find this method of divination to be superior to all others because, as its name implies, it recognizes the difficulty of focusing on events that have not yet occurred and it takes into account the likelihood of changes that may most certainly occur. In fact, the basic premise of I Ching is that every situation in the panorama of human events has within its context an inherent tendency to change. While some may despair and complain that the only thing constant in life is change, those who rely on I Ching agree—but remain confident that changes occur within cycles and that these cycles may be observed, predicted, and acted upon.

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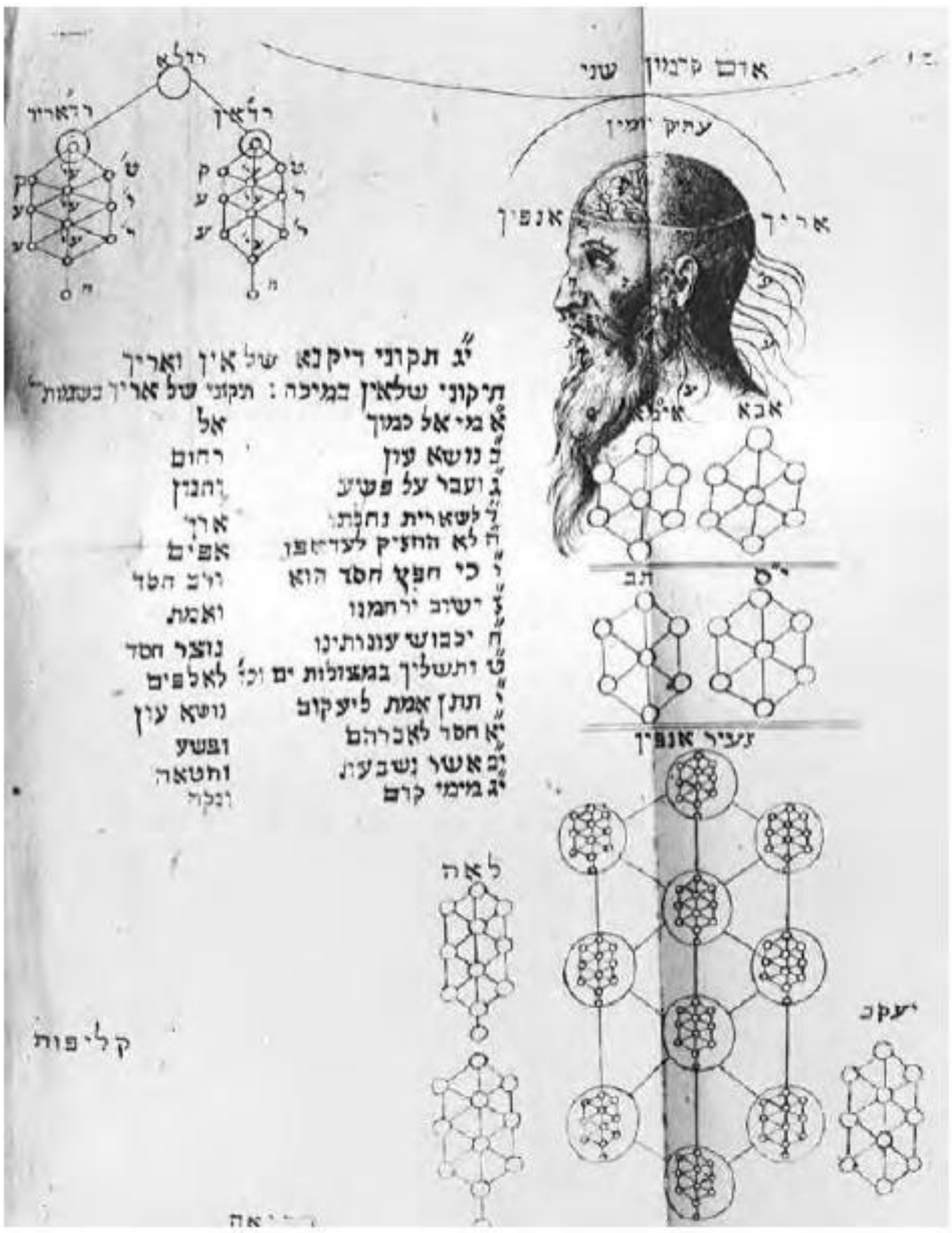
KABBALAH

The Kabbalah (also Cabala, Kabala, Kaballah, Qaballah, etc.) is a mystical Jewish tradition that teaches that the elect of God shall know both Him and the universe and will be raised above common knowledge to a spiritual level where they will understand the secrets of Holy Writ and creation through symbolic interpretation. Kabbalists affirm that the elect shall discover in the ancient texts whatever they choose, and they have the right to assert that the things they discover had been in the sacred scriptures from the beginning.

THE Kabbalah emerged as a text of power and influence in the thirteenth century.

Letters and numbers, the Kabbalah teaches, are not merely signs invented by humans to record things, events, and thoughts, but are in themselves reservoirs of divine power. Hebrew, in the Kabbalistic sense, is a universal language, capable of restoring to humankind the universal understanding that existed before the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel. It is interesting to note that the Greek school of neo-Pythagorean philosophers also understood numbers and letters to be divine things endowed with supernatural powers.

The Kabbalah began to emerge as a text of power and influence in Spain and southern France in the thirteenth century. Many of its teachers proclaimed that the Kabbalah (Hebrew for "received tradition") had been given by God to Moses (14th–13th century B.C.E.) on Mt. Sinai along with the Torah, and generations of **magi, alchemists,** and magicians believed this claim to be true and revered the ancient texts as a legacy of the Creator to humankind, the apex of His creation. Contemporary scholarship suggests that rather than a divinely authored text, the Kabbalah was a product of the earlier mystical tradition of the Maaseh Bereshit and Maaseh Merkavah, both of which would only be taught to one stu-



Engraving from *Kabbala Dnudata Seu Dotrina Hebraeorum Transcendentalis et Metaphysica Atove Theologica* by Christian Knorr von Rosenroth, 1677. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

dent at a time. The Maaseh Bereshit (Hebrew for "work of creation") dealt with the divine utterances that brought the universe into being and how control of these sounds or letters would grant great magical powers over the material substance of the world. Maaseh Merkavah (Hebrew for "work of the chariot") attempted to utilize the mystical practices of heavenly ascent achieved by Ezekial in his vision of the fiery chariot and the throne of glory in heaven. After a period of intense preparation, including fasting, meditation, chanting, and the recitation of certain letter combinations and the names of angels, the adept of Maaseh Merkavah sought to attain a vision of the divine throne of God and to become transformed from human to angel.

Combined with the Maaseh Merkavah and the Maaseh Bereshit to form the Bible of the Kabbalists was the Zohar (Hebrew for "splendor"), which was ascribed to the followers of Simeon Bar Yochai, who was said to have recorded the mystical teachings of Elijah during the years the prophet spent hiding in a cave. Moses De Leon who claimed to possess a copy of the ancient manuscript, published The Zohar in the thirteenth century. After De Leon's death, however, his wife admitted that he had attributed his own writings to Simeon Bar Yochai in order to assure sales to those interested in such ancient magical texts. Modern scholars concede that while the Zohar splendidly depicts the spiritual reality that lies behind everyday experience in the material world, there are many passages that betray the influence of Spanish culture of the thirteenth century and were likely written at that time by De Leon.

The influence of the Kabbalah on mystical Judaism, as well the European alchemists, scholars, and philosophers of the Middle Ages, was powerful and all pervasive, and the text remained a source of strength and inspiration to seekers of enlightenment for many centuries. As the influence of the Christian Church grew stronger throughout all of Europe, the Kabbalah and those who taught its mysteries retreated into the shadows of universities and libraries; and for many scholars, the text was regarded as one of the esoteric and sometimes forbidden hidden works of ancient wisdom. In the twentieth century, Carl G. Jung (1875–1961) introduced the Kabbalah to the psychotherapeutic community and spoke highly of its value in achieving a sense of wholeness with the universe.

Study of the Kabbalah underwent a dramatic rebirth of interest in the 1960s when there was both a resurgence of Jewish spirituality and an interest in the mystic teachings of the Kabbalah by many individuals in the New Age Movement. The appeal of the Kabbalistic teachings to those seekers in the New Age lay to a great extent in the understanding that God's essence may emanate through various realms of existence and that each human may draw from that supreme power to help bring the act of creation to its final perfect state. Many Kabbalistic groups sprang up around the country utilizing the ancient teachings to assist their members to achieve deeper states of meditation, to accomplish healings of

Will the Red Heifer Bring About Armageddon?

In March 2002, a red heifer was born in Israel that some Jewish traditionalists, as well as Christian and Muslim fundamentalists, believe could bring about the end of the world in 2005. According to ancient Jewish teachings, it was only the ashes of a flawless red heifer that could purify worshippers who went into the Temple in Jerusalem. The First Temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E.; the Romans demolished the Second Temple in 70C.E. Without a flawless red heifer to sacrifice to purify the Temple Mount, the Third Temple could not be rebuilt and the Messiah could not come.

Fundamentalist Christians shared the excitement of the birth because they believe that after Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) has returned and defeated the forces of evil at the battle of **Armageddon,** he will begin his millennial reign from the Third Temple—which could not be rebuilt until the Temple Mount had been purified by the ashes of the red heifer.

The genetically engineered red heifer born in 1996 created a great deal of tension in Jerusalem, for Muslim leaders were concerned that fundamentalist Jews and Christians might use the sign of the calf's arrival as a signal to take over the Temple Mount, which the Muslims have occupied since 1967. Muslims revere the Temple Mount as the place where Muhammad (c. 570–632) ascended into heaven; and in 685, followers of the Prophet began constructing the 35-acre site known as the Noble Sanctuary, which today includes the Dome of the Rock and the al Aqsa mosque.

Once again, traditional rabbinical scholars insist that the three-year waiting period be observed, which means in their religious belief, that if no hairs of any other color have appeared in the heifer, it is of divine origin and may be sacrificed to purify the Temple Mount and construction on the Third Temple may begin. As Rod Dreher writing in the *National Review Online* put it: "You don't have to believe that a rust-colored calf could bring about the end of the world…but there are many people who do, and are prepared to act on that belief."

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themselves and others, and to reach higher levels of mystical insight.

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NECROMANCY

Necromancy involves the evocation of spirits of deceased individuals for the purpose of divination. Some magicians believed that spirits could only be summoned during the first year of that person's death. Necromancy was forbidden by the Laws of Moses, but even the great king Saul (11th century B.C.E.) sought the advice of the prophet Samuel through the **mediumship** of the **Witch of Endor.** The Christian clergy also condemned the practice since the earliest days of the church. None of these warnings and proclamations have prevented sorcerers and **magi** from attempting to evoke the spirits of the dead through a variety of rituals.

A spirit could not be called without the magician first taking steps to protect himself. Should he not do this, his soul would be in danger. Protection took the form of **talismans,** seals, special powdered concoctions, and, most importantly, the magic circle. As long as the magician stood within the magic circle, he was invulnerable to whatever spirit entity he managed to call up.

A variety of circles were used. Sometimes a triple circle was drawn, the diameter of each concentric circle being six inches less than the one surrounding it. The outermost circle was marked at four equidistant points for north, south, east, and west. Magical words were written at each point: "Agial" at the eastern, "Tzabaoth" at the southern, "Jhvh" at the western, and "Adhby" at the northern. Between each of these points a pentacle, or five-pointed star, was drawn.

The magician placed his brazier of lighted charcoal at the eastern point, in the smallest circle. Then his altar, its center plumb with the center of the brazier, was equipped. Upon the altar were the ritual tools, including salt water, incense, candles, and herbs appropriate to his specific undertaking. Lighted candles would also be placed around the outside circle. Each tool was carefully consecrated and wrapped in white linen.

In the circle with him, the magician would have prepared the proper talismans. Inscribed also within the circle were the seals of the spirits to be evoked. Next, a triangle was drawn to the side of the magic circle, and it was in this triangle that the spirit would manifest. The magician then commenced with the conjuration, the first order of business being the evocation of the magician's own guardian spirit. This was a further assurance of protection. Then the evocation of the planetary spirit was attempted.

Still other rites demanded that the magician draw a circle containing Solomon's seal (Star of David) with a rectangle superimposed over it, a cross within the center diamond formed by the seal. Solomon's seal was especially recommended for summoning air spirits. According to Peter of Abano (an occult author who lived from 1250 to 1318), this summoning should take place when the moon is waxing. Abano also recommended the inscription of four concentric circles for the invocation of good spirits. This should be done in the first hour of a Sunday in springtime. The names inscribed in the circles were Varcan, the Lord's king-angel of the air, and Tus, Andas, and Cynabel, who are the Lord's holy ministers. The highest angels of Sunday, according to Abano, are Michael, Dardiel, and Huratapal. The north wind carries these angels, and they can be invoked by magical ceremonies employing incense made of red sanders.

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NUMEROLOGY

According to numerologists, each number possesses a certain power that exists in the occult connection between the relations of things and the principles in nature which they express. All that humans are capable of experiencing can be reduced to the digits one through nine. These single numbers are derived from the simplification of all combinations of numbers to their basic essence. This essence then vibrates through the single digit.

Because numerology became popular among New Age diviners in the 1970s, many people who have been introduced to the technique for the first time believe that it is of recent origin. On the contrary, numerology is among the oldest of the psychic sciences, and numerological divination and number charms are found in India, Greece, Egypt, China, and Europe.

Pythagoras (c. 580–c. 500 B.C.E.), the great Greek mathematician and mystic, proclaimed that the very world is built upon the magical power of numbers. According to his doctrines, numbers contained within them the essence of all that is in the natural and the spiritual worlds. For those who followed the teachings of Pythagoras, the number one symbolized unity and therefore the Creator-God. Two represented the duality of good and evil and stood for the devil. Four, symbolizing balance, was considered by Pythagoreans as their most holy and sacred number, and their most solemn oaths were sworn on four. Pythagoreans also used numbers to represent various planets and elements. For example, five stood for fire; six, earth; eight, air; twelve, water.

In addition to the teachings of Pythagoras, Cornelius Agrippa's (1486–1535) work *Occult Philosophy* (1533) quite likely furnished the basis for much of the belief in numerology practiced in the Western world. Agrippa also emphasized the powers inherent in numbers and even prescribed certain numbers as tools in banishing evil, promoting healing, and summoning benign spirits. The energy found in the number five, for instance, could exorcise demons and serve as an antidote to poisons.

NUMEROLOGY is among the oldest of the psychic sciences.

Contemporary numerologists use their various systems to produce assessments of an individual's personality traits, behavior patterns, and to describe compatibility and a possible course of future events for their clients. Depending upon the numerological system, the first and most important number derives from one's birth date and is determined by reducing the numbers of that date into single digits. Beyond this cycle of nine, though, are the two Master Numbers 11 and 22. These never are reduced to single digits. Take the following birthdate for purposes of illustration:

March 29, 1985
3 11 23
3 + 11 + 5 = 19
1 + 9 = 10

The number has been found in this manner: March, the third month, provides the number 3. The day gives 2 + 9 = 11. 1 + 9 + 8 + 5 = 23. Three reduces no further. Eleven does not reduce, being a Master Number. Twenty three (2 + 3) reduces to 5; 3 + 11 + 5 = 19, 1 + 9 = 10 reduces to 1.

The number one, then, is the most important number in this person's life. It is his or her destiny, which cannot be changed, but which he or she does have the ability to direct. From this number, individuals may determine their potential; their hidden aptitudes, talents, and desires; and their specific mission in life.

According to numerology, there are specific meanings for each number, with both posi-

tive and negative aspects. Interpretations of the nine numbers may vary with the individual numerologist, but here, briefly, are some basic meanings for each number:

1—Number one people are independent and need to be, as they tend to be the oak that shelters multitudes. They must control and direct their body, mind, and spirit to the utmost efficiency. They should accept no limitations, yet they must learn to cooperate without losing their individuality. The negative aspect of the number one lies in the danger of emphasizing the needs of self over others.

2—People of the number two will naturally follow the lead of others. Those with this number become excellent diplomats, peacemakers, and go-betweens. Here, as opposed to the number one, the attraction is to groups, to communities. The number two is a perfect wife or husband, for all other numbers are compatible with them. The negative aspect of number two lies in the hazard of withdrawing from others and becoming extremely self-effacing.

NUMEROLOGISTS *assessed personality traits, behavior patterns, and describe compatibility and a possible course of future events.*

3—Those on this path through life have discovered the joy of living. They will tend to find their opportunities on the lighter side of life, in circulating and socializing. An artistic environment is best for the three personalities as they are always seeking expression through writing, speaking, or art. The negative polarity for the number three personality is to become superficial.

4—These people are the builders, those who start with a firm foundation and build something of lasting importance. People who are "fours" serve patiently and dependably and are capable of great achievements. They do the job at hand, striving to perfect the form of the task before them. The opposite polarity for the four personality is to become distant and removed from others.

5— Those with the number five as their destiny must be prepared for frequent, unexpected change and variety. Five personalities do a lot of traveling and learn to understand all classes and conditions of people, and they are generally without racial prejudice. Five people always are seeking the new and progressive. Number five personalities must guard against becoming self-indulgent.

6—Because six is the number of devotional, impersonal love, these people serve quietly, cheerfully, and efficiently, applying the law of balance to adjust inharmonious conditions. People often come to six personalities for material or spiritual aid, and they must always be ready to give it. Some persons with a six life-path are musically endowed, but their real love is for the home and the harmony therein. The opposite polarity for the six personality is to become tyrannical.

7—Seven is a cosmic number related to the seven planets, seven days of the week, seven colors, and seven notes on the musical scale. Things and opportunities are brought to the seven persons, without their actively seeking them. Those with this number should use their mental abilities to probe the deep mysteries and hidden truths of the universe. They are potential mystics; and with their extreme sensitivity, the seven personalities must guard against their tendency to wish to withdraw from the larger society in which they find themselves.

8—Those bearing the number eight in their life-path are the practical people of the material world. They usually desire and achieve love, power, and success. Eight is the number associated with large corporations and organizations. It is a powerful number, and those bearing the responsibilities of the number eight may succumb to the negative polarity of becoming demanding individuals.

9—Nine is the number representing humanitarianism. Those under this vibration must be prepared to give up all personal desire and ambitions. Number nine operates under the Law of Fulfillment, and its appeal is to the all-inclusive, to the many. The negative polarity of the number nine personality is to become egocentric.

11—A Master Number: This is the number of the dreamers, the visionaries, the ones who receive their ideals intuitively. Their destiny is to reveal something new and uplifting to the world. Number 11 is the messenger, the spokesman or broadcaster. The negative polarity for revelators is to become fanatical and judgmental in their beliefs.

22—A Master Number: This is the practical idealist who is concerned with the benefit and progress of humankind. A 22 readily conceives philanthropic plans and seeks to help the masses with their improvement, expansion, and growth. The negative vibrations that accrue around the 22 personalities may lead them to become self-promoters, rather than idealists who work for the general good of the many.

According to the precepts of numerology, one's name is very important, as it is concerned with sound, a direct manifestation of vibration. Therefore, since each letter of every alphabet has its distinctive sound, it follows that each letter would have its own distinctive number. Using the one to nine cycle it is imperative to establish the essence of the number.

The graph that follows, with a name given as an example, shows how to arrive at the number vibration.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

Example:

M	A	R	Y	J	O	H	A	Y	E	S
4	1	9	7	1	6	8	1	7	5	1
		21			7			22		
		3			7			4		

14 (1+4)= 5

The five is the number of this person's name, and according to numerology such a number relates to the person's character and personality. Referring back to the basic explanation of the number vibration, a five would make Mary a progressively minded who must be prepared for much travel and many changes in her life.

Numerologists claim that numbers hold the key to determining many aspects of one's life and destiny. Some who practice numerology even believe that totaling the number of the vowels of one's name can identify the essence of a person's inner self and the soul. Using Mary's name again, we get the numbers 1 + 6 + 1 + 5. By totaling and simplifying these we arrive at the final digit of four. This number represents Mary's inner self. It expresses her real potential, longings, and hidden talents. As a four, her expression is to serve others patiently and dependably and to create something of lasting importance.

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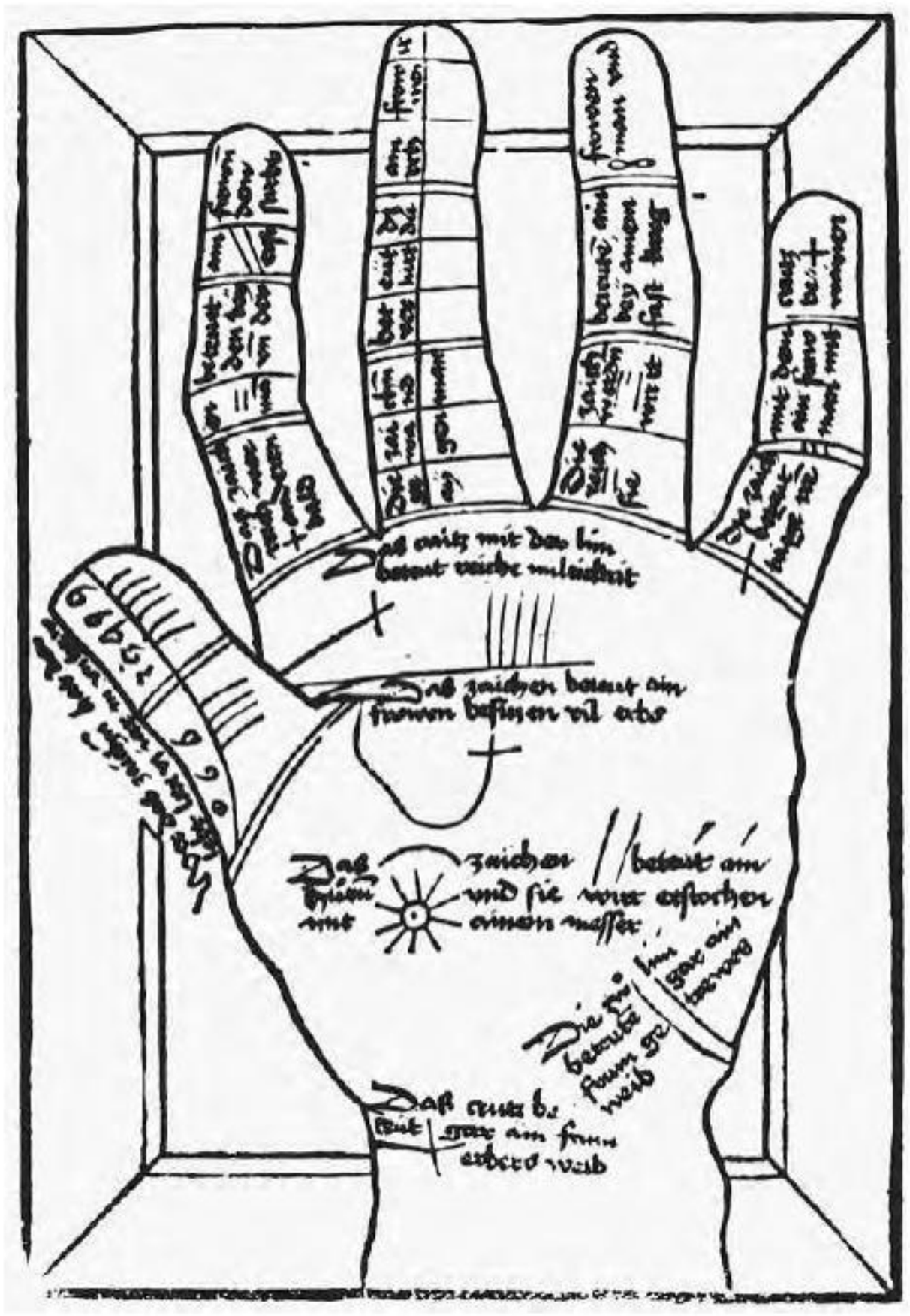
PALMISTRY

Palmistry, most often associated with carnival fortune-telling booths and gypsy caravans, has been a popular means of divination for centuries. Some traditions state that the Brahmins of ancient India practiced the occult science as a means of determining the potential of their students. An old story has it that Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) discovered a treatise on the subject of palmistry that was written in letters of gold, which he then presented to Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.E.), who took great interest in examining the character of his officers by analyzing the lines on their hands. Many years later, this magical volume was translated into Latin and found its way to Arabian **magi** and to magicians in Europe.

Essentially, those who read palms envision the human hand as a microcosm on which the



An illustration plate on palmistry from the German book *Die Kunst Ciromantia* (*The Art of Chieromancy*). (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

individual's life path can be foreseen on the lines that crisscross the palm. Palmistry is subdivided into three parts: chirosophy, the determination of the mystical significance of the various lines; chirogonmy, analyzing the overall shape of the hand itself; and cheiromancy, divining the future and/or past from the form of the hand and fingers and the lines and markings thereon. Some palmists concentrate on reading only the lines of the hand. Others include the fleshy mounts, fingernails, fingers, and even the wrist lines for clues to an individual's life patterns.

There are a variety of opinions regarding which hand to read, left or right. Most commonly, the right hand is read in a right-handed person, and the left for a left-handed person. Traditionally, in a right-handed person, the left hand represents future potential, whereas the right hand depicts the actuality of their personality as it presently exists. For a left-handed person, this would be reversed. Other schools of palmistry state that in a right-handed person the subjective hand, the left, should be read first, for it indicates the natural inclinations and abilities of the subject. The right hand, the objective hand, predicts how far the individual will follow the pattern of life indicated by the subjective hand. In left-handed people, the right hand is subjective and the left is the objective.

For a palmist, each part of the hand is associated with a planetary spirit. The mount or mound of Jupiter is located at the base of the finger of Jupiter, the forefinger. The mount of Saturn is located at the base of the finger of Saturn, the second finger. The mount of the Sun is found at the base of the finger of the Sun, the third finger. The mount of Mercury rests at the base of the little finger, the finger of Mercury. The mount of Venus is the fleshy part of the palm at the base of the thumb. The mount of the Moon is located in the thicker part of the side of the hand, directly beneath the mount of Mercury below the little finger.

The major lines of the palm are the Life, Head, and Heart, which describe the basic personality traits as laid out in the palm. The Life line is the prominent line that begins at the base of the thumb (the mount of Venus) and runs up toward the finger of Jupiter—or, in other terms, the line that starts about halfway between the thumb and the forefinger and curves around the area of the thumb, ending usually near the base of the thumb, nearly at the wrist.

The Head line begins at the start of the Life line, and the two lines should be joined together, just touching. Once palmists locate the beginning of the Head line about midway between forefinger and thumb, they trace its course across the palm toward the outside of the hand.

The Heart line begins in the area of the mount of Jupiter at the base of the forefinger, then runs across the base of the other mounts to the edge of the hand. It is the first horizontal line in the palm.

Palm reading at the Festival of Mind, Body, and Spirit. (GUY LYON PLAYFAIR/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

The line of Mercury, found beneath the little finger, is not present in many people's hands. The line of the Sun is located underneath the third (ring) finger. The line of Saturn, the so-called Fate line, is only found in about 40 percent of the population. This vertical line (s) runs from the wrist up towards the middle finger. The Girdle of Venus is composed of curved lines that will appear underneath the middle and ring fingers. The line of Intuition is a curved, crescent-like line that extends from the lowest part of the mount of the Moon to the mount of Mercury, located directly below the little finger. The lines of Affection or Marriage are located on the side of the hand under the little finger in the area called the mount of Mercury.

The longer one spends studying the human palm, the more lines and markings one is likely to discover. There are "bars," short lines that cross major lines, indicating warnings of serious interference. There are "crosses" that represent periods of ill health, unhappiness, or problems at work. There are even small "stars" consisting of several little crosslines that reveal something extremely rare or unusual. One may also see "triangles" (ingenuity), "squares," or "rectangles" (signs of protection).

Although few scientists have taken palm reading seriously, on December 9, 2001, the *Ananova* Internet News Service reported that researchers at Barcelona University in Spain had announced the preliminary results of extensive research that indicated that intelligence can be predicted by palm reading. According to these scientists, people with learning disabilities have distinctive patterns of lines on their palms. Other research indicated that the lines on the palm can reveal a person's susceptibility to heart disease, autism, anxiety, and schizophrenia.

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PROPHETS AND DIVINERS

Thousands of years before the contemporary era, wise men and women listened while murmuring springs and streams spoke to them of what was to be, and they looked through the brilliance of precious stones into the world of tomorrow. Trees spoke to these early mediators between the gods and humans, as did the wise serpent, the wolf, and the birds that flew overhead.

Many centuries later, Chaldean priests contemplated the night sky and conceived the idea of a supreme spirit from whom sprang a familiar host of lesser deities. In the aftermath of this modification of the traditional order of things, a caste of priests arose, vested with all knowledge of the occult. Subsequently these priests became adept in the practice of divination, finding signs in the organs and intestines of sacrificed animals and translating dancing shapes of flames and swirls of smoke into images of future events. When the gods spoke directly to individuals in the symbolic language of dreams, the priests were there to interpret. In these and other ways, the will of the cosmic rulers was revealed to their earthbound subjects.

The children of Israel, even though they spurned the hordes of good and evil spirits recognized throughout the ancient world, practiced divination in several forms. The book of Genesis records that Laban, the father of Rachel, who became the wife of Isaac, possessed Teraphim—instruments of divination whose oracles were held to be of the highest truth.

Although the practice of sorcery and divination was forbidden to the Hebrews, the high priests of Israel inquired of the Lord regarding the future by means of the high priests' jeweled Ephod and the Urim and Thummim. When the Lord failed to speak to him through the Ephod, Saul (11th century B.C.E.), first king of Israel, resorted to **necromancy,** or divination through the spirits of the dead. Saul entreated the fabled **Witch of Endor** to call up the spirit of the great prophet Samuel, only to hear his own death foretold. According to tradition, Solomon (10th century B.C.E.), wisest of all the Hebrew monarchs, foretold the future by consulting demons, which he summoned with his magic lamp and great seal.

The **Sphinx,** the guardian of Egyptian magic, served as an oracle for diviners of that land. According to Plutarch, such thinkers as Solon, Thales, **Pythagoras** (c. 580–c. 500 B.C.E.), and Lycurgus traveled to Egypt to converse with priests who heard the voice of the Sphinx. Ancient **magi** solemnly testified that the statues of Egypt spoke, and when these oracles of hewn stone uttered their pronouncements, scribes wrote their words on rolls of papyrus while priests listened.

The Greeks saw in numbers the mystical keys to the Great Mind of the cosmos; and the fates of kingdoms, commerce, and human lives hung on the enigmatic utterances of the Delphic oracle. A Greek sect called the psychagogues conjured the spirits of the dead, who brought petitions for their survivors as well as prophetic messages. With so many deities to keep track of, it is no wonder that the Greeks were ever on the alert for omens, even in such simple phenomena as birds in flight and the sequence in which a fowl picked up kernels of grain. Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.) foretold the future with the aid of his own familiar spirit, which replied to yes-and-no questions with sneezes to the right or to the left.

The Roman emperors, while officially forbidding divination, rewarded Chaldean astrologers with drachmas when their readings were favorable and with death or exile when they found adverse omens in the stars. Even the early Christian Church, which persecuted magicians and soothsayers, found that the use of crosses, beads, and relics and bones of the saints were useful aids in bringing the faithful

Phrenology

Austrian physician Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828) speculated that different mental functions are located in specific parts of the brain, therefore becoming the first person to complete the theory of cerebral localization. In his book *The Anatomy and Physiology of the Nervous System in General and the Brain in Particular,* a four-volume set published between 1810 and 1819, Gall set down the principles that focused on the contours and measurements of the human head as the basis of his doctrine on cranioscopy or phrenology. (The word phrenology stems from *phrenos,* or mind, and *logos,* meaning study.)

Gall believed it possible to establish individual behavior, personality, character, and strengths and weaknesses by studying the contours or bumps on the head. Complete with topographical maps depicting and illustrating his findings, his book and theories caused a sensation that still continues today. Many either embraced and hailed phrenology as a new science, or shunned or scorned it at best, as a "pseudoscience." Even today, there are some doctors, practitioners, societies, and websites advocating the authenticity and accuracy of phrenology.

Perhaps because it appeared so logical, with easy-to-follow maps and interpretations of them, phrenology provided a relatively simple diagnostic technique, and caught on as a raving sensation throughout parts of Europe and the United States. The supposed scientific, medical application of phrenology soon found its way into the hands of self-taught and self-styled "experts" who exploited it. Phrenology became the basis for many things, from the selection of marriage partners to employees for the workplace; as a diagnostic tool for mental illness to a way of determining personality profiles— but mainly to generate money. Phrenology parlors were everywhere between 1820 and 1842, giving rise to many inventions. Phrenology machines made it possible for a person to get a detailed interpretation of their personality by allowing a helmet to descend upon his or her head and measure and read the bumps on the skull. Some of these machines and their history are preserved and on display in the Museum of Questionable Medical Devices, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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into a state of mind in which the voice of the Holy Spirit might be heard.

All human cultures throughout history have given great attention to their prophets and seers. Perhaps the quintessential prophet is **Nostradamus** (1503–1566), whose name has become synonymous with prophecy and who is better known to the general public than any of the Old Testament prophets. The French seer has inspired numerous books, countless articles, and a number of television specials. Although his visions of the future were written in poetic verse and read like gibberish to the skeptics, those who believe firmly in Nostradamus's gift of prophecy quote his predictions as if they were Holy Writ. The claim that Nostradamus had predicted the tragedy of the World Trade Center terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, was widely circulated on the Internet and on talk radio. The alleged prediction was soon exposed as a hoax, but not before thousands of books on Nostradamus were sold.

THE *practice of sorcery and divination was forbidden to the Hebrews.*

The twentieth century produced a number of prophets who gathered their believers and provoked their disbelievers, but none received the mass attention of **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945), the famous "sleeping prophet" of Virginia Beach, and **Jeane Dixon** (1918–1997), Washington, D.C.'s "window on the world." Although there will always be seers who will produce an occasional startling prophecy that comes to pass and attract transient devotees until the next prophet comes along with an even more startling prediction, the trend at the onset of the twenty-first century appears to be individuals relying upon their own powers of prophecy and the insights gained from utilizing their own methods of divination.

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EDGAR CAYCE (1877–1945)

According to many, Edgar Cayce was one of the greatest clairvoyants of all time. Before his death at the age of 67 in 1945, the "Seer of Virginia Beach" went under self-induced hypnosis twice per day and gave more than 30,000 trance readings—9,000 of them medical diagnoses. In his lifetime, Cayce earned the gratitude of thousands of men, women, and children whose lives he had saved or improved through his diagnoses of illnesses that had escaped the examinations of highly trained medical personnel.

Always a controversial figure, Cayce was derided by cynics who asked how a man whose formal education had terminated with the ninth grade could become a greater healer than professional medical men with years of training behind them. His defenders were quick to point out that Edgar Cayce did not heal patients who sought his help, he merely diagnosed their ailments—often with a cooperating family physician standing at their side.

The skeptical German scholar Dr. Hugo Munsterberg investigated Cayce in 1910 with the announced intention of exposing him. Weeks later he left the seer to prepare an endorsement, rather than an expose, of Cayce's work. In 1929 Dr. William Moseley Brown, head of the psychology department at Washington and Lee University, declared, after an extensive investigation, that if ever there were such a thing as an authentic clairvoyant, that individual was Edgar Cayce. The authenticated cures attributed to Cayce's diagnoses number in the thousands.

Cayce's son, Hugh Lynn Cayce, once commented that his father had said that everyone was psychic, "but for many people manifestation of this ability can be very disturbing, upsetting, and in fact, it can even destroy the personality if it runs rampant in the person's life. This can be damaging if the individual

does not use these abilities constructively. If he takes ego trips with it, or begins to fake it, the result can be destructive to the personality, particularly that of young children."

In 1931, the **Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE)** was chartered in the state of Virginia as a nonprofit organization to conduct scientific and psychical research based on the Cayce readings. In 1947, two years after his death, the Edgar Cayce Foundation was established. The original ARE has become the membership arm of the Cayce programs. The foundation is the custodian of the original Cayce readings, and the memorabilia of the great contemporary seer's life and career. Both are headquartered in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and there are more than 1,500 ARE study groups around the world.

The ARE maintains an extensive library of information concerning the entire field of psychical research and metaphysics, as well as the Cayce materials. It also sponsors regular seminars, publishes a journal, and established Atlantic University as an environment in which various psychic attributes can be examined and developed. Since the establishment of the ARE, thousands of people from every corner of the nation, as well as from around the world, have journeyed to Virginia Beach to attend lectures and conferences and to investigate the information in the Cayce readings. Among these have been Jess Stern, author of *Edgar Cayce—The Sleeping Prophet* (1967) and Thomas Sugrue, author of *There Is a River* (1942), both of which are important books about the life and work of Edgar Cayce.

Astonishing tales of clairvoyant feats such as the location of missing persons, objects, and criminals have filled many books by a number of authors. Equally intriguing are the "life readings" that the seer gave regarding the past incarnations of individuals. Others speak of the series of trances in which Cayce gave a detailed recreation of everyday life in ancient **Atlantis,** and spoke of the Great Crystal that powered their society. According to his clairvoyant insights, Cayce perceived a secret room in the **Sphinx,** a veritable Hall of Records that would reveal many remarkable facts about the evolution of humankind on Earth. He also put forward a number of prophecies about the future.

In the period 1958 to 1998, Cayce foresaw a number of dramatic geographic changes. He predicted a shifting of the poles, which would be caused by the eruption of volcanoes in the torrid zones. Open waters would appear north of Greenland, and new islands would rise in the Caribbean Sea. He also stated South America would be shaken by a violent earthquake. While these cataclysmic events have not yet occurred, many of Cayce's followers believe that there are definite signs that such geographic changes are in the process of manifesting.

Long before his death in 1945, Cayce appeared to envision the racial strife that lay ahead. "He [the African American] is thy brother!" Cayce said while in trance. "Those who caused or brought servitude to him without thought or purpose have created that which must be met within their own principles, within their own selves....For He hath made of one blood the nations of the earth!...Raise not democracy above the brotherhood of man, the fatherhood of God."

As early as 1938, Cayce foresaw difficulty for Russia as long as its people were denied freedom of speech and the right to worship. Then, in a provocative vision, he declared, "...through Russia comes the hope of the world—not in respect to that which is sometimes termed Communism or Bolshevism—no! But freedom! That each man will live for his fellowman."

Hugh Lynn Cayce died on July 4, 1982, in Virginia Beach. Posthumously, a collection of his speeches concerning Edgar Cayce's teachings on Jesus and Christianity was published under the title *The Jesus I Knew*. Hugh Lynn's son Charles Thomas Cayce became the president of the ARE in 1976 after his father suffered a heart attack, and he still serves the organization in that position.

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Painting depicting Aegeus of Athens consulting the Oracle of Delphi. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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DELPHIC ORACLES

The famed Oracle of Delphi on the slopes of Mt. Parnassos in Greece made known the will of the gods to rulers, philosophers, generals, politicians, and anyone else of reasonably high status who was anxious to hear a favorable word from the gods. For centuries, the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in central Greece contained the most prestigious oracle in the Graeco-Roman world, a favorite of public officials and individuals alike. At various times throughout its long history, the oracle was said to relay prophetic messages and words of counsel from Python, the wise serpent son of the Mother-goddess Delphyne or from the Moon-goddess Artemis through their priestess daugh-

ters, the Pythonesses or Pythia. Then, according to myth, the god Apollo murdered Delphyne and claimed the shrine and the Pythia for himself, imprisoning the serpent seer in the recesses of a cave beneath the temple. The name of Delphi means "womb," and suggests the journey that the seekers of prophetic knowledge had to take as they entered the cave of the Pythoness and descended deeper into the mystical recesses of the oracle, deeper into the womb of Mother Earth.

The Pythia would await the seekers while seated upon a three-legged seat, or tripod, and it was from such a perch that she would issue her prophetic utterances. The many tripods scattered throughout the cave were, in essence, individual altars for her sister priestesses, the three legs symbolizing the connection between them and the triadic spirit of prophecy.

In the summer of 2001, Jelle de Boer of Wesleyan University in Connecticut and coworkers discovered a previously unknown geological fault that passes through the sanctuary of the Temple of Apollo. Such a crossing makes the bitumen-rich limestone found there much more permeable to gases and groundwater. The researchers went on to speculate that seismic activity on the faults could have heated such deposits, releasing light hydrocarbon gases, such as ethylene, a sweet-smelling gas that was once used in certain medical procedures as an anesthetic. Although fatal if inhaled in large quantities for too long a period of time, in small doses ethylene stimulates the central nervous system and produces a sensation of euphoria and a floating feeling conducive to an oracle's visions.

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Psychic Jean Dixon (1918–1997). (CORBIS CORPORATION)

JEANE DIXON (1918–1997)

According to a popular story concerning the remarkable abilities of the seeress Jeane Dixon, President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882–1945) took the time one day in 1944 to clear his desk so that he might give undivided attention to her predictions concerning those terrible days during World War II (1939–45). After she had answered his questions about the efforts on the various military fronts, he asked her directly how much longer he would have to carry out the tasks that he had set before himself.

As if she had expected the question, she warned him as compassionately as she could that he would have very little time. The president was not satisfied. He wanted a more specific answer. She told him, then, that he would have no longer than the middle of the following year.

According to those who hold that Jeane Dixon was the most famous and accurate seer of political events in the twentieth century, she correctly predicted the results of every presidential election, foretold the deaths of U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold (1905–1961) and President John F. Kennedy (1917–1963), predicted that the Russians would win the race into space, and in general foresaw events on both personal and international scales too numerous to mention. A devout Roman Catholic who faithfully

attended Mass each morning, Dixon was convinced that the gift of prophecy that she possessed was closely associated with the power of God, and she claimed to be cautious that she did not abuse this ability. In the 1960s, when she was hailed as "Washington's Window to the Future," she ran a profitable real estate concern in Washington, D.C., with her husband, James L. Dixon.

There seemed to be no standard procedure to this seer's prophetic insights. They came to her at various times, in various places, and in various emotional states. In the book *The Call to Glory* (1971), she envisioned herself as a prophet who issued predictions in order to fulfill the mission that God had given her. The book's acknowledgements named Rev. Stephen Hartdegen, a Roman Catholic priest, as her "personal religious consultant" for the book. Dixon appeared to believe firmly that it was her God-given mission to predict the change in the top leadership positions of Soviet Russia while in front of television cameras, or while under a beautician's hair drier, to warn the woman sitting next to her to avoid an approaching airline disaster.

JEANE *Dixon foretold the death of U.S. President John F. Kennedy.*

In 1956, for an interview in *Parade* magazine, Dixon was asked to predict the results of the 1960 presidential election. She foretold that the election would be won by a Democrat, but that he would either be assassinated or die in office. In the 1960 presidential election many friends remembered her prediction. Even though Richard Nixon (1913–1994), the Republican candidate, would have more votes than Kennedy, the candidate on the Democrat's ticket, Kennedy would become president and, tragically, die while in office. Although the account of Dixon's famous Kennedy prediction was recalled in Ruth Montgomery's three million-copy bestseller *A Gift of Prophecy: The Phenomenal Jeane Dixon* (1966), many skeptics have pointed out that Montgomery neglected to include the seeress's 1960 prediction that John F. Kennedy would definitely fail to win the presidency.

In spite of those who were skeptical of the true accuracy of her predictions, Jeane Dixon's many supporters insisted that her prophetic powers extended beyond the political sphere. According to numerous accounts, with but the barest knowledge of the people involved, she was been able to predict murders, suicides, the results of horse races, fires, and accidents. Once she was able to foresee the number that would win a raffle and purchased the corresponding ticket for her husband. He won a car.

After the death of Josef Stalin (1879–1953), world interest focused on Russia's next prime minister. When Georgy Malenkov (1902–1988) was finally elevated to the position, Jeane Dixon was asked before a national television audience how long Malenkov would be prime minister of the Soviet Union. The question was asked by the former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, Joseph Davies, and he was obviously dubious about Dixon's prophetic power.

Using a crystal ball to focus her attention, Jeane Dixon said that Malenkov would be premier for less than two years. Ambassador Davies disagreed with Dixon in a tone that approached open mockery. He was sure that no premier of the Soviet Union would ever be replaced. It seemed in the nature of Russian politics that the leader would either be assassinated or die a natural death before another man could take over.

But Dixon stood firm. While smoothly acknowledging the ambassador's superior knowledge of the Russian situation, she nonetheless predicted that Malenkov's replacement would be a portly military man with wavy hair, green eyes, and a goatee. Davies had been in Russia for many years and said that he knew of no such man. Ignoring his apparent skepticism, Dixon went on to predict that not only would the Russians win the race into space, they would also dictate the terms of world peace.

Premier Malenkov was replaced by Nikolai Bulganin (1895–1975). Malenkov was not killed, and the new premier was exactly as Dixon had described him: ". . . a portly military

man with wavy hair, green eyes, and a goatee," a comparatively unknown figure to the West. In 1957 Russia launched the first successful artificial Earth satellite, but Dixon was incorrect when she predicted that the Soviets would beat the United States to the moon. And, of course, far from dictating the terms of world peace, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Dixon's popularity enabled her to write a column on astrology that was nationally syndicated and to write a series of books, including *My Life and Prophecies* (1968), *Yesterday, Today and Forever* (1976), *Jeane Dixon's Astrological Cookbook* (1976), and *A Gift of Prayer* (1995). In 1962, she told Ronald Reagan (1911–) one day he would be president, and for a number of years, she served as the Reagans' astrological advisor.

Dixon's list of annual predictions inspired many recordkeepers doubtful of her gift of prophecy to maintain a tally of her hits and misses. Skeptic Robert Todd Carroll declared most of her predictions to have been "equivocal, vague, or mere possibility claims." John Allen Paulos, a mathematician at Temple University, coined the term "the Jeane Dixon effect" to describe the manner in which the media and a believing public would loudly proclaim a few accurate predictions and overlook the much larger number of incorrect forecasts.

When Jeane Dixon died from cardiopulmonary arrest on January 25, 1997, she remained a remarkable prophet in the eyes of her admirers, a spiritually devout woman who fulfilled her mission from God by sharing with the public her gifts of prophecy.

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Irene Hughes. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

IRENE HUGHES (C. 1926–)

In 1966 with her vision of the exact dates for a great Chicago blizzard, Irene Hughes soon became known widely as the "Chicago Seeress." She has foretold deaths, assassinations, marriages, divorces, winning teams in sports, major weather disasters, and the outcome of elections. Notarized statements, personal letters of affirmation, and newspaper records, have validated her predictions. She has predicted the following: In 1966, the Middle Eastern War of June 1967; in January 1967 President Lyndon B. Johnson (1908–1973) would not seek another term, which he announced in April of that year; in November 1967,the assassination of Robert Kennedy (1925–1968), which occurred in June 1968; in 1969, a "tragedy for Senator Kennedy, in or around water" prior to Edward "Ted" Kennedy's (1932–) crisis at Chappaquidick when the automobile that he was driving went into the water, drowning one of his campaign workers. In 1987 she published her prediction of a plummeting stock market and told a group of millionaires that the market would drop "400 points" on the following Monday. On "Black Monday," the market dropped 500 points. Two weeks before Princess Diana's (1961–1997)

death in 1997, Hughes told her radio audience that the princess was in a death cycle and that her death would occur soon.

An area in which she has devoted particular attention has been that of offering psychic assistance to criminal investigators. In all cases, the police solicited Hughes's help.

Hughes's experience with the law and her own research into all phases of psychic phenomena has given her time to give thought to the matter of psychics and possible legal conflicts. "It should be stressed that the information a psychic gives to police officers should be for their use alone to check out and turn into factual evidence," she said. "No psychic information should ever be used in court without the police having first checked it out and proved it to be accurate."

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OLOF JONSSON (1918–1998)

In February 1971 all the media was abuzz with rumors that one of the astronauts on the Apollo 14 mission was conducting a Moon-to-Earth ESP experiment with a psychic-sensitive somewhere on Earth. On February 26, *Life* magazine was revealed that Chicago-based Olof Jonsson was the psychic who had been chosen to participate with astronaut Edgar Mitchell in the experiment. Jonsson was considered the most tested, tried, laboratory-evaluated psychic-sensitive in the United States and Scandinavia.

In March 1952, Jonsson's psychic detective work led to a murderer responsible for the deaths of 13 victims. In each instance, the man attempted to destroy evidence by torching the home of his victim. The murderer turned out to be the police officer assigned to work closely with Jonsson on the investigation. When the officer realized the investigation was directed toward him, he committed suicide.

Jonsson came to the United States in 1953 to be investigated by the well-known parapsychologist Dr. **J. B. Rhine.** For the next 14 years Jonsson submitted to testing at various ESP testing laboratories. He would sit guessing Zener cards—the classic testing deck consisting of the symbols cross, square, wavy line, circle, and star—by the hundreds or the thousands.

In 1978, Olof Jonsson joined a crew of 11 treasure hunters, including President Ferdinand Marcos (1917–1989) of the Philippines, to locate the gold that had been plundered by Japanese officers during World War II and hidden on the islands. Jonsson was instrumental in locating several mineshafts containing more than $2 billion in gold. Jonsson and a number of the other treasure hunters recalled later how the mine shafts were filled with the sorrowful spirits of the men and women the Japanese military had enslaved to do the digging.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Jonsson joined numerous treasure hunters who sought the watery graves of ships that had gone down with cargo on board. Although he continued to be successful in these quests, Jonsson received little income from these enterprises.

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NOSTRADAMUS (1503—1566)

On December 14, 1503, Michel de Nostredame began a life that was destined to be filled with political intrigues, Renaissance rationalism, and mysticism. Born in Saint-Remy in Provence, France, Nostradamus came from a long line of Jewish ancestors who had first come to Europe during the Dispersion. Sometime before his birth, Nostradamus's parents had publicly converted to Roman Catholicism because of a papal edict decreeing disfavor to all those who were not of the Christian faith.

However, during their son's formative years, the religious practice of the family had become a curious blend of Catholic and Jewish customs. In addition, there was a strong current of mysticism in the family. Young Michel's grandfather was considered one of the most influential astrologists on the entire continent.

When he was old enough, Nostradamus was sent off to study liberal arts at Avignon. His great interest was in studying astrology, and this prompted his practical-minded father to reconsider the choice of vocation he had made for his son. The next time Nostradamus was sent to school it was to Paris, and there he studied to become a man of medicine. After almost four years of intensive study, Nostradamus passed his examinations and was allowed to establish a practice. His plans to continue study for the doctorate were disrupted when the plague struck Southern France.

Nostradamus is said to have been successful in his treatment of the Black Death, even though some of his fellow doctors complained that his methods were unorthodox. Later he returned to the University of Paris and there earned his doctorate. He accepted a position at the university and also married.

His unorthodox interests and unquenchable desire to travel made him unhappy in the university setting, but his deep affection for his family enabled him to achieve some satisfaction. After his wife had borne him two children, another outbreak of the plague swept his family away. Grief stricken, Nostradamus abandoned his practice and set about wandering across Europe. It was during this period that he first began to cultivate his prophetic powers.

As he wandered, he made predictions which would later make him famous. While traveling in Italy, Nostradamus saw a young Franciscan monk coming toward him. He was an ex-swineherd named Felice Peretti from Ancona. As the young monk passed, the prophet bent one knee to the ground devoutly, in an attitude of deep respect. Afterwards, Nostradamus's traveling companions questioned him about his strange behavior. His reply was that he must submit himself and bend a knee before His Holiness. In 1585, Cardinal Peretti became Pope Sixtus V (1520–1590).

Everywhere the seer went he was in great demand. Once, visiting a noble family in France, he spotted two pigs running together side by side. Nostradamus told his host that that evening they would eat the black one, and the wolf would eat the white one.

The host decided on a plot to foil the prophet. He ordered the cook to slaughter the white pig and serve it for supper. The cook did as he was ordered. But while he had his back to the spitted carcass, a wolf cub that the family had been attempting to domesticate stole up to it and began making a meal of the freshly killed animal. Eventually the cook chased the cub away, but he knew that he could not put an apple in a mutilated pig's mouth and drop it on the master's table. So the cook had the other pig, the black one, butchered and prepared for the master's table that evening.

NOSTRADAMUS *believed he was guided in his prophecies by the angel Anael.*

That evening at dinner, the noble Frenchman explained to his guest how he had arranged to fool him by ordering the cook to prepare the white pig and not the black one. As respectfully as possible, Nostradamus disagreed. The cook was summoned to settle the matter, and the entire story was brought to light, showing the exact fulfillment of Nostradamus's prediction.

Later in his life, the great prophet was summoned to give a reading for Catherine de Medici (1519–1589), the queen mother and controller of France. She was concerned for her children, and no prophet in his right mind would have told her what was to happen to them even if he could have envisioned it. Catherine's children were all destined to die young as the result of political intrigues.

Perhaps because of the nature of the inspiration Nostradamus received, but more likely because of public response, the prophet began to hide his predictions in obscure poetic language. It would have been sheer folly to tell

Michel Nostradamus. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

the ruthless Catherine de Medici that all her children were destined for miserable deaths. His only recourse was to disguise the ugly truth in poetry and preserve his own skin.

In his astrological studies, which he turned to late in his career, Nostradamus, who believed he was guided in his prophecies by the angel Anael, also resorted to poetic quatrains, four-line verses, arranged in groups of 100 (Centuries). According to many Nostradamus scholars and enthusiasts, a large number of prophecies contained in these quatrains were fulfilled. Those who believe in his prophetic powers insist that Nostradamus foresaw airplanes, rockets, submarines, and many great historic events. Other more skeptical researchers believe the prophecies to be nonsensical gibberish.

In a famous quatrain that many feel refers to Adolf Hitler (1889–1945), Nostradamus writes that a son of Germany named "Hister" will obey no laws. Skeptic James Randi's translation, however, points out that "Hister" refers to a geographical region, rather than a person.

Some believe that Nostradamus foresaw the downfall of Communism in a quatrain that says "the law of More" (a widely read treatise on communal living in Nostradamus's time) will be seen to decline because of "another much more attractive doctrine." But the seer missed his target on another interesting prophecy that had to do with a masculine woman, who, at the time of the double eclipse in July and August 1999, would rise to power in Russia.

According to some interpreters, Nostradamus foresaw the decline of the papacy in the year 2000. While some may argue that such a decline has begun, others will counter that in many ways the papacy has a greater world influence in the twenty-first century that it has enjoyed for quite some time. Another quatrain tells of the next-to-last pope declaring Monday as his day of rest and wandering far because of a frantic need to deliver his people from economic pressures.

A last great battle, in which the "barbarian empire" shall be defeated, is determined by some interpreters of Nostradamus as being predicted for the year 2332. In this last battle of **Armageddon,** a young German leader will force the warring nations to lay down their arms and observe a lasting world peace. Nostradamus and a host of other prophets have designated Palestine as the site for this last desperate warfare.

Perhaps the controversial prophet's most unusual prediction was fulfilled in June 1566. That month, although Nostradamus had not suffered an unhealthy day in his life, he died after a short illness. Nostradamus had previously informed his physician that he would die on June 25, and he upheld his reputation as a seer by doing so.

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Drawing of the famous witch Mother Shipton. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

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MOTHER SHIPTON

Often called the world's most famous prophetess, Mother Shipton was born in a cave beside the River Nidd in North Yorkshire, England in 1488. Previously known as Ursula Sontheil, she would display supernatural powers by the age two that earned her the nickname of Child of the Devil.

Although little is known about the rest of her youth, stories circulated about an incident that occurred early in her childhood. Upon returning to her house after doing an errand, her foster mother found the door wide open and Ursula missing. Reporting dreadful wailing and strange noises coming from the house, the neighbors told a story of an invisible force that wouldn't let them enter the kitchen. Together, they all returned to the house to discover the girl sitting in the kitchen. Completely naked, Ursula was sitting on the iron bar in the chimney from which the cooking hooks were suspended, pleased that she had wreaked havoc. From that time on, gossip spread and rumors abounded about her growing uncanny abilities.

In addition to being mischievous, Ursula made rhymes or prose of events or circumstances that would often come true. She suffered from a physical deformity that made her a victim of merciless teasing, and she soon developed what seemed a power to reap revenge on those who did so. For the most part, Ursula was an oddity, and said to even be feared by many.

Accused of using witchcraft in order to make a man fall for her, she married Toby Shipton, a carpenter, in 1512. Ursula Shipton continued to tell fortunes and predict events. Her fame spread throughout Europe, for her predictions in riddle that forecast such events as the Fire of London in 1666, the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and future technology. Born fifteen years before Nostradamus, it is reputed that she predicted the end of the world and even predicted her own end, with her death in 1561.

Although the first known edition of Mother Shipton's prophesies appeared in print in 1641, (*The Propheceyes of Mother Shipton…Fortelling*

Charlie Chan portrayed by actor Sidney Toler as he gazes into a crystal ball. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

the Death of Cardinall Wolsey, the Lord of Percy, and others, As Also What Should Happen in Insuing Times), by an anonymous author, eighty years after her death, it was also published in London by Richard Lowndes. It was a 1684 edition by Richard Head and edited by Charles Hindley, which included her earliest biographical data. Both Hindley and Head, in later years, said the whole thing was a hoax and they made up and invented most of the details of her life.

There is controversy as to whether or not Shipton ever really existed outside of legend. Some say thirteen of her prophecies were accurate and fulfilled; while others say she may have been a real person, but her prophecies were all part of the legend and were written after the events had already come true.

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SCRYING/CRYSTAL GAZING/CRYSTALOMANCY

For many centuries, those who would divine the future have assisted their clairvoyant abilities by crystal gazing, known technically as scrying. This method of divination is of such vast antiquity that it would be impossible to state exactly where it originated. It is known that both the ancient Egyptians and Babylonians scryed by means of gazing into low, open stone dishes filled with palm oil. But who can say for certain when the first diviner entered into an altered state of consciousness while gazing into a pool of water, a crystal globe, the surface of a polished gem, or any transparent object and received what he or she believed to be a vision of the future?

The practice of scrying consists of fixedly gazing into a crystal ball, often placed upon a black cloth in order to shut out all brilliant highlights and reflections.

In place of a crystal ball, scryers will occasionally use the surface of a pool or a glass or saucer full of water, ink, oil, or other liquids. Such surfaces, when used by scryers for the purpose of divination, are known under the name of "speculum." In other instances, scryers will utilize a large piece of natural quartz crystal to serve as their window into other dimensions.

In their instructions to those who would be scryers or crystal gazers, practitioners of the art advise the apprentice to make their mind a blank. They should gaze, rather than stare, steadily at the crystal, blinking as little as possible. It is also advised that they should not extend such steadfast gazes for more than five minutes at a time. If their eyes begin to water, this may be taken as an indication that their time limit has been reached. They should then end their experimentation without delay.

Sooner or later, the accomplished scryers promise, the crystal ball or the scrying device will cloud over and, when this passes, small figures may be seen moving about in the crystal itself. A varying panorama, not unlike

Predicting the future using a crystal ball and tarot cards. (PHILIP PANTON/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

miniature motion pictures, will develop, and certain scenes portraying the future or the past will be played out before their eyes. Such pictures and scenes—whether they are of familiar or strange locations—do not actually appear in the ball, crystal, or liquid; they are merely projected into the object by the subconscious mind of the scryers.

If beginners are unable to see anything in the crystal or the liquid, the experienced practitioners remind them that they can attempt to train their latent ability. They suggest various exercises, such as strengthening their visual memory by first looking at a certain object in the room and then trying to project it, mentally, into the crystal. Neophytes might also close their eyes for a few minutes, thinking intensely of someone well known to them, and then trying with their eyes open to visualize a picture of that person in the crystal.

DELVING DEEPER

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TEA LEAF READING (TASSEOGRAPHY)

A centuries-old method of divining the future involves the interpretation of the fragments of tea leaves at the bottom of a client's cup. The first rule to follow in tea leaf or tea cup reading, also known as tasseography, is to brew the tea in a pot without a strainer in order to allow sufficient bits of leaves to enter the cup. Obviously, tea bags will not work at all. For those who prefer reading coffee grounds, the same rule applies: fresh-brewed coffee—no instant coffee or coffee bags. The rest of the rules that follow regarding tea leaf reading are also those required for the interpretation of coffee grounds.

The best results in a reading will be obtained from a white or light-colored cup with a wide top. The person whose fortune is to be read must drink the tea, leaving a little in the bottom of the cup. Once the tea has been drunk, the subject of the reading should slowly move the cup from left to right three times, thereby distributing some of the leaves around the sides of the cup.

At this point, most tea leaf readers may sit for a few minutes in silence, allowing the psychic rapport to be better established with the client. When they feel a mental connection has been made, the readers will take the cup from the client and begin an interpretation of the symbols made by the bits of leaf within the cup. There are some readers who prefer to have their client shake the cup to be certain the leaves are scattered around its surface and then place it upside down on the saucer. When the cup has been emptied, it is handed to the reader for interpretation of the leaf particles. Whichever method the individual reader prefers, they all agree that the first impression upon looking into the cup is the most important.

Experienced readers take in the total pattern of the leaves and envision the various symbols in terms of the whole picture before picking up on individual details. Again, there is little dogma among tea leaf readers. For some, the rim of the cup represents the future; the bottom, the past. For others, the rim represents the present, the sides predict the future, and the bottom foretells the very distant future. There seems some consensus that the cup's handle stands for the client's home life and personal environment, so the nearer the symbol to the handle, the sooner it will occur.

If the reader sees some of the specks of tea leaves as forming numbers, these may be interpreted as representing time—hours, days, weeks, months, depending upon other impressions received by the reader. If the reader envisions some bits of leaves as letters of the alphabet, they usually represent people close to the client. Very small specks, appearing as dots, indicate a journey for the client. Larger dots indicate money coming soon. Leaf residue that appears to be arranged in a wavy line suggest uncertainty. Straight lines represent a definite course of action that must be followed carefully. If the reader interprets any specks as stars or tri-

Tea leaf reading.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

angles, the indication is good fortune; circles, great success; squares, a need to be cautious.

The reputation of any tea leaf reader is dependent upon his or her innate psychic ability and an imaginative interpretation of the meaning of the symbols that have been formed by the scattered bits of leaf. Here are some suggested interpretations of tea leaf imagery that seem somewhat common among tea leaf and coffee grounds readers:

- *Angel:* Good news is on the way. Someone is watching out for your best interests.
- *Ant:* You are an industrious person, but there is more hard work ahead for you.
- *Axe:* Someone near to you may be planning to stab you in the back with lies or deceit.
- *Bear:* Trouble ahead.
- *Bell:* Good news. Perhaps a wedding day will soon be set.
- *Bird:* There is a journey to be planned soon. It will be pleasant and productive.
- *Cat:* Keep your eye on a treacherous friend or relative.
- *Clouds:* If the flecks are scattered, troubles will soon be over. If they are solidly grouped, financial woes will soon materialize.
- *Flies or other insects:* Minor annoyances will soon become major problems if not dealt with immediately.
- *Flowers:* Love or an important honor is about to come to you.
- *Frog:* Be ready to make a dramatic change in your life.
- *Heart:* There is someone close to you in whom you may always confide.

- *Horseshoe:* Go ahead with your plans. The outcome will be fortunate.
- *Hour glass:* Take more time to make your decision.
- *Knife:* Avoid misunderstandings with those closest to you. Be more mindful of your health. Beware of a potential lawsuit.

A TEA *leaf reader's reputation is dependent upon their innate psychic ability and an imaginative interpretation of the meaning of symbols.*

- *Moon:* If it appears full, there is romance ahead for you. A half moon represents a time to leave old projects for new. The quarter moon warns against making hasty decisions.
- *Ring:* There is an approaching marriage or engagement for you or someone close to you.
- *Snake:* A small misfortune will only slightly impede your plans for success, for you will easily overcome its ill effects.
- *Wheel:* You or someone close to you are about to receive great advances in work and will soon receive much needed financial increases.
- *Woman:* Your great desire is for love and a happy family life.

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

clairvoyant Someone who has an ability or insight to perceive or see objects, events or actions in a supernatural way, beyond the normal senses.

cosmos From the Greek *kosmos* meaning "order, universe, ornament." The entire universe as regarded in an orderly, harmonious and integrated whole.

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.

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.

haruspicy A method of divining or telling the future by examining the entrails of animals.

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.

neophyte From the Greek *neophutos* meaning "newly planted." A person who is a new convert to a religion or religious community. Somebody who is a beginner at an endeavor or task.

soothsayer From Middle English, literally meaning "somebody who speaks the truth." Someone who claims to have the ability to foretell future events.

Chapter Exploration

Amulets
Bells
Bloodstone
Candles
Cauldron
Crystals
Fairy Circles
Garlic
Hand of Glory
Horseshoes
Knife
Love Knots
Mandrake Root
Maypole
Mirror
Mistletoe
Rings
Salt
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Trees
Voodoo Dolls

Tribal Empowerment
Crystal Skulls
Fetishes
Megaliths
Runes
Talismans
Totems

Things of Sacred Power
The Ark of the Covenant
Crosses
The Holy Grail
Philosopher's Stone
The Spear of Destiny
Swastikas

Chapter 8
Objects of Mystery and Power

An object of mystery and power can be an everyday object that an individual believes brings good luck or fortune, ranging from an item of clothing that was worn when some great personal success was achieved, to an antique necklace passed on from generation to generation by a revered member of the family tree. In addition to such items of personal significance, individuals prize objects that reportedly brought victory or good fortune to heroes of long ago. Still others search for mysterious relics imbued with supernatural attributes that have accomplished miracles so that such powers might be theirs.

INTRODUCTION

Objects of power and mystery range from ancient stone structures with puzzling origins and purposes, to legendary lost relics that reportedly reappeared centuries later, to everyday objects that are believed to have special powers that will bring good fortune to the bearer.

Salt, for example, represents life and health to many people: it has been used as a flavor enhancer and food preservative since ancient times. A superstition for new parents in Europe and the Americas involves placing salt in a baby's cradle to protect the infant until it is baptized; a similar custom in some Middle Eastern countries calls for babies to be rubbed with salt to protect them from demons. It's bad luck in many cultures to spill salt, but there is a quick way to recover: toss a pinch of salt with the right hand over the left shoulder in order to stave off any bad luck resulting from the salt spill. Throwing salt over one's left shoulder is also believed to be a way to ward off the devil, who is said to look over the left shoulder of people; the salt tossed over the shoulder goes into the devil's eyes.

Some people keep or carry a certain object they believe brings them good luck and helps ward off bad fortune. Those items are based on superstition, religious belief, cultural practices, or personal associations. A "good luck charm," an object that symbolizes some important event, or a sacred religious item all possess some significance that combines with personal conviction to bring a sense of power, protection, and influence. The word "charm," however, did not always refer to an object of good luck. In the past, a charm was an incantation or inscription meant to result in an act of magic.

Amulets and talismans are objects intended to attract good luck and ward off bad luck. An amulet is most often a stone or a piece of metal with either an inscription or figures engraved on it. When talismans are crafted, the maker usually follows a ritual in order to infuse the talisman with a certain power. For example, a talisman crafted for a particular individual might be made of a metal corresponding to the qualities associated with a person's astrological sign. The metal would have to be melted and forged during a positive astrological cycle.

Just as powerful in stirring the imagination are items associated with Judaism and Christianity that were lost in ancient times and were claimed to be recovered later. No physical evidence is available to determine that such objects ever existed, but they continue to be pursued. Sometimes, distinctions between what is real or imagined become blurred. The Holy Grail is never mentioned in the Bible, for example, but by medieval times it was popularized as "the holiest relic in Christendom" through *Le morte d'Arthur* by Sir Thomas Malory (fl. 1470). Tales of knights questing for the Holy Grail actually preceded a full account of the history of the grail. Yet, so powerful is the legend that the term "Holy Grail" is commonly used nowadays to describe an elusive, ultimate achievement. It is questionable as to whether the Holy Grail ever existed as a physical object, but it continues to inspire the imagination.

When it comes to things of mystery and power, then, the human imagination usually plays a key role in broadening the mystery and making it more powerful. Even when science provides data or physical proof that something mysterious can be explained, the ability to understand the impact of the explanation requires imagination, and often a change in outlook. Such is the power of objects of mystery: imagination and skill was used to create them, and imagination is required to begin to comprehend them by the more advanced human race of many centuries later.

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AMULETS

The word "amulet" comes from the Latin (*amuletum*), an indication of the power Romans invested in amulets as protection against evil spells. Prehistoric amulets representing fertility and animals have been found near some of the oldest known human remains. Archaeologists have also unearthed shells, claws, teeth, and crystalline solids dating to 25,000 B.C.E.; engraved with symbols and sporting small holes, the objects were probably worn as necklaces.

Animals have been used as symbols in amulets since the earliest times. Modern amulets include a rabbit's foot; when rubbed it is activated to bring luck. The wishbone from the breast of a bird is believed to make wishes come true to the person lucky enough to hold the larger half when the bone is broken with a partner, a common practice at Thanksgiving Day dinners in the United States. Metal representations of wishbones and rabbit's feet have become popular amulets in contemporary times.

By the time the Roman Empire was established in the first centuries B.C.E., however, amulets had a long history of being worn for luck and protection. Egyptians considered amulets necessary for protection of the living and the dead. An amulet with a heart on it was often placed with the dead to help represent them in judgment about their fate in the afterlife. Likenesses of scarabs (a kind of beetle) were also prominent. A scarab encloses an egg in mud or dung and rolls it along to a spot where it can be warm and safe. Egyptians considered this a metaphor for the journey of the sun each day. The scarab amulet became a common emblem for regeneration and was placed with the dead.

Sumerians, who inhabited Mesopotamia (present-day Iraq) and were contemporaries of the Egyptians, had amulets inscribed with images of animals and gods. They also inscribed such images on seals for everything from pottery to vaults to doors: the emblem on the seal represented a guardian spirit that would bring bad luck to those who opened the sealed compartment without permission of the owner.

ANCIENT AMULETS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Ancient Assyrians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Arabs, and Hebrews placed great importance in amulets:

- *Frog*—protected fertility
- *Ankh*—everlasting life
- *Udjat*—health
- *Scarab*—resurrection after death

Some of the Egyptian amulets are massive—a stone beetle at Karnak measures five feet long by three feet wide and weighs more than two tons.

SOURCE:

"Amulets History" [Online] http://www.paralumun.com/amulet.htm. November 11, 2002.

The treasures of King Tutankhamen of Egypt (c. 1370–1352 B.C.E.) abound with crystals in the form of gems and jewels. They were intended for personal adornment, but they also had symbolic meaning: they were believed to possess mystical and religious powers. Today, crystals are still worn for decorative purposes in the form of gems and jewels; those who believe in the mystical powers of crystals wear them as amulets.

Many amulets have religious significance. Ancient Jews wore amulets around their necks that contained slips of parchment on which the laws of God were written. The Torah, comprising five books of the Old Testament of the Bible, is among the copies of holy books including the Bible (Christians), Vedas (Hindu), the Koran (Muslims), and the Avestar (Zoroastrians) believed by the faithful to

Amulets at the Wat Market. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

bring good luck and to ward off evil. A favorite contemporary Muslim amulet consists of a square-inch miniature of the Koran enclosed in metal and worn around the neck. Muslims also believe they gain power by wearing amulets inscribed with a form of the name of Allah.

EGYPTIANS *considered amulets necessary for protection of the living and the dead.*

Amulets are frequently mentioned in Talmudic literature where they are called *kemiya* and often consist of a written parchment or root of herbs worn on a small chain, a ring, or a tube. Many such amulets had healing purposes: they were considered legitimate only after having worked successfully in healing on three different occasions. Another kind of parchment amulet was the *mezuzah*, a Hebrew word for door post. Moses (14th–13th century B.C.E.) commanded Israelites to inscribe the words "Hear O Israel, the Lord Our God Is One God" on the doorposts of their homes. An amulet with those words continues to be attached to doors in many modern Jewish households, or worn as a gold chain around the neck for good luck.

Early Christians inscribed the word *ichthys* (Greek for "fish") on their amulets because the word contained in Greek the initials for Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior. The fish symbol has been important to Christians ever since.

A simple cord is perhaps the plainest amulet of them all. Wrist, ankle, and neck cords are popular in contemporary times and have a long history. Unlike other amulets, which when lost or broken are believed to end luck or protection, cords release magic to come true when they break naturally from wear. An amulet lost or broken might be a reason for despair, but a broken cord should signal the beginning of good fortune.

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BELLS

Bells have been associated with mystical occurrences and the spirit world since ancient times. Goddess images were frequently cast in the shape of bells. Ancient Jews wore bells tied to their clothing to ward off evil.

The ringing of bells or death knells for the deceased is an old custom. Some authorities believe that the ringing of bells at times of death originated in the practice of seeking to frighten away the evil spirits that lurk beside a corpse, waiting the opportunity to seize the newly released soul. In ancient times bells

were rung only when important people died, but with the advent of Christianity it became the custom to ring death during burial services for all church members.

In medieval times, church bells were rung during epidemics with the hopes of clearing the air of disease. It was generally believed that church bells had special magical or spiritual powers, especially because of their position, suspended between heaven and Earth, guarding the passageway between the material and nonmaterial worlds, frightening away demons. The sacred bell of the Buddhists, the *ghanta*, serves that spiritual expression in a similar manner, driving away the negative entities and encouraging the positive spirits to manifest. The very sound of a bell is a symbol of creative power.

People along the west coast of Africa used to tie a bell to the foot of an ill child to ward off evil, and food was placed nearby to lure those spirits away. In contemporary times, bells above the door of a shop alert the shopkeeper that customers have entered. That practical function is predated by the use of bells over doors to keep evil spirits from entering into a home or shop.

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Bloodstone

Carnelian is a red-colored variety of chalcedony that for many centuries has been known as "bloodstone" and credited with the power to stem loss of blood from wounds or excessive menstrual flow. Although some have declared that its name was derived from the Latin *carne*, "flesh," most authorities maintain that the origin of the bloodstone's common European version, carnelian, lies in the word *cor*, "heart."

The blood redness of carnelian made it highly desired among ancient Egyptians who used it to represent the blood or virtue of the goddess Isis and placed it within the body cavity of a mummy. The Egyptian jewelers also favored the bloodstone as an addition to their heart amulets and proclaimed it as a symbol of the heart-soul of the goddess.

Carnelian is called the Mecca stone by many Muslims and is carried by them as an object that may assist in fulfilling all wishes for perfect happiness. While many authorities state that the "sardis" mentioned as the first stone in the breastplate of Aaron, Moses's brother, was a ruby, others suggest that it was a carnelian, or bloodstone.

Carnelian is called the Mecca stone by many Moslems.

Some bloodstones are greenish in color, with bright red flecks of jasper within them that look like flecks of blood. In folk medicine it matters little which bloodstone one employs, for in the mind of the practitioner, the stone is certain to halt the flow of blood and promote healing. And for the practical magician, the use of a bloodstone in rituals and incantations is believed to greatly increase the realization of all desires.

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Candles

Candle burning has been associated with religious and magical ceremonies since earliest antiquity. To light a candle in respectful remembrance of a person who has died is a common practice in many religions. The light of a single candle is held by many to be sym-

bolical of the illumination of the soul in the midst of earthly despair or of death.

Ancient Romans honored Juno Lucina, Mother of the Light, whenever a candle was lit to spread its light and sweet scent into the darkness. Juno Lucina controlled the sun, moon, and stars, and granted to newborn children the "light" of their spirit. Each year during the winter solstice a festival of lights was celebrated in her honor. This winter celebration became the Christian feast of Santa Lucia (Saint Lucy), which is still observed in Sweden with a young woman wearing a crown of candles and portraying the *Lussibruden* or Lucy Bride.

The custom of the lighting of the Yule candle also has its roots in the pagan observance of the winter solstice. Whereas Christians light an oversized candle that they hope would burn through the night from Christmas Eve to the dawn of Christmas Day to bring good luck for the coming year, the Scandinavians of old ignited a bundle of kindling and conducted a religious ceremony that was designed to encourage the sun to return from the long night of darkness.

For many centuries, candles have been very popular in the practice of certain rites of magic. In the Middle Ages, it was believed that a candle formed in the image of a woman and burned with the proper incantation could bring love to a man seeking the favor of a particular lady. According to tradition, a red-colored candle brought about the best results. First, according to the charm, the candle was to be anointed with perfume to signify femininity. Then, after the candle had burned for a few minutes a brief invocation was offered to loving spirits to bring the man's love to him forevermore. The invocation was to be made at sunset—once over the flame of the candle, then repeated over the smoking wick. The spell was to be repeated on consecutive sunsets until the candle had been consumed.

A black candle formed in the shape of a skull was often used in ceremonial magic to dispel curses. The skull-candle was to be burned at midnight and a proclamation, which had been formally written on paper, was to be read above the flame, demanding the removal of any curse that had been set against the magician. The candle was to be anointed with oil and was to be burned precisely at midnight.

It was believed that power and success might be gained through the ritual burning of a candle with oil and setting before it an incense offering of sandalwood or myrrh. The candle was lighted, and the magician concentrated on a mental image of the goal that he or she most wished to attain.

If a Magi felt that he had become the unwelcome recipient of a candle spell, he believed that he might reverse its effect through an ancient Medieval candle burning ceremony. For five consecutive nights, the magician was careful to light two large, black candles just as the sun was phasing into dusk. As the candles burned, the supplicant recited an invocation that called upon benevolent spirits to remove the curse from his head and to redirect it toward whomever had summoned the powers of darkness to cast a malediction against him. The ritual required that two candles must be allowed to be completely consumed each night.

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CAULDRON

Cauldrons were used in various Celtic rites. Some cauldrons were believed to possess magical qualities: they would not boil the meat of a coward or an unrighteous person; they granted divine inspiration; or they provided great quantities of food. Early Celts used cauldrons in rites of fertility, and "cauldrons of plenty" were associated with abundance. The mead in

the cauldron of the Celtic goddess Cerridwen gave divine wisdom, and that of the goddess Branwen promised regeneration.

Cauldrons in Celtic cultures may have also been used in acts of human sacrifice. The Gundestrup Cauldron, recovered from a peat bog in present-day Denmark dating from around 100 B.C.E., has a carved image of a victim being plunged into a cauldron.

The following ritual goes back to the early Middle Ages and has become a legendary magical method of gaining a desired lover's affection. It requires a cauldron of the first rain water in April. As the water boils, the following ingredients are to be collected and stirred into the brew: seven hairs from a blood snake (an old colloquialism for sausage prepared in the gut and/or hide of a pig), seven feathers from an owl, seven scales from a snake, a hair from the object of love and a bit of his nail paring. When all the ingredients have been incorporated into the cauldron, the magical "stew" must be allowed to boil briskly for seven minutes. At the end of this time, the magician must permit the brew to cool before he or she sprinkles it upon the intended lover. The brew is meant to warm the lover up a bit, not to scald him or her.

A woodcut of witches at a cauldron. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

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CRYSTALS

Crystals were prized in many ancient cultures, and they remain so today—both for their scientific and their mystical qualities. Crystals have practical uses in radios, lasers, and computers, among other devices; and traditional Native American healers and New Age practitioners of alternative medicine believe that they have marvelous curative powers.

Ancient Greeks valued quartz crystal for its beauty and believed it had supernatural powers. The Greeks thought that the mineral quartz with its crystalline structure was water frozen so thoroughly that it could never be thawed, and they called quartz, "krystallos," from the word "kryos," which means icy cold. *Krystallos* became "crystal" in English during the Middle Ages to refer to stones with structures like quartz. Atoms and molecules in crystals are always arranged in tidy rows. These repeated, orderly patterns give crystals their beautiful sparkle and special shapes.

Some crystals, when compressed, develop electrical charges (piezoelectricity) at their ends, and others develop similar charges when heated (pyroelectricity). Both of those properties are evident in quartz and make the mineral useful in sonar and radio, for amplifying electric current, and to help make possible the solar battery that converts sunlight into electrical energy.

Lithium crystals are an energy source in the popular *Star Trek* television and movie series to fuel the starship *Enterprise*. On Earth, lithium is the lightest known metal and is often used in storage batteries.

Marcel Vogel, Man of Crystal Vision

Marcel Joseph Vogel, born in San Francisco in 1917, was revived after being pronounced dead at the age of six from pneumonia. At this time, Vogel encountered a near-death experience (NDE). It caused him to question the meaning of life. Every day, from the age of six, he walked to early morning Mass to pray and questioned the purpose of his existence.

At age 12, an answer came as a "voice" that told Marcel he would be a "phosphor chemist" doing work in luminescence. Majoring in chemistry and physics at the University of San Francisco, Vogel found little written, or taught, in the field of luminescence. So he translated articles he found written in German on phosphors. Due to deteriorating health, he left college and completed his education privately, with Dr. Peter Pringsheim, a German professor.

Pringsheim and Vogel published a book, *The Luminescence of Liquids and Solids and Their Practical Application* (1943). Vogel published other papers and formed his own corporation, Vogel Luminescence. The company pioneered in the manufacturing of fluorescent paints, oils, crayons, chalk, Day-Glo colors, invisible ink, and tagging and tracing powders—used to detect bacteria and disease, including cancer. He worked part-time for IBM and he became a senior research scientist in 1957. He remained with IBM until 1984, when he founded his own lab, Psychic Research, Inc.

Vogel's work with human–plant communication experiments led to his discovery of an intelligent matrix existing in crystal/liquid crystal with an ability to store, amplify, and transfer information, and that crystal can be altered during its growth stage. Seventeen years of research in this area led to his faceted crystal inventions, useful in laser applications. Vogel was also working on the structuring of water for purification purposes, and the structuring of wines to rapidly age them.

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The verifiable qualities of crystals are showcased in numerous applications in modern technology, but the mystical qualities of crystals are more difficult to explain and depend more on belief. Since the days of ancient Egypt, crystals have been believed to have healing properties and the ability to rid the body of negative energies. Crystals are believed to be able to store images and thoughts, serving as keepers of knowledge of the past. Among other attributes reputed of crystals is the ability to store and discharge light; to receive impressions from humans, who are able to program crystals for certain functions; to emit frequencies; and to become reenergized by sunlight and moonlight. Clear quartz is said to attract positive energy, and small wands with crystals mounted at both ends can supposedly locate pain or illness in a body.

Some mystics claim that inhabitants of the legendary continent of **Atlantis** used crystals to produce psychic energy and establish interstellar communication. Some believe that a powerful crystal energy source ultimately destroyed Atlantis. The popular twentieth century mystic **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945) told his followers about his visions of the great crystals that powered Atlantis, and he referred to the healing capacities of crystals. Cayce taught that crystals possessed an energy within themselves that could be transmitted to people and be of great assistance in meditation, healing, and the achievement of higher levels of consciousness.

In 1976, **medium/channel** Frank Alper founded the Arizona Metaphysical Center in Phoenix and began channeling spirit messages that outlined methods of crystal therapy. In *Exploring Atlantis* (1982), three volumes of spirit directives on the powers of crystals, Alper outlined techniques that were followed with careful attention by New Age enthusiasts around the world. Within a very short time, crystal therapists were applying the ancient healing exercises that Alper's channeled messages described as having originated in ancient Atlantis.

New Age believers in crystal power were told by a number of channelers that all people had within themselves a Higher Self that was the ultimate expression of their personality. This Higher Self could become a conduit between themselves and a source of divinity that had the power to activate a crystal for the purpose of healing. Those who wished to focus the healing abilities inherent in crystal were told that they must activate their crystal by breathing their "intent" to help others into the crystal. The process of activation involved their taking their crystal in the left hand. According to New Age channeling, the act of holding one's crystal in the left hand will stimulate the creative, intuitive process in the right brain hemisphere. Once this has occurred, the supposed vortex of energy in the crystal begins interacting with the individual's electromagnetic field and will start to increase the field energy around him or her.

When the energy field has been activated, the individual is to begin to breathe into the crystal the intention to be able to heal the physical bodies of those who request a healing. The individual healer must remember always that the crystal will magnify his or her intention and thereby serve as a powerful healing instrument.

In addition to its use in healing, crystals have always been popular as devices utilized in

Crystal necklaces for healing and well-being. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

scrying, the ancient fortune telling technique of foreseeing future events in a clear surface. Pure quartz crystals polished into spheres became popular for divining purposes during the Middle Ages, and such crystal balls are still used by various contemporary psychic readers to obtain glimpses of the future.

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FAIRY CIRCLES

In most traditions, especially in the British Isles and Scandinavia, the fairy folk were supernormal entities who inhabited a magical kingdom beneath the surface of the earth. Fairies have always been considered to be much akin to humans, yet something more than mortal person. As many of the ancient texts declare, the fairies are "of a middle nature between Man and Angel." One factor has been consistent in fairy lore—these so-called "middle folk" continually meddle in the affairs of humankind, sometimes to do them good, sometimes to do them ill.

NATIVE American tribes have similar stories of interactions with entities they call the "pukwudjinis."

Tales have been told with endless modifications and variations, but it remains essentially a story of a fairy outwitting a greedy human. Less widely known are the many stories in which the person who discovers the fairies at their work is whisked away by them to the fairy kingdom, from which he or she may return much later as an old person believing that only a day or so has gone by.

In *The Science of Fairy Tales* by Edwin Sidney Hartland, published in London in 1891, the account is given of a shepherd who went out one day to look for his cattle and sheep on the mountain and seemingly disappeared into thin air. After about three weeks, the search parties had abandoned hope of ever finding him again. His wife had given him up for dead, and it was at that time that he returned. When his astonished wife asked him where he had been for the past three weeks, the man angrily said that he had only been gone for three hours. When he was asked to describe exactly where he had been, he said little men who closed nearer and nearer to him until they formed a small circle surrounding him. They sang and danced and so affected him that he got lost.

Near Bridgend is a place where a woman is said to have lived for 10 years with the fairy folk and who upon her return insisted that she had not been out of the house for more than 10 minutes.

The Germans, the Irish, the Scots, the English, and the Scandinavians have no end of such accounts of fairies interacting with people and stealing time. There are variants of these tales in Wales, in the Slavic countries, and in Japan and China. Stories are told of men and women who returned years, sometimes even generations, after they had stepped into a fairy circle and been enchanted by the singing and dancing of the wee people. Additional anecdotes are told of those who coupled with fairy folk and produced a hybrid of human and fairy individuals.

In Scotland the story is repeated of a man who went with his friend to enter his first child's birth in the record books and to buy a keg of whiskey for the christening. As the two men sat down to rest, they heard the sound of piping and dancing. The father of the newborn child became curious, and spotting some wee folk beginning to dance, he decided to join them.

A T. H. Thomas drawing from the book *British Goblin* (1880) by Wirt Sikes of a man being pulled back before entering a fairy circle. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

His friend fled the spot, and when the new father did not return for several months, the friend was accused of murdering him. Somehow he was able to persuade the court that he should be allowed a year and a day to vindicate himself. Each night at dusk, he went to the spot where his friend had disappeared to call out his friend's name and to pray. One day just before the term ran out, he saw his friend dancing merrily with the fairies. The accused man succeeded in grabbing him by the sleeve and pulling him out. The bewitched man snapped angrily because his friend would not let him finish the dance. The unfortunate friend, who would face the gallows if he could not bring the enchanted man home, told the celebrating father that he had been dancing for 12 months and that he should have had enough. When rescued from the fairies' circle, the man would not believe the lapse of time until he found his wife sitting by the door of his home with their year-old son in her arms.

Several Native American tribes have similar stories of interactions with entities they call the "pukwudjinis," the little vanishing people. The tribespeople also refer to the medicine or magic circle. If anyone stepped inside one, he or she could disappear for months or years or a lifetime.

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Garlic

Some naturally formed amulets can be worn or kept to ward off evil. Garlic reportedly keeps one safe from vampires, and also repels evil spirits. For garlic to perform that function in Mexico, it must be received as a gift. Some Roman soldiers wore garlic for extra protection when they went into battle.

It is possible that the tradition of garlic as an agent capable of warding off creatures of

Some people use garlic to ward off vampires. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

darkness grew out of the simple fact that heavy consumption of garlic greatly affects the breath odor of those who have liberally partaken of the herb. In the ancient mystery religions, which emphasized the goddess and fertility rites, those who had eaten heavily of garlic were ostracized from worship.

DELVING DEEPER

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HAND OF GLORY

One of the most macabre of all occult preparations was the Hand of Glory, a magic light made from the hand of a dead man. Once the hand had been severed from a corpse—often taken from the body of a hanged highwayman swinging on a gallows—it was to be slowly dried in an oven. When it was judged as quite dry, it was to be soaked in the melted fat of a black tomcat. Each finger served as a separate candle, and twisted human hair wrapped around the fingers served as wicks.

Although used as a protection against evil by those common folk who somehow managed to acquire such a grisly deterrent of the forces of darkness, the Hand of Glory was a favorite acquisition of burglars and thieves who believed that as long as the fingers burned the persons whose house they invaded would remain fast asleep and allow them to conclude their thievery undetected. There was even a little rhyme to be said when the hand was lit:

> Let those who rest more deeply sleep;
> Let those awake their vigils keep.
> O, Hand o' Glory shed thy light,
> Direct us to our spoils tonight.
> Flash out thy light, O skeleton hand,
> And guide the feet of our trusty band.

The only way to stop the power of the hand once it had been ignited was to douse it with either milk or blood. According to belief, water alone was incapable of extinguishing the flames of a Hand of Glory.

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HORSESHOES

Horseshoes have long been popular in folk magic as an instrument of bringing the owner good luck—provided the object is worn out and found, rather than new and purchased.

In some countries the horseshoe is hung with the open end downward as a fertility symbol, but in Ireland, Britain, and the United States it is commonly hung with the open end pointing upward, so luck won't run out. A great debate rages: should a horseshoe be hung with its ends pointing downward, so luck can pour out in a steady, unending stream, or is it better placed upward, to collect, store, and bestow luck?

In Italy, a horseshoe is hung by the door, not above the door, as it is elsewhere, so it can be touched by whomever passes over a threshold. In Mexico, horseshoes are wrapped up in bright colored threads. In Turkey, horseshoe charms are manufactured to help ward off the evil eye.

DELVING DEEPER

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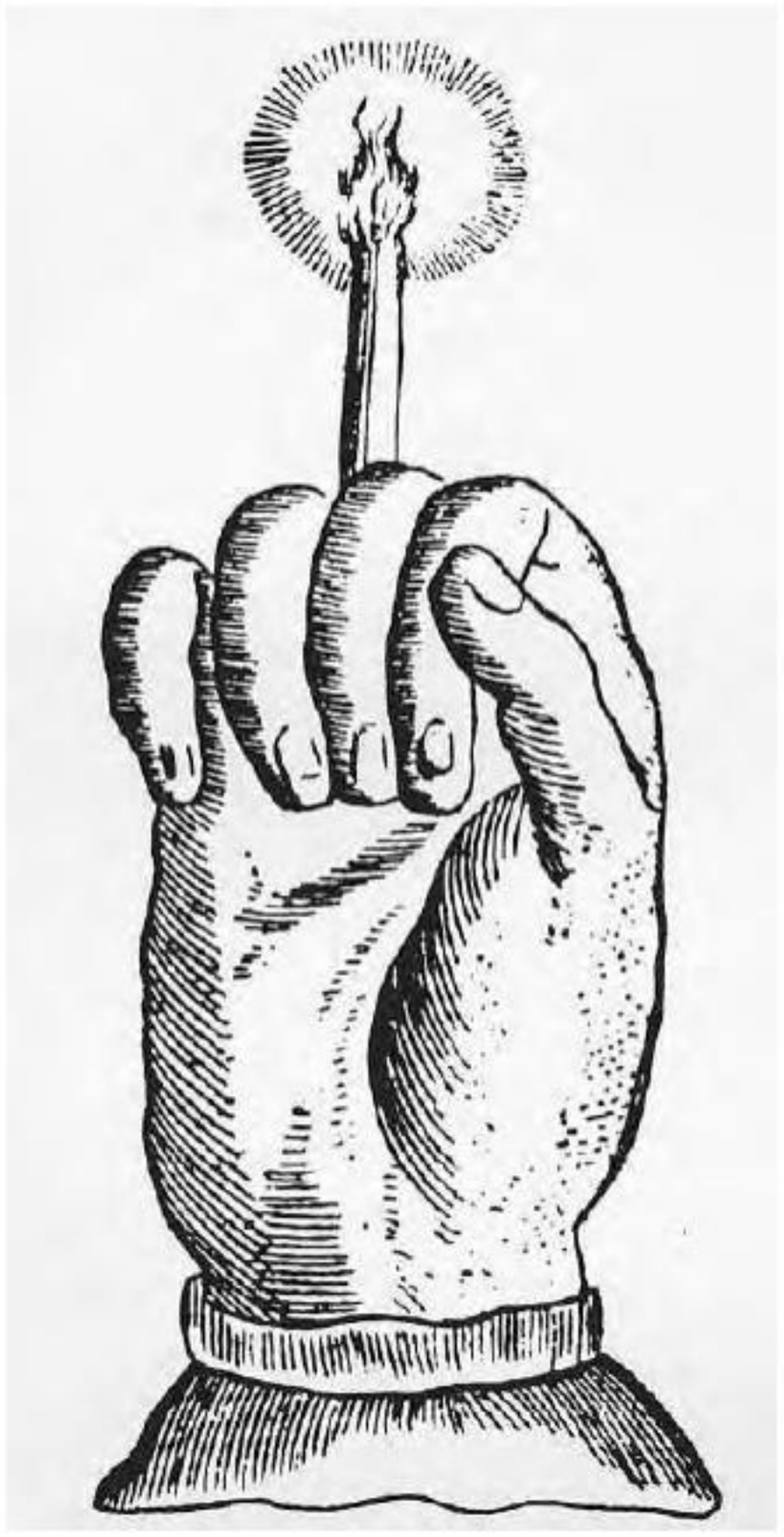
KNIFE

The original cutting implements used by humans consisted of pieces of flint or other stone that had been chipped to form an edge. Such bits of stone evolved into the knife, among the first tools to be developed by humankind. Eventually, the stone blade became longer; the handle was wrapped with leather to avoid accidentally cutting the hand; and the knife was carried everywhere its owner went.

In the martial encounters between tribes, the spear, which is a knife with a long handle, and the club were favored in order to keep some distance between combatants. But when things got up close and personal, the knife came into play. Thus when the arts of warfare evolved and bronze weapons were used, the sword—a large and long knife—together with the spear and club were considered honorable implements of war. The knife was deemed the last resort of the gentleman or the sole weapon of the brigand and the assassin. In the days of chivalry, the knights bore swords and lances for self-defense while peasants and outlaws carried knives to protect themselves. The knife was a kind of secret weapon, and therefore considered base by those who faced one another with swords or lances. Men and women of any means whatsoever used knives



"The Hand of Glory" from Albertus Parvus Grimoire. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

primarily for cutting their food before they ate their meals with their fingers. Forks were unknown as table utensils until well into the eighteenth century, and table knives were a rarity until about the same time. People carried their own serviceable knives so they were always prepared to dine.

In witchcraft, the ceremonial knife is referred to as the athame.

In various systems of magic, from the times of human and animal sacrifice to ceremonial rituals, the knife has played an extremely important role. The magic circles of protec-

Chinese jade knife, c. 2500–2000 B.C.E. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

tion that surround the magus and the sorcerer must be drawn with the magician's special knife, blessed by an invocation to a deity. In witchcraft, the ceremonial knife is referred to as the athame.

Knives are used in various divination practices simply by spinning them and seeing toward which object, number, person, and so forth, the blade points. Other traditions believe it is bad luck to spin a knife on the table, fearing that it symbolizes death for the one to whom it points.

While magicians use their magic knife to stir their potions, many individuals believe that those who use a knife to stir their tea, coffee, or food will summon strife. To drop a knife while eating, some people believe, is a sign that unexpected company will soon arrive. Others fear that to drop a knife will bring illness to the household. With the knife having played such an important and integral role in the societal and spiritual development of humankind, it is little wonder that there should be many superstitions regarding its use and misuse.

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LOVE KNOTS

The expression "tying the knot" when one speaks of the marriage vows seems to have almost universal meaning. Africans tell of similar "knot-tying" love spells in their own tribes. Somehow it seems the most natural kind of symbolism to visualize the binding of one's self to the object of one's love while the fingers weave the knots and the lips chant a soulful litany. Here is how the ancient love spell of the seven knots was woven:

The magician would take a length of cord or ribbon that would sustain seven knots strung out at a distance of about an inch from one another. According to the ritual, the first knot was to be tied in the middle of the cord with the admonition that the two lovers remain bound to each other from that moment and that their love was in the circle that bound them.

At about the distance of one inch, the conjurer formed the second knot to the right of the first, telling the lovers that their love would endure with the strength of steel. The third knot was tied to the left of the first knot and the lovers were told that they would not be able to break away from one another, even though from time to time their passion might waver. The fourth knot was placed to the right with the message that all good spirits and the Holy Light would always keep the image of the other in the lovers' mind. The fifth knot was done to the left, assuring fidelity throughout their lifetimes. The sixth knot was bound on the right, binding the exclusivity of their affections, one to the other. The last knot, the seventh, was secured to the left and the officiator declared that the two should stand always within the circle of their love and happiness, unable to be separated by any power of Earth.

The incantation completed, the maker of the ritual would then bind the two ends of the

cord together and wear it in the manner of a garter upon her or his left arm above the elbow. The "seven-knot-love-garter" was to be worn to bed for seven alternate nights. Upon the fourteenth day, the charm was either to be burned in offering to good spirits or to be hidden in a secret place.

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MANDRAKE ROOT

Mandrake, also known as *mandragora officinarum*, has a long tap-root that resembles a human form. This resemblance created the superstition that it literally shrieked when it was uprooted. Those who heard the scream were to die, or, if it didn't kill them, it caused them to go insane.

This relative of the potato family was a popular anaesthetic during the Middle Ages. In the Elizabethan Age it was used as a narcotic.

DELVING DEEPER

"The Mandragora Plant—Myths and other Information." [Online] http://www.wordfocus.com/anesthes-wrd-hist.html#mandragora. November 11, 2002.

MAYPOLE

The ancients in Great Britain and Northern Europe believed that May 1 was the boundary day between summer and winter and that on this day a war took place between the two seasons to determine which would prevail. It became customary to stage a mock war between two people, one to represent winter; the other, summer. Summer always managed to win and was promptly crowned King of the May. In triumph he held aloft green branches decorated with beautiful May flowers and sang an old folk song, the essence of which seems to have been, "I have won, I bring you summer!"

Mandrake root shaped like mother with child. (RAYMOND BUCKLAND/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Later, as the custom evolved, a young tree was cut down and decorated with ribbons and flowers. This tree was set up triumphantly in the village and everyone danced around it. The Druids worshipped the tree, and it is possible that the Maypole originated with them. But long before the time of Charles I (1600–1649) in England the tree had given way to the pole. Huge poles were planted in the ground and decorated with green branches and flowers. Long streamers were attached to the top, and each dancer held on proudly to his or her end of the ribbon.

Group of young women performing the Maypole dance. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

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MIRROR

The first mirror was quite likely a quiet pool in which one caught a fleeting reflection of an image of oneself. The early Greeks had mirrors that were made of circular pieces of polished bronze, sometimes with richly adorned handles. The early Egyptians also had bronze mirrors, highly polished dishes, usually with graceful and decorative handles.

Since early times the mirror has been used in divination, in attempts to read the future or the past. In ancient Greece divination performed by means of water and a mirror was so popular and so widely practiced that it was given a definite name—"catoptomancy." There are still seers and fortune-tellers called "scryers" who "see" the past and the future in crystals and mirrors.

An early belief was that one saw the will of the gods in the mirror. To break a mirror accidentally, therefore, was interpreted as an effort on the part of the gods to prevent the person from seeing into the future. This was construed as a warning that the future held unpleasant things.

It was not until 1688 that glass mirrors were invented. In that year, a Frenchman,

Louis Lucas, invented plate glass that, backed with the proper alloy, formed a mirror that for the first time gave both sexes a true reflection of their appearance.

One of the most common of modern superstitions is that to break a mirror invites death, or seven years of bad luck. This old folk belief originated with the Romans about the first century C.E. They believed that the health of a person changed every seven years, and as the mirror reflected the health or the appearance of the person, to break a mirror would be to shatter one's health for a period of seven years. Among highly superstitious people the breaking of the mirror came to be looked upon as a death omen. Somehow this superstitious belief has prevailed and still exists even among educated people.

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MISTLETOE

Mistletoe is another natural amulet. It is commonly hung in homes during Christmastime; the custom of kissing under the mistletoe goes back to ancient Europeans, who believed mistletoe brought fertility, healing, and luck. They hung it in homes and barns. Mistletoe was sacred as well to Celts. It is a parasitic plant that grows on trees without forming roots in the earth. This quality led Celts to venerate mistletoe as a divine substance.

For many centuries, people around the world have created many folklore beliefs about mistletoe:

- Central Australian aborigines believed that the *ratapa*, spirits of unborn children of their tribe, lived in trees, rocks, and sprigs of mistletoe.

Man and woman hanging mistletoe. *(CORBIS CORPORATION)*

- The Japanese chopped mistletoe, leaves, and millet, and offered prayers for a good harvest.
- Swedes hung a mistletoe besom (broom) in the house as a charm against lightning.
- Swedes used mistletoe rods to locate treasure in the earth. The rod was supposed to quiver, like a divining rod, when it was over the treasure.
- Austrians hung mistletoe over the doorstep to protect people in the house from nightmares.
- Since ancient times, a kiss under the mistletoe was a pledge of love and a promise of marriage.
- The kiss of friendship was given under a mistletoe to signify a truce. Enemies who met under the mistletoe in the forest were to lay down their arms, exchange friendly greetings, and keep a truce until the following day.

DELVING DEEPER

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RINGS

The ring as a pledge can be traced back to great antiquity. "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, 'See I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.' And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand" (Genesis 41:42).

Similar use of signet rings as symbols of respect and authority is mentioned in several parts of the Bible, and it would appear that rings were commonly worn by persons of rank at that period, and that rings were bestowed upon others either as gifts or for the purpose of transferring authority.

Rings worn only as ornaments were common in early Egypt, in Greece, and even among less civilized peoples. In antiquity, it was the custom among people of the lower classes to break a piece of gold or silver to seal the marriage pact. One half of the token was kept by the man, the other half by the woman. This custom came before the exchange of rings. In ancient Ireland, for instance, it was the custom for the man to give the woman he wanted to marry a bracelet woven of human hair. Her acceptance of it was symbolic of accepting the man, of linking herself to him for life.

In England, rings were exchanged to seal the verbal contract of betrothal.

It appears that the ring as a love pledge existed at an early period. It was customary in the early Middle Ages to make a solemn betrothal by means of a ring to precede matrimony. In England, rings were exchanged to seal the verbal contract of betrothal. In Italy the use of the ring was widespread, and the diamond was the favorite gem. The diamond remains the favorite gem for the engagement ring in modern times. Indeed, many people think only of the diamond in connection with rings of betrothal. According to an old superstition, the sparkle of the diamond is supposed to have originated in the fires of love. Therefore the diamond engagement ring is considered by many persons as the only true engagement ring, portending love and happiness throughout life.

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SALT

In Finnish mythology, the mighty god of the sky, Ukko, struck fire in the heavens. A spark from this celestial fire fell into the ocean and turned to salt. Another old legend is that the oceans are made up of the tears of all those who have suffered since the world began; and as tears are salt, the oceans' waters are salt.

Salt was used long before the contemporary era, and it was highly valued by those who included it in their diet. Salt was probably being traded even in Neolithic times. The Israelites believed that no meal was complete without a bit of salt to help digest it. Homer (9th–8th century B.C.E.) called salt divine, and Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.) described it as a substance valued by the gods.

At one time salt was regarded as being almost as valuable as gold, and soldiers, officials, and working people in Greece and Rome received all or part of their pay in salt. Money paid for labor or service was termed "salarium," the origin of the word "salary,"—money paid for services rendered. From this custom of paying with salt comes also the popular phrase "to earn one's salt."

It was a custom in early times to place salt before strangers as a token or pledge of friendship. "Take a pinch of salt with me" was the popular method of inviting a friend or

acquaintance to one's home to partake of one's hospitality.

In many Asian countries salt was offered to guests as a token of hospitality, and if any particles fell to the ground while being presented it was considered an omen of ill luck. The belief was that a quarrel or a dispute would follow.

Among the Germans there is the old saying, "Whoever spills salt arouses enmity." The ancient Romans believed that to spill salt was to cause quarrels or disputes, and when salt was spilled it was the custom to exclaim, "May the gods avert the omen!" Another old tradition says that if salt is thrown over the left shoulder, it will appease the devil, who will otherwise make enemies of friends whenever salt is spilled.

According to some authorities, the widespread notion that the spilling of salt produces evil consequences is supposed to have originated in the tradition that Judas overturned a salt shaker at the Last Supper as portrayed in Leonardo da Vinci's (1452–1519) painting. But it appears more probable that the belief is due to the sacred character of salt in early times.

These old salt superstitions are found in many widely separated countries. Long ago they captured the public fancy, and they have survived. There are still many people who believe that to spill salt is an omen of a quarrel or bad luck, and that to toss a bit of the salt over the left shoulder is to cancel the negative consequences.

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Salt crystals. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

SILVER

Silver is said to offer protection and enhance one's psychic qualities. Silver was associated with the moon in Roman and Chinese cultures, and was considered divine (rather than a naturally formed metal) by Incas of South America. Egyptians coveted silver because it was not found in their region.

Silver bullets are reportedly good for killing vampires, werewolves, and ghosts. Another metal, brass, is especially good for amulets since it is believed to repel evil spirits.

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STONES FOR HEALING AND ENERGY

Perhaps the most popular amulets in folk magic are the 12 birth stones. These semiprecious gems, mounted in rings and pendants, have enjoyed widespread appeal for centuries. Because most people are familiar

with these stones, the magic powers of each is as follows:

Agate. This stone may appear as striped or clouded quartz, and is astrologically associated with the sign Gemini. An agate amulet is believed to promote good health. An agate ring bestows wealth and honor; also, it can be used to obtain favors from people in high positions. Legend has it that any person who gazes upon this gem will be compelled to speak the truth and cannot maintain secrecy.

Amethyst. This gem, a purple variety of quartz, is traditionally considered to be the Aquarian birthstone. An amethyst ring is usually worn for protection against sorcery and the evil eye. An amethyst pendant prevents depression and supposedly bestows spiritual visions.

Bloodstone. Also known as heliotrope, this variety of quartz is the Piscean birthstone. Worn as a pendant, it allegedly prevents miscarriage and other illness during pregnancy. Mounted in a ring, the amulet reportedly promotes creativity. Worn to bed, bloodstone may bestow pleasant dreams and clear visions of the future.

Diamond. This precious gem is astrologically associated with the sign of Aries. A diamond amulet traditionally symbolizes enduring love and happiness in a marriage. Given as a gift, the gem is believed to strengthen emotional bonds and promote loyalty. A diamond pendant may be worn to obtain honor and friendship. Mounted in a ring, the amulet insures lasting marriage and financial success.

Emerald. Traditionally associated with the astrological sign Taurus, this precious green gem has several unique properties. An emerald pendant is thought to afford women protection against assault. Mounted in a ring, the stone promotes domestic stability and fortune. According to legend, this amulet may be used to combat epilepsy, depression, and insanity.

Garnet. This semiprecious gem is the birthstone of Capricorn people. Early Egyptians and Phoenicians used the stone extensively. It reputedly healed snakebite and food poisoning by absorbing foreign chemicals in the blood through the skin. A garnet pendant is usually worn to arouse the passionate love of the opposite sex. A garnet ring reputedly combats fear and pessimism. Argument and eventual separation of two lovers is thought to result when garnet is given as a gift.

Opal. This semiprecious gem is associated with the astrological sign Libra. Worn as a ring, this amulet reputedly alleviates indigestion and other stomach disorders. Also, it instills tranquility and joy. An opal pendant is worn to attract happiness in love, fortune and favorable judgment in court. The opal amulet is believed to take on a dull gray appearance when minor illness is forthcoming. A sickly yellow hue presages injury by accident.

Ruby. This popular birthstone, which is associated with the astrological sign Cancer, reputedly promotes mental health and tranquility. A ruby pendant is thought to combat depression and enable the wearer to overcome sorrow. A ruby amulet worn as a ring bestows knowledge, health, and wealth. This stone should never be given as a gift, as it is thought that discord and broken relationships will result.

Sapphire. This deep blue corundum is astrologically associated with the sign Virgo. A sapphire pendant is a reputed cure for fever, seizures, and delusions. Mounted in a ring, the gem bestows wisdom and compassion. When danger is imminent, this amulet reportedly takes on a chalky appearance, which remains until the hazard has subsided.

Sardonyx. The birthstone of Leo people, this gem is a popular remedy for impotence. Ancient occultists believed that a sardonyx amulet could be worn to alleviate this affliction in less than a week. Mounted in a ring, sardonyx has no power; however, worn as a pendant, the stone combats sterility. Given as a gift, the sardonyx amulet is thought to guarantee the recipient's fidelity.

Topaz. This gem is the birthstone of Scorpio people. Some medieval occultists insisted that a topaz amulet promoted psychic sensitivity and facilitated control of destiny. A topaz pendant reputedly bestows honor, happiness, and inner peace in addition to the above benefits. Mounted in a ring, the gem insures promotion and financial success.

Turquoise. The birthstone of Sagittarians, turquoise has been worn in amulets since the

earliest times. Native Americans considered the stone sacred, and medieval sorcerers used it in various magic rituals. Modern authorities claim that a turquoise amulet is an effective deterrent against illness and injury. Worn as a pendant, the stone also protects its bearer from a violent death. A turquoise ring is said to have the power to allow the wearer to rekindle old love affairs.

In addition to the 12 birthstones, other gems of magical and healing significance warrant consideration. These are:

Amber. This gem, which has been used for magical purposes from time immemorial, is primarily a health aid. An amber pendant reportedly cures diseases of the blood, poor circulation, and prevents heart attack. Mounted in a ring, this stone is believed to combat malfunction of the kidney and protect the wearer against heat stroke and suffocation.

Beryl. This opaque stone usually comes in yellow, pink, green, or white. Worn as a pendant, it is claimed to promote happy marriage and honesty. Given as a gift, it is a popular deterrent to unfaithfulness. A beryl ring is frequently worn to insure good health during pregnancy.

Carnelian. This reddish quartz gem was highly popular with Old World occultists. Early Chaldeans gave their stone to enemies and thereby rendered them harmless.

Chrysocolla. This stone is recommended for treatment of diabetes and asthma and is said to build inner peace and strength and to attract prosperity and good luck.

Coral. This stone occurs in a variety of colors and is allegedly invaluable to careless people. As an amulet, it is said to take on a chalky white appearance when in close proximity with sick people. A coral ring or pendant may also be worn to promote health and wisdom.

Jade. Throughout history, magicians have used this gem as a deterrent to sorcery and demonic possession. Jade is therefore considered to be one of the most potent protective device known to humankind. Modern occultists claim that a jade pendant may be worn to achieve these effects, and that a ring combats tragedy and depression.

Jet. Perhaps one of the most powerful amulets known, this lustrous black gem holds an important place in the legends of various cultures. In ancient Greece, occultists believed that it was a sacred substance, and in Assyria it was considered to be the gods' favorite jewel. Medieval legend credits the jet amulet with supernatural powers. The person wearing this stone supposedly attains complete control of the natural elements—fire, air, earth, and water.

Lapis Lazuli. This stone has long been valued as an aid to cleanse the mind and body of toxins and promote psychic abilities.

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Trees

Many trees and plants are used as objects of power. Hazel, the wood of choice for magic wands, was commonly used for divining rods as a means for locating sources of underground water so that wells could be dug. A hazel rod was used by St. Patrick (fifth century C.E.) to draw out the snakes of Ireland, which he then cast out to sea.

Hazel is the wood of choice for magic wands.

To the Druid and other magicians, trees are a good source of radiant vitality and may be drawn upon for relief, and even cure, of backache conditions. Many who are attuned to nature seek to create a tree charm to bring them strength. The prospective charm maker

Voodoo doll. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

selects a suitable tree, strong, upright, free from distortions, and of good size. Ash, spruce, and birch are recommended. For best results, the tree should be situated as far away from human contamination as possible.

Once a proper tree has been selected, the magician makes friends with it by touching it, talking to it, and thinking into it. The tree should be circled nine times while the magus touches it gently with his or her fingertips. Upon the completion of the encirclement, the magician takes a final position to the north, leans back against the tree, and reaches his or her hands behind so that they might touch the bark of the tree. In this position, the magus chants:

> 0 Tree;
> Strong Tree; King Tree:
> Take thou this weakness of my back.
> Give me strength instead.
> That I may be as upright as thyself
> Between the Heavens (look up)
> And the Earth beneath (look down).
> Secure from storm
> And blessed in every branch.
> May this be so!

The magician repeats the incantation until a feeling of rapport is established with the tree. When it is felt that the treatment is over, the magician breaks contact gently and thanks the nature spirits for their help.

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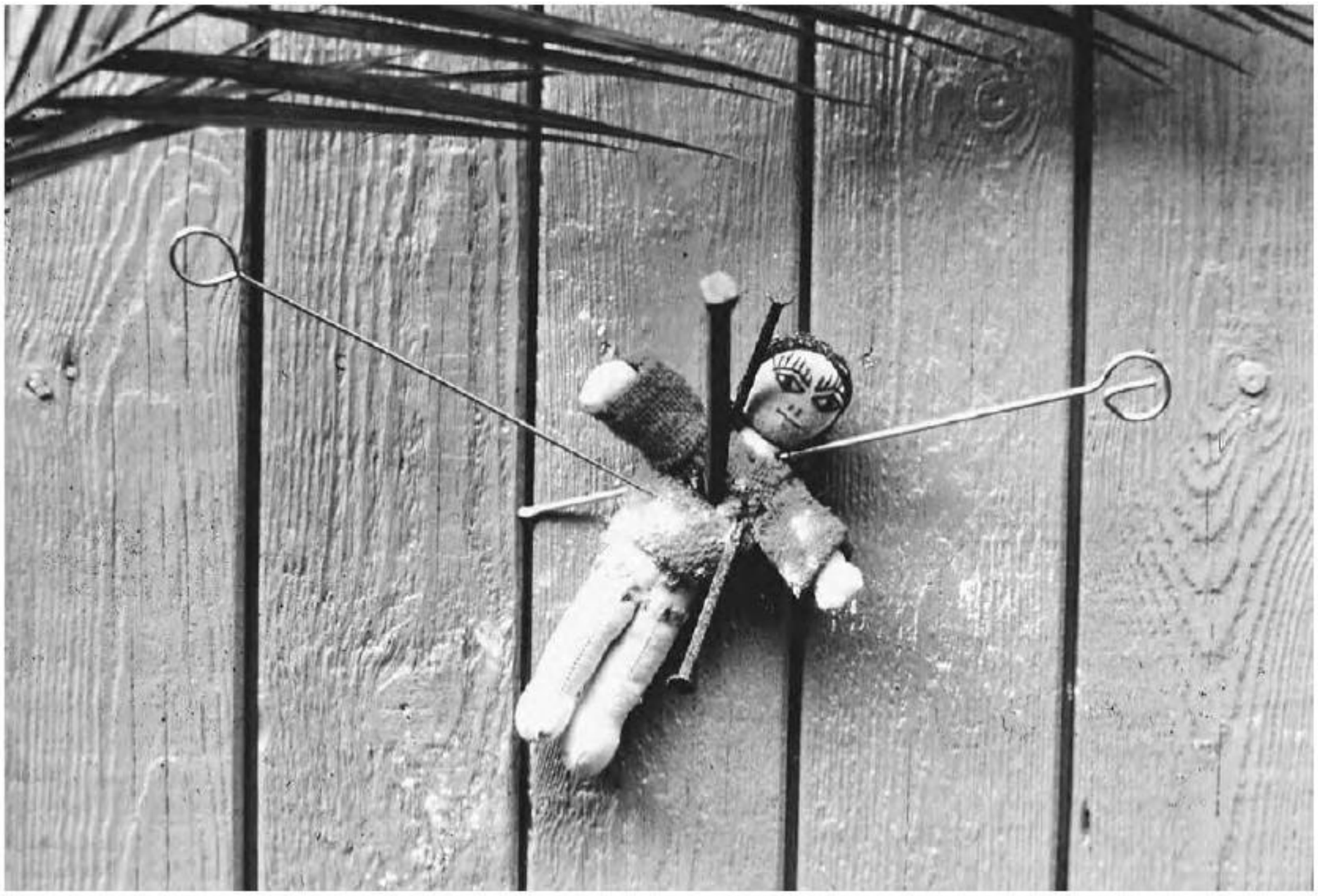
VOODOO DOLLS

To accomplish the placing a curse or a spell upon an individual, many magic traditions utilize a wax or cloth image to represent a hated enemy or a desired loved one. To properly effect such a spell or curse, it is generally required to obtain some personal bit of the object of one's intentions, i.e., nail parings, hair, excrement, saliva; and mix this in with soft wax or sew it in the cloth. Once this has been accomplished, the wax or pieces of cloth may be shaped into the form of either a male or female figure.

In the popular mind the so-called voodoo doll is the most well-known of such effigies, and many tourists have brought such souvenirs home from their visits to New Orleans or Haiti where **Voudun** (Voodoo) is practiced as a religion. Over the years, the portrayal of a voudun priest or priestess sticking pins into a doll that represents someone who has incurred their wrath has become so common that such effigies or puppets are known collectively as voodoo dolls. Actually, such figures have no role in the religion of voodoo, and the practice of sticking pins in dolls or poppets (puppets) is a custom of Western European witches, rather than the Haitian or Caribbean practitioners of voudun. Perhaps the misunderstanding arose when outsiders who witnessed



Replica voodoo doll. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

certain rituals saw the followers of voudun sticking pins in the figures of saints or guardian spirits. Such acts are done not to bring harm to anyone, but to keep the good force of magic within the object.

One method of effigy cursing calls for the magician to fashion a wax or cloth skeleton and to inscribe the name of the intended victim on its back. The image is then pierced with a thorn or a sharpened twig in the area corresponding to the victim's body part that the sorcerer desires to inflict with pain. Once pierced, the skeleton is wrapped in a shroud and prayed over as if it were a deceased person. When the death-rites have been accomplished, the effigy must be buried in a spot over which the intended victim is certain to walk.

Waxen and cloth images may also be used to bring about unions of love, as well as terrible deeds of hatred and revenge. In order to weave a love spell with wax effigies, the magician fashions two hearts of wax, baptizes them with the lovers' names, and then joins the hearts together with three pins. The images are then given to the one who desires such a union so that she or he might press the wax hearts to her or his own heart.

EVERY magic tradition in every culture utilizes a wax or cloth image to represent a hated enemy or a desired loved one.

When magicians are convinced that they themselves have been cursed, they might form an image, or puppet, to represent the one who has cast the malign spell. Once the magicians have fashioned such a puppet, they bury the box containing the puppet under a thin layer of soil. Over the soil, they light a bonfire and chant their wish that the curse set against them will be consumed along with the flames that burn the puppet representing the one who cursed them.

Witchcraft puppet.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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TRIBAL EMPOWERMENT

In *Black Elk Speaks* (1932), John G. Neihardt told of accompanying Black Elk, the aged holy man of the Oglala Sioux, to Harney Peak, the same place where the spirits had taken Black Elk in a vision when he was young. Neihardt wrote that as those who stood by watched, thin clouds began to gather out of a clear sky. A scant chill rain began to fall, and there was low, rumbling thunder without lightning. With tears running down his cheeks, Black Elk chanted that the Great Spirit, the Six Powers of the World, heard his prayer to preserve his people. According to Neihardt, Black Elk stood for a few minutes in silence, his face uplifted, weeping in the rain, and then the sky was once again cloudless.

While those witnesses who observe such apparent control over the weather by a tribal shaman consider it magic, the practitioners themselves regard such abilities as empowerment. The tribal medicine men and women use forces that have been here for all time for the benefit or needs of their people. In their view, magic is not magic if one understands it. Their medicine power enables them to will something into existence because they have need of it.

When evolving humankind existed in a less technological state in tribes around the world, there was a conscious or unconscious awareness that humans were a part of nature, part of one whole. And conversely, the whole was part of humankind. Because of this oneness, humans understood that they were a part of the power of creation and of all the creatures that walked, swam, or took flight.

To be a recipient of tribal empowerment, the practitioner, the shaman, or the priest must live their commitment every moment of every day. They must believe in the unity and the cooperation of all forms of life. When they are forced to take the life of an animal in order to survive, they kill only after uttering a prayer, beseeching the group spirit of that animal to understand that such an act was necessary in the turning of the great wheel of life.

When those tribal initiates who seek empowerment have displayed the proper attitude of receptivity, they must go alone into the wilderness to fast, to receive their **spirit guide,** and to receive a secret name and a sacred song. Perhaps the guide will also grant special powers of healing or prophecy to the supplicants.

The recipient of tribal empowerment is able to obtain personal contact with the invisible world of spirits and to pierce the sensory world of illusion which veils the great mystery. Often this gift is heightened by the intoning of the personal mantra, the personal song, the holy syllables that attune him or her with the eternal sound, the cosmic vibration of all creation.

A crucial element in tribal empowerment is the ability to rise above linear time. Most

people have accepted the conventional concept of time as existing in some sort of sequential stream flowing along in one dimension. In solitary, mystical experience, those recipients of tribal empowerment are able to enter a reality of time that is not clock-measured or clock-controlled and that places their psyches in a dimension beyond linear time and space.

The ethnologist Ivar Lissner believed that in the sophistication of the modern world, people must not forsake the heritage of spirituality that has been bequeathed to humankind over hundreds of thousands of years. Humans must never allow the materialist or the pure technologist to dictate the fate of humanity. In his view, surveying the contributions made over the centuries by those nontechnological societies and their tribal empowerments, humankind must be guided by "great, universal minds which are closer to the secrets of the transcendental and throw more into the scales than mere weight of technological progress."

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CRYSTAL SKULLS

Crystal skulls are fashioned from large pieces of crystal, usually from the mineral quartz. They are often life-sized and bear the same distinguishing characteristics as a human skull with eye sockets, a nasal cavity, and a rounded cranium. The most exquisite crystal skulls have finely crafted jaws with removable mandibles.

In addition to claims of paranormal activity, controversy concerning crystal skulls centers on their origins. More than a dozen of them were claimed to have been discovered in Mexico and Central America and are dated by their founders or those who currently possess them as being hundreds, perhaps thousands of years old. Common methods for dating artifacts can neither confirm nor refute claims about when these crystal skulls were crafted, but, generally speaking, skulls sculpted with metal tools cannot be more than a few centuries old if they originated in Mexico and Central America.

CRYSTAL skulls are believed to awaken the human consciousness to a higher level of being.

Some crystal skulls are attributed to the Mayan culture that thrived in southern Mexico and Central America during the first millennium C.E. However, as established through studies of recurring symbols, artifacts, or references in hieroglyphics, there is no known cultural tradition among the Mayans that relate to crystal skulls or any kind of skull worship or fascination. There is some evidence of skulls being symbolically important in Aztec culture, which flourished earlier and further north than Mayan civilization, yet there are far fewer claims among crystal skull enthusiasts that connect the objects to Aztec culture. Radio-carbon testing is not applicable to crystal, because the method works only on previously animate objects.

Crystal skulls are credited by believers for having the ability to awaken human consciousness to a higher level of being. Some people assert that they experience a psychic connection when viewing a crystal skull, and commonly declare that they were infused with positive energy. Skulls of quartz crystal, like other quartz objects, are believed by mystic crystal enthusiasts to have the ability to record events, thoughts, and emotions that occur in their presence.

Some believers in mystical qualities of crystals credit ancient peoples with having crafted crystal skulls. According to them, ancients used the skulls to predict the future, to control the weather, as healing devices, as oracles to receive cosmic wisdom, as receivers

of universal knowledge, and as a tool meant for future use to gain divine knowledge.

There is a crystal skull on display at the London Museum of Mankind, and the Paris Crystal Skull is on display at the Trocadero Museum. Both skulls can be traced back to Mexico, where records show they were purchased in the 1890s. The London Museum acquired its skull through Tiffanys of New York in 1898. Tests conducted in 1995 revealed scratches from steel tools, perhaps a jeweler's wheel, confirming the skull must be of modern origin. The date of the skull was moved from ancient Aztec times to the more recent period after the Spanish conquest of Mexico in 1520. Night workers at the museum reportedly refused to work near the skull unless it was covered, citing vibrations, colors appearing in the skull, or a simple association of skulls and death.

The Amethyst Crystal Skull and the Mayan Crystal Skull were found in Guatemala in the early 1900s. The latter skull received its name because it was found at the site of Mayan ruins. "Maya" is kept by a psychic who uses the skull to assist her in readings.

Two skulls exhibit particularly exquisite craftsmanship. The Rose Quartz Crystal Skull, found along the Guatemala-Honduras border, includes removable mandibles, as does the Mitchell-Hedges skull, the most famous and notorious of crystal skulls. Named after its founders and keepers, F. A. Mitchell-Hedges (1882–1959) and his daughter Anna (1910–), it is considered the finest example of a crystal skull. Fashioned from clear quartz, the Mitchell-Hedges Crystal Skull is realistic in size (the cranium approximates that of an average female adult), and its jaws were formed from the same piece of crystal as the skull. The jaws fit neatly into sockets and maintain a perfect balance with the skull.

The two biggest mysteries of the Mitchell-Hedges skull concern the craftsmanship used to make it and the story surrounding its discovery. The skull is believed to have been formed from a large block of crystal that was carved into a rough shape of a skull and then smoothed into its final shape with water and a solution of silicon-crystal sand or, perhaps, through some unknown technology. There are no scratches on the Mitchell-Hedges skull that would indicate the work of metal tools. Shafts within the skull are said to channel light from the base of the skull to the eye sockets in a manner similar to modern optic technology, and the sockets have concave forms that reflect light to the upper cranium. Internal prisms and light tunnels are believed to be the reason why objects are magnified and brightened when held beneath the skull.

Like other crystal skulls, the Mitchell-Hedges skull reportedly changes color, sometimes clouding up white, and other times growing from a small patch of black to intensely black. Many of those who have viewed it report strange visions when looking in, and some have detected a faint hum or a scent. Like other mystical crystal objects, the Mitchell-Hedges version has been reputed to have oracular and healing powers, to be able to accumulate natural magnetism, and to amplify and transmit energy. Its keeper and early publicist, F. A. Mitchell-Hedges, also claimed it had the power to kill, citing several of his enemies who died before he did.

Mitchell-Hedges was an explorer and gambler who wrote books about his searches for remnants of lost tribes and the lost continent of **Atlantis** (*Lands of Wonder and Fear*, 1931) as well as his encounters with sea monsters (*Battles with Giant Fish*, 1923, and *Battles with Monsters of the Sea*, 1937). In 1927, Mitchell-Hedges and his daughter Anna were clearing debris atop a temple in the ancient Mayan city of Lubaantum (modern-day Belize) when Anna discovered what became known as the Mitchell-Hedges Crystal Skull on her seventeenth birthday. Weeks later, near the same site, she found the jaw of the skull.

Mitchell-Hedges did not publicize the skull until 1943, when he began referring to it as the Skull of Doom and claimed it was 3,600 years old. Curiously, he barely mentioned the skull in his autobiography, *Danger, My Ally* (1954). After he died in 1959, daughter Anna became the keeper of the skull.

It is now generally accepted that Anna Mitchell-Hedges did not discover the fabled crystal skull in the ruins of a Mayan city in

1927, but Mitchell-Hedges bought the artifact at an auction at Sothebys in London in 1943. Such claims have been verified by records at the British Museum, which had bid against Mitchell-Hedges for ownership of the object.

In 1970, the Mitchell-Hedges skull was examined by art conservator and restorer Frank Dorland. He claimed to have seen a spirit after studying the skull late at night in his home. According to Dorland, tests conducted at Hewlitt-Packard laboratories in Santa Clara, California, vouched for its craftsmanship including an absence of scars that would indicate metal tool work, and evidence that it was cut against the crystal axis. The validity of the tests has been questioned, as has the whole story of how the Mitchell-Hedges Crystal Skull was found and how far back it dates.

Jo Ann and Carl Parks became owners of the famous Texas Crystal Skull, whom they affectionately call Max, in 1980 when a Tibetan healer bestowed the artifact on them in payment of a debt. Admittedly unaware at first of the significance of this object, Carl and Jo Ann, residents of Houston, placed the skull in a closet for the next seven years. Not until they came into contact with F. R. "Nick" Nocerino of Pinole, California, one of the world's foremost authorities of crystal skulls and director of the Society of Crystal Skulls, did they learn what an important artifact it was. Nocerino had been searching for that skull since the 1940s. He knew of its existence, but its actual location had sent him on a quest that had led him around the world.

Of the 13 crystal skulls known to researchers that are the actual true size of a human head, Max is the largest, weighing 18 pounds compared to the others, which weigh nine to 11 pounds. Max was found in a Mayan tomb at a site in Guatemala, and it has been estimated that Max came from a 50-to-60-pound piece of crystal that was more than a half a million years old. Other than Max and the crystal skull owned by Anna Mitchell-Hedges of Canada, all the others, each differing somewhat in size and detail, are held in museums or private collections.

People claim that being in Max's proximity provokes images and visions within them. They believe to see scenes from the past history of Earth, and frequently they perceive UFO-related scenes and messages. "Whether you believe any of that or not, if you simply look at the artifact on a scientific and archaeological level, you cannot help being overwhelmed and awed at the skilled worksmanship that was involved in creating him," Jo Ann Parks has commented.

The British Crystal Skull on display at the London Museum of Mankind is considered to be a nineteenth-century artifact. Scientists, at least, are convinced that all evidence weighs toward recent origins of all crystal skulls. Until convincing evidence that a known civilization venerated such an object, or that crystal skulls are remnants of a vanished civilization, belief in special qualities of the skulls are in the minds of beholders of mysticism.

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Fetishes

Fetishes (from the Portuguese word *feitio*, meaning artificial, or false) are distinguished from amulets and talismans by supposedly being endowed with human thoughts or feelings, or infused with a spirit. Drawings of animals on cave walls by prehistoric people were believed to infuse humans with the qualities of strength, speed, or other attributes associated with that animal. Today, fetishes carved of wood or stone by Native Americans of the Southwest have the same purpose. Fetishes carved in the likeness of an animal are given as gifts, with the recipient supposedly gaining some of the qualities of that animal. Fetishes from the Zuni tribe are particularly sought after in modern times, sustaining a tribal tradition stretching back in time for centuries.

Assortment of voodoo dolls and fetishes on display at an outdoor fetish market in Lome, Togo. (CAROLINE PENN/CORBIS CORPORATION)

Fetishes are important in the vodoun religion, originating in western Africa as small pouches or chests, or items worn as amulets, and evolving into doll fetishes that were believed to possess the spirit of the person on whom the doll was modeled. That mystical practice of vodoun practitioners was misrepresented and generally overdramatized as a horror element of voodoo in popular culture, in movies, television shows, and fiction.

Unlike an amulet, which works automatically to bring luck or ward off misfortune, the Nkosi was believed to work only through an elaborate ceremony, where its power to identify the party guilty of a crime was coaxed and sometimes forced into action. That is the nature of fetishes, and what distinguishes them from amulets and talismans. Fetishes have personalities that must be appealed to in some way in order for them to work; amulets, invested with power based on the material and inscriptions, are supposed to work automatically; and talismans work automatically if they were crafted following a specific, ritualistic practice.

DRAWINGS of animals on cave walls were believed give humans the qualities of strength, speed, or attributes of that animal.

Egyptians had dolls called *shawabtis* that were occasionally buried with the dead for their use in the afterlife. A central African tribe called the Bakongo had a fetish called *Nkosi*.

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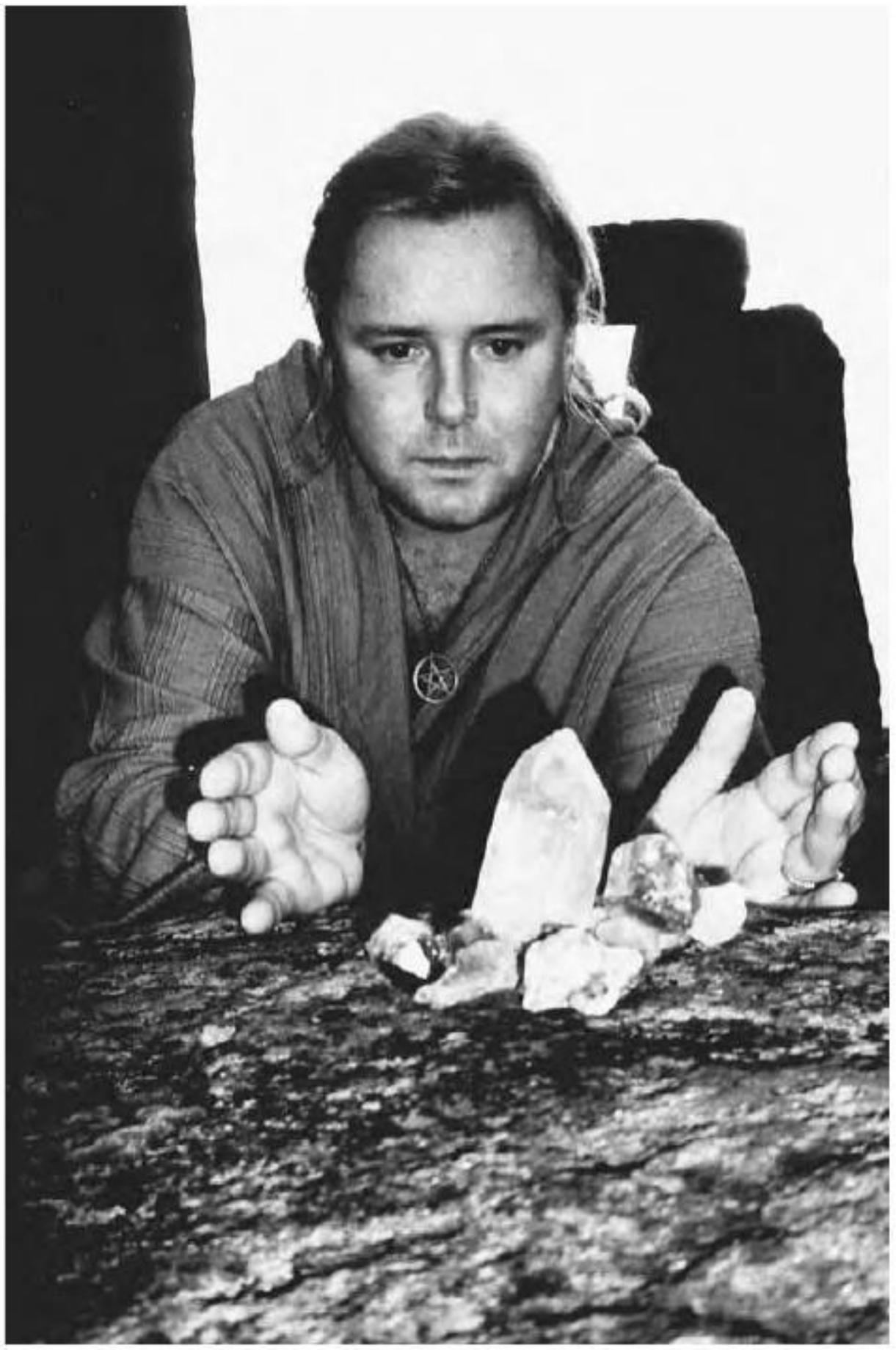
MEGALITHS

Around Carnac, in the Brittany region of France, stand more than 4,000 stones dating back 6,000 years. Some of them stand individually, some are aligned in rows, and some mark the sites of chambered graves beneath nearby mounds. Intricate burial chambers in Ireland, like many of the 12,000 ancient chambered burial sites beneath mounds in northern Europe, have arrangements of stone or markings that correspond with lunar and solar cycles. All of those ancient structures and arrangements of large stones are examples of a megalith (from the Greek "megas" meaning large, and "litho" meaning stone), a term used most specifically in reference to stone structures erected for ceremonial, astronomical, and religious purposes, and as monuments. Megalith building (placing large stones in a specific site) dates back to at least 5000 B.C.E. Many of the most famous megaliths were erected between then and 1500 B.C.E. The communities that erected them eventually faded into the recesses of history, but the megaliths they left behind continue to tantalize the imagination.

Adding to the mystery of these ancient structures is the supposition that they were erected by people not credited with possessing the knowledge and technology needed to move massive stones. Even if large labor forces were available, most megalithic structures demanded keen architectural and mathematical skills for planning and erection. Additionally, many ancient megaliths seem to have had sophisticated uses as solar and lunar calendars and as astronomical observatories. In fact, the discipline of archaeoastronomy (the study of astronomy among ancient societies) has become a burgeoning field of study during the past few decades, with ancient megaliths often serving as the focus of the discipline.

As ancient megaliths are studied, a greater appreciation for the skills and knowledge of prehistoric civilizations comes forth. Missing pieces of the puzzle of human development remain, however, fueling more speculation and theories. Perhaps survivors from vanished civilizations passed knowledge on to inhabitants of distant lands. As the old myths sometimes suggest, the megalith builders themselves may have known magic secrets of levitation and of transforming and reassembling solid materials. UFO enthusiasts argue that visitors from outer space may have directed the erecting of megaliths, particularly since so many megalithic sites were devised with the intention of viewing and charting the skies above.



White witch Kevin Carlyon working with crystals at Stonehenge. (KEVIN CARLYON/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Ancient megaliths are generally divided into five categories:

1. alignments, stones placed in rows and other non-circular shapes;
2. burial chambers, underground chambers usually covered by a mound of some kind;

3. monoliths (from the Greek; "mono" means single, "litho" is stone), single standing stones, also called menhirs;
4. monument memorials to gods or community leaders; and
5. stone circles.

The greatest concentration of aligned megaliths is in the Carnac area of Brittany, France, where megaliths are aligned in rows in three different fields. Le Menec has two stone circles at either end of 12 rows of megaliths. The tallest stones stand 13 feet in height, and the stones dwindle in size moving from west to east, totaling 1,099 megaliths. Kermario has 10 rows and 1,029 megaliths. One tall menhir, in which five serpents are engraved, serves to signal a nearby tumulus, an earthen mound that covers a chambered grave. The third field, Kerlescan, has 13 rows of aligned megaliths that form the shape of a barrel.

MANY ancient megaliths appear to have had sophisticated uses as solar and lunar calendars and as astronomical observatories.

The megaliths of Carnac first underwent radio-carbon dating techniques in 1959. At that time it was expected the results would show the megaliths were erected during the first or second century B.C.E., for it was generally believed that the megalith builders had come from the eastern Mediterranean region from Egypt, or Mycea (a civilization that preceded ancient Greece). The radiocarbon test, however, pushed the megalith builders back as far as 4650 B.C.E. All previous theories about the origins of the Brittany megaliths were undermined. The structures originated with pre-Roman and pre-Celtic civilizations, and they were older than similar structures in the eastern Mediterranean region from which the engineering expertise to erect the megaliths was previously believed to have originated.

The question of how the megaliths were positioned at sites where they stand is baffling. Modern-day tests conducted on moving the megaliths from quarries to nearby sites showed that it was possible for the primitive societies to move and erect the megaliths using rope or simply pushing the stones. Such effort, however, would have required coordinating the labor of hundreds of workers. One test during the 1970s showed that 200 people could move a 30-ton stone two to three miles in a few days by rolling the stone over logs.

Some monoliths (single blocks or large pieces of stone) are formed naturally and gain mythical importance based on their sublime appearance. In the Australian desert stands the world's largest monolith, Uluru (also called Ayers Rock), which reaches about a thousand feet high. Uluru is venerated by aborigines (native people of the area), who believe the ground beneath it is hollow and is a source of energy called Tjukurpa Dreamtime. According to their belief, all life as it is today is part of one vast unchanging network of relationships that can be traced to the spirit ancestors of the Dreamtime. The great spirits walked along the earth and literally sang material objects into existence.

The Uluru monolith extends downward more than three miles beneath the surface. Approximately 500 million years ago it was part of the ocean floor at the center of present-day Australia. Depending on the time of day and the atmospheric conditions, Uluru can dramatically change color, from a deep blue to glowing red. The area draws a variety of visitors, from those seeking to tap mystical energy, to tourists bussed in and out for a couple hours' worth of viewing time.

Among natural monoliths with mysterious qualities are "healing stones," usually a large stone with a hole through it. The Men-an-Tol in Cornwall, England, is one of several examples of a stone reputed to have healing properties. According to legend, people can be cured of back and leg pains by passing through the hole in the stone.

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RUNES

Although the various markings on objects of stone and wood known as runes are commonly referred to as an ancient alphabet of the Northern European Germanic and Scandinavian people, they do not really constitute a language as such. The runes are essentially symbols with particular meanings that were used to convey brief magical inscriptions and were often used in rites of divination. The word "rune" means "secret," especially as it might apply to a hidden wisdom, and the various symbols were inscribed on a wide variety of objects to give them power. The runes were used to send secret messages, to cast spells, to divine the future, and to communicate with the spirit world.

Some scholars say that some of the symbols used in the mystical runic markings may have originated as far back as Paleolithic times and been combined in historic times with certain characters from an old Etruscan alphabet. Certain traditions attribute the runes to the *Volsungr*, an ancestral tribe of heroic and semidivine beings that settled in Northern Europe just prior to the Ice Age. According to some of the legends of the Volsungr, the godlike beings gave the magical symbols as a gift that might assist lesser humans in their struggles to survive in the harsh environment of Ice Age Europe. In the Old Norse religion, it was Odin, the father of the gods, who, seeking higher wisdom, hung upside down from the World Tree for nine days before he received the rune symbols as the answer to his quest.

When the runic symbols were placed on small rocks or blocks of wood, the Old Norse cast them to predict the success of a hunting or fishing expedition, when to plant crops, or what course their children might follow throughout their lives. In the eleventh century when Christianity began to replace the old Viking religion and Latin became the written language of the educated, the runes were not replaced, but gained an even stronger reputation for containing magical powers. While the priests of the new religion frowned upon any supernatural connotations attributed to the runes, the symbols remained as integral designs in folk art, jewelry, and wearing apparel. In recent years, the casting and reading of runes—the "Viking Oracle"—has again become a popular tool of divination.

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TALISMANS

The word "talisman" comes from the Arabic and means "to make magical marks." An amulet can be a found object, a common item, or one bought in a store. A talisman, on the other hand, is inscribed with pictures, words, letters, or mystical signs and is crafted for a specific function. When properly designed, talismans are believed to bring love, treasures, and health, and can allow one to communicate with the dead. Talismans must be crafted following a specific ritual based on the intended use, and the recipient's astrological sign, religion, or other qualities are often taken into consideration.

TALISMANS are often used by members of secret societies.

Talismans are intended to remain mysterious. While amulets often feature recognized symbols to bring protection or luck, talismans

Bone pendants. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

have inscriptions meant to be secret or specific only to the individuals wearing them. Talismans must be crafted at a proper time and in a proper way to be effective; injury is believed to result from carelessness in the making or wearing of talismans.

Talismans are often used by members of secret societies. Kabbalists, for example, combined a complicated system of knowledge that utilized elements of numerology and astrology to create magic squares that protect against sorcery. Magic squares feature letters that spell out the name of God or numbers arranged in rows and columns that produce an equal sum when added in various sequences.

The magic triangle, another talisman, is based on the belief that systematic reductions of an inscription, line by line, create power that can ward off evil spirits and heal maladies. The mystical word "Abracadabra," for example, was used in medieval Europe as a chant to reduce fever. Each time the word was spoken in the chant, a letter was dropped. As the chant reduced, the fever was dispelled. Such talismans were especially popular during the Great Plague that swept through London during the mid-1660s.

A talisman of **vodun,** called gris-gris, is a small cloth bag filled with items from herbs to cloth to animal parts, created in a ritualistic practice and intended to bring money, love, or good health to the wearer.

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TOTEMS

Among the shamanic teachings of the traditional Native Americans, the totem represents the physical form of one's spirit helper, his or her guardian or guide. The totem entity may in some ways be comparable to the concept of a guardian angel or **spirit guide** that presents itself on the physical plane in the form of an animal.

Traditional Native Americans believed that the great mystery prepared the land as a place where all things that swam, walked, crawled, and flew were to mingle in harmony. Gifts were bestowed upon each creature, with abilities to learn lessons from one another. The native people accepted their kinship with all of nature and believed that each entity performed its specific talents according to its abilities. Therefore, it was advantageous for all humans to learn the identity of their totem and to receive its lessons in order to make their lives more complete.

In the shamanistic tradition, all creatures are called relatives and are considered brothers, sisters, parents, and so forth. All nonhuman entities are regarded as "people," and everyone has an important role to perform in the larger system of life.

It was the totem animal that guided shamans through the portal that led to the other world, to the mysterious transcendent reality beyond the material world, the dimension that lay beyond time and space. For all the members of the tribes, their own totem animal

gave them their spiritual power and provided them with their own instrument of passage into the spirit world. Their totem animal would guide them in the purification of their spirit, helping them to achieve self-discipline through fasting, prayer, and the emptying of their hearts of all earthly desires. Although many in the Judeo-Christian tradition prefer to emphasize the charge that humans shall have dominion over all animals, it might be mindful to also take serious notice of Job 12:7–8: "Ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or to speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you."

Although totems are most often associated with Native Americans, many cultures have at some time in their past used animal totems. Local sport teams use names such as the Tigers, Lions, Bears, Cardinals, and Falcons. Various religions and sects use expressions like the Lamb of God, the Dove of the Holy Spirit, and the Lion of Judah. People through history have even had such surnames as Bear, Beaver, Wolf, Crane, Crow, Drake, Finch, Fish, Fox, Hawk, Robin, Pike, Lamb, Partridge, and Salmon.

For many centuries, humans have allowed animals to be both surrogates and teachers. The ethnologist Ivar Lissner has pondered the provocative mystery of why those anonymous Franco-Cantabrian cave artists of more than 20,000 years ago never left mankind any clearly defined self-portraits that would show the exact physical appearance of human ancestors. Aside from a few Venus-type mother-goddess statuettes, people are left with a rather bizarre collection of ghostly creatures with the heads of animals and birds, strange half-human, and half-animal entities.

Lissner suggested that the Stone-Age artists really were portraying themselves, "…but in the guise of intermediary beings who were stronger than common men and able to penetrate more deeply into the mysteries of fate, that unfathomable interrelationship between animals, men, and gods." The ancient cave painters may have been saying that "…the road to supernatural powers is easier to follow in animal shape and that spirits can only be reached with an animal's assistance."

Totem pole. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

For countless centuries, those people who trust their totems have relied upon the assistance of their personal animal totem to lead them to higher spiritual awareness.

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THINGS OF SACRED POWER

Things of sacred power associated with Judeo-Christian history as recorded in the Bible and in various apocryphal

texts have enraptured believers for centuries. Whether pilgrims seek the physical remains of Noah's Ark or the cup from which Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) drank Passover wine at the Last Supper, great controversies over the physical existence of certain objects mentioned in the Bible have persisted for thousands of years and continue in the new millennium.

So prevalent is the belief that Noah's Ark can be located on the slope of the tallest mountain in Turkey, Agri Dagi (**Mt. Ararat**), that some travel agencies include participation in expeditions to search for the ark as part of tour packages to Turkey. Several ark sightings on Mt. Ararat occurred during the twentieth century. During a thaw in the summer of 1916, a Russian Imperial Air Force lieutenant flying over Mt. Ararat reported seeing half the hull of some sort of ship poking out above surface of a lake. A photograph taken in 1972 by the Earth Research Technical Satellite (ERTS) is said to reveal an unusual feature at 14,000 feet on Mt. Ararat. It was reported to be the same size as the Ark. In the 1980s, former NASA astronaut James Irwin participated in expeditions up the mountain, but he found only the remnants of abandoned skis. With the breakup of the former Soviet Union, expeditions up the mountain intensified during the 1990s, and the search for Noah's Ark continues.

As described in the Old Testament book of Exodus, the Ark of the Covenant, a wooden chest covered with gold, is said to contain such sacred relics as the tablets of law from God that Moses (14th–13th century B.C.E.) brought back from Mt. Sinai. The ark possessed supernatural powers and served as a means through which God could express his will to the Israelites. It was last known to have rested in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, but ever since Babylonian forces conquered the city in 587 B.C.E. the whereabouts of the Ark of the Covenant has been a mystery. Interest in the Ark of the Covenant has inspired generations of those who would recover the sacred relic. In medieval times the **Knights Templar** supposedly came into possession of the ark.

A whole mythology has been built around the legendary Holy Grail, said to be the drinking vessel of Jesus at the Last Supper before his crucifixion and resurrection. The legend of the grail has been perpetuated through literature since the twelfth century, particularly in tales involving knights of Camelot who served the legendary King Arthur of Britain. Through the inspirational recounting of the various quests, Christian teachings and virtues are presented. In modern times, the Holy Grail persists as a symbol of an ultimate achievement, a higher order of being for which people search.

Another thing of sacred power that has inspired generations of Christians is the **Shroud of Turin,** which is discussed in an earlier chapter. The Bible mentions a "clean linen cloth" (Matthew 27:59) in which the dead body of Jesus was wrapped following his crucifixion. Several cloths purported to be the one mentioned in the Bible have been made public through the centuries. The Shroud of Turin is a linen cloth that bears the image of a bearded, crucified man. The claims that the image on the Shroud of Turin was that of Jesus were first made public in the fourteenth century. The Shroud has been controversial ever since—embraced as authentic by believers, and written off as a forgery by skeptics. Each time evidence seems to weigh heavily against the authenticity of the Shroud, a new finding renews the controversy and inspires believers.

Perhaps a greater stretch for the skeptical mind is the belief that the lance that pierced Jesus' side has been preserved down through the centuries as a symbol that will bring vast political power to the one who possesses it. Nevertheless, when Christian crusaders discovered the lance in the Church of St. Peter in Antioch during the First Crusade in 1098, they used it as a symbol to rally their forces and defeat the Saracens. From that time onward, European monarches coveted the Holy Lance as a sign that their reigns would be far-reaching and long-lasting. Fortunately, the power of the **Spear of Destiny** ebbed when it fell into the possession of the Nazis and their leader, Adolf Hitler (1889–1945).

This section will examine these objects of sacred power and discuss why they have been deemed so precious and holy by believers down through the centuries.

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THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

Ever since the Babylonian Captivity of Jerusalem in the sixth century B.C.E., the whereabouts of the Ark of the Covenant has been a mystery. As described in the Old Testament of the Bible, the ark served as the visible sign of God's presence to the Israelites. The Israelites would rally and vanquish their foes when the ark was brought to sites of battle, and death came to those in the presence of the ark who were enemies of God, betrayed their allegiance to God, or who simply forgot about the ark's immense power. According to the Bible, the ark was last known to have rested in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Whether it was destroyed, stolen, moved, or remained hidden after Babylonian forces conquered the city and leveled the temple in 587 B.C.E. is not known.

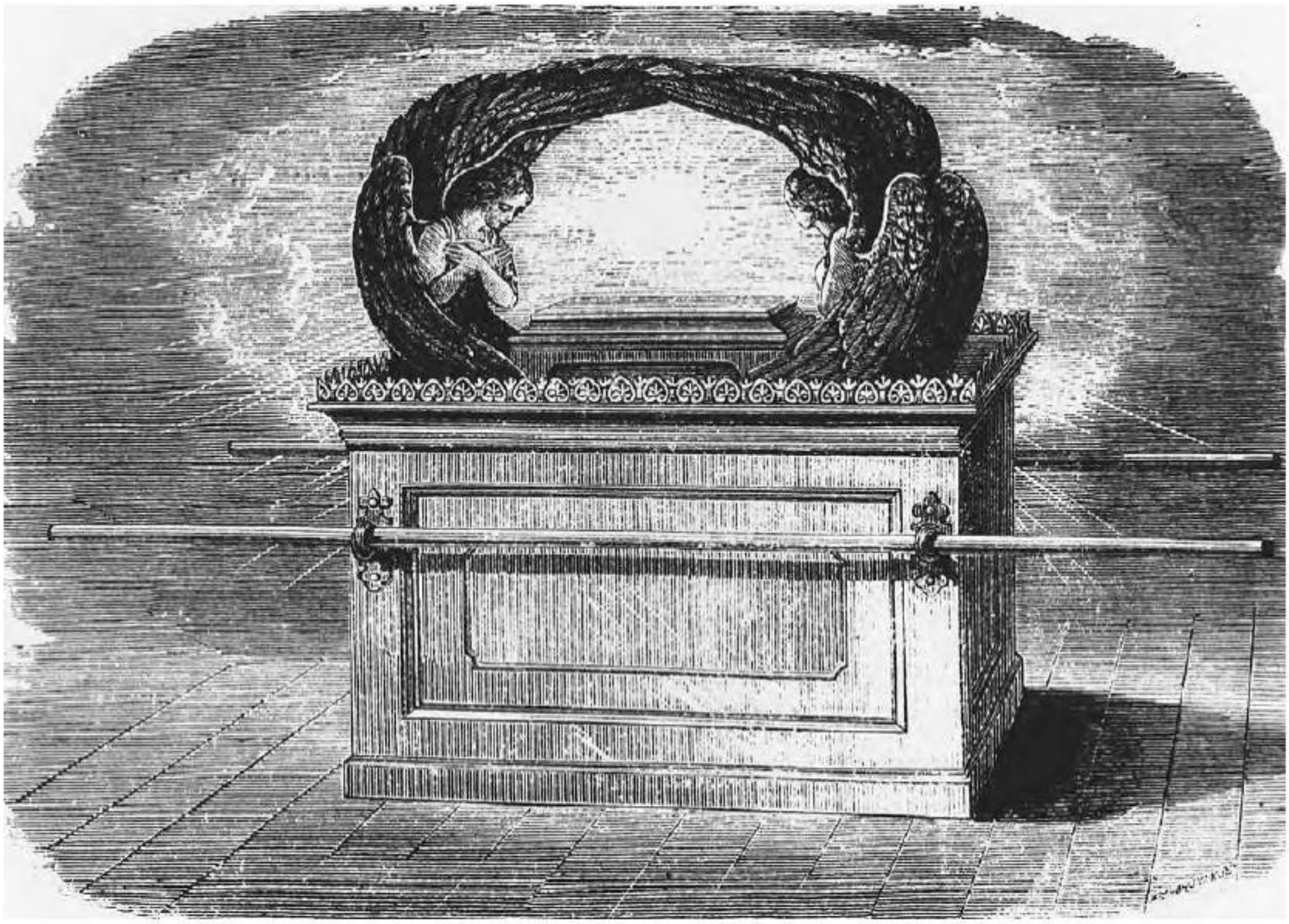
Another mystery concerning the ark is its contents. The ark is said to contain numerous sacred relics, including the tablets of law from God that Moses (14th–13th century B.C.E.) brought back from Mt. Sinai; Aaron's rod, a kind of rounded stick that miraculously grew leaves as a sign of God's trust in Aaron, brother of Moses; and/or a specimen of manna, the mysterious food that had provided an unending source of nourishment to the Israelites as they wandered in the desert. Additionally, the ark possessed a supernatural power that awed and overwhelmed those who viewed it, and it served also as a means through which God could express his will.

The idea of the ark was expressed by God to the Israelites and was then made into a material object by skilled craftsmen in about 1462 B.C.E. They built a chest (about 2 cubits in length and 1 cubits in height or about 3 feet, 9 inches in length, 2 feet, 3 inches in height) using setim (acacia) wood overlaid with the purest gold. The outside of the ark had a gold rim and four golden rings, one on each corner of the chest. Two poles made of setim and covered with gold ran through the gold rings on either side; the poles were used to lift the ark and were never removed from the rings. The ark had a cover of gold on which two cherubim faced each other, each with wings spread. The oracle (word, or commands) of God would issue from the ark from a cloud between the two cherubim (Exodus 25:19–22).

THE Ark of the Covenant was last known to have rested in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem.

The ark originally provided safety to the Israelites in their journey to the Promised Land. The power of the ark was manifested several times and enemies were scattered. When priests carrying the ark stepped into the River Jordan, the water stopped flowing and all the Israelites were able to cross. At the battle of Jericho the ark was carried by a procession around the walls of the city for seven days, after which the walls came down and the Israelites won the battle.

After losing a series of battles with the Philistines, the Israelites brought the ark to a battle site, hoping for inspiration and wanting to strike fear into the Philistines. However, the Philistines won the battle and secured possession of the ark. The Philistines viewed their capture of the ark as a victory over the Israelites and their God. The ark was treated as a trophy, but several disasters fell upon the Philistines, including the rapid spread of a plague and an invasion of mice wherever the ark was placed. The Philistines eventually built a cart on which they placed the ark and representations of their afflictions; they yoked two cows to the cart and set it forth. The cart made its way to the territory of Israel, where the ark came into the possession of the Bethsames. A large number of Bethsames fell dead when they failed to show respect for the ark. Fearful of the ark's power,



Ark of the Covenant.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

the Bethsames offered it to the inhabitants of nearby Cariathiarum, who took it in their possession with proper sacraments.

Later, when David (d. 962 B.C.E.) became king of Israel and established Jerusalem as the holy center of the nation, the ark was to be moved there. Along the way, however, a cart carrying the ark was jostled and the ark began sliding off. Forgetting about the ark's strange powers, a man who reached out to secure it was struck dead. The ark was then housed at a nearby site outside the city, where it was the object of veneration for several months before the journey to Jerusalem was completed. The ark was taken once from Jerusalem to inspire David's army in its battle against the forces of Absalom.

Eventually, the ark was placed in the new Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. It was occasionally taken away from the temple for a battle or ceremony, but soon the ark was not allowed to leave the temple. As decades passed, the sacredness and powers of the ark were largely forgotten. When Jerusalem was invaded and taken by Babylonians led by King Nebuchadnezzar II (c. 630–562 B.C.E.; the Babylonian Captivity of Jerusalem is dated from 587 B.C.E.), the whereabouts of the ark became a mystery. It was either destroyed along with the city or, as suggested in Kings 4:25, taken to Babylon as one of the spoils of victory.

Some biblical scholars theorize that those Israelites still faithful to God were forewarned about the fall of Jerusalem and moved the ark to safety. Jeremiah is said to have moved the ark to a cave on Mt. Sinai, the mountain in Egypt where Moses first spoke with God. The Talmud, the ancient, authoritative history of the Hebrews, indicates that the ark was kept in a secret area of the Temple of Solomon and survived the destruction and pillaging of Jerusalem. The Temple of Solomon was rebuilt on its original foundation after the

Babylon Captivity. Around 150 B.C.E., a successor of Alexander the Great invaded Jerusalem and took valuable items from the new temple, but the ark was not mentioned among them.

One account has the illegitimate son of Solomon and Sheba stealing the ark about 1000 B.C.E. and hiding it in Aksum, Ethiopia, where it was guarded by a monk in a church. Other stories have the ark being transported during a Hebrew migration to Abyssinia (Ethiopia) that preceded the Babylonian Captivity. There, according to that version, the ark remained on an island in Lake Tana. With the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman world by 300 C.E., Abyssinia was largely Christian. Later, during the sixteenth century, fierce battles were waged by invading Muslim armies on the Christian empire of Abyssinia, causing much destruction, including the razing of monasteries on the island Tana Kirkos, where the ark was believed to have been kept. A cathedral was built after the Muslim armies retreated, and there, according to this legend, the ark remains safe.

In December 2000, Erling Haagensen and Henry Lincoln published their thesis that the Ark of the Covenant and the **Holy Grail** were both hidden in sites on the Baltic Sea island of Bornholm about the year 1170.

Interest in the Ark of the Covenant has recurred through the centuries. In medieval times the **Knights Templar** supposedly came into possession of the ark. In contemporary times, interest in the ark was renewed with the 1981 film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, where it is the object of a search just prior to World War II (1939–45) between Nazi forces and an American archaeologist named Indiana Jones. The ark is found and, as in the Bible, its power kills (literally melts) all of those who do not pay it proper respect. In the film, as in the Old Testament, the presence of the ark brings destruction to the wicked and to the vain. In *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the relic eventually ends up in an undistinguished crate in an overstocked U.S. government warehouse waiting to be archived.

In December 2001, Rev. John McLuckie found a wooden tablet representing the Ark of the Covenant in a cupboard in St. John's Episcopal Church in Edinburgh, Scotland. Rev. McLuckie, who had lived in Ethiopia, recognized the artifact as sacred to Ethiopia's Orthodox Christians, and arranged to have the tablet returned in a special ceremony in 2002.

Delving Deeper

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Crosses

Christians wear crosses to remember the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) and because they believe that nothing unholy can stand in the presence of the cross. The cross as a Christian amulet dates back to the fourth century, when the Roman emperor Constantine (d. 337) adopted it as his symbol instead of the traditional Roman Eagle. That act symbolized the conversion of Rome to a Christian empire.

THE cross as a Christian amulet dates back to the fourth century.

But amulets with crosses date back to Mesopotamia and Egypt, and served as a symbol long before associations of the cross with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Native Americans already had amulets with crosses by the

time of first contact with Europeans. European adventurers, beginning with Christopher Columbus (1451–1506), assumed that Christians had arrived previously when they saw the crosses on Native Americans, but they were really viewing a people who invested belief in the power of a universal symbol. Crosses and circles are among the symbols and figures worn for protection and prosperity by humans since the earliest times. Such crosses often signified the four directions, the four forces (earth, water, air, and fire), and, when enclosed in a circle, the oneness of life.

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THE HOLY GRAIL

The Holy Grail is most often identified as a serving dish or a chalice that was used by Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) during the Last Supper. The word "grail" may have originated from "garalis," which derives from the medieval Latin word "cratalis" (a mixing bowl). Garalis became "greal" in medieval French, "grail" in English. Another possible origin for the word is based on the writings of a Christian monk named Helinandus, who served the Cistercian order as a chronicler and died around 1230. He wrote of a hermit who around the year 717 saw a vision of a dish used by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. The hermit supposedly wrote a book in Latin and called the dish "gradale." In French, gradale meant a wide and deep dish on which various meats are placed; it is similar to the word "greal" ("pleasant"). Greal was the word used to describe the dish in French tales, and it became "grail" in English.

In the history that developed after grail stories emerged, Joseph of Arimathea came into possession of the vessel following the crucifixion of Jesus. As the story continues, Joseph of Arimathea was imprisoned for several years for expressing his faith that Jesus was the Messiah, the son of God. After being released, he traveled to Britain and took the grail with him. When he died, the grail passed on to his descendants. The grail had magical qualities for the righteous, providing food and assurances of the grace of God. A few generations later, because of some transgression and a general lack of humility and virtue by keepers of the grail, the powers of the vessel were lost and its existence was virtually forgotten.

The legend of the grail has been perpetuated through literature since the twelfth century, particularly in tales involving knights of Camelot who served the legendary King Arthur of Britain. Stories of their quests to find the Holy Grail blend supernatural adventures, love stories, Christian myth, and the lore of Celts, a people who occupied much of Europe until the spreading of the Roman Empire.

King Arthur, the legendary ruler of ancient Britain, was most likely based on a figure from around 500 or earlier. According to Celtic lore, Arthur helped stave off invasions by Angles and Saxons, Germanic tribes that subsequently conquered Britain in the fifth century. Arthur became more established as a historical figure during the 1100s, when a book written by Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1100–1154), *History of the Kings of Britain*, included details of his heroic reign. Much of Geoffrey's material was gathered from folktales and contains historical and chronological inaccuracies. However, Geoffrey's work was popular and was translated from its original Latin into French (by a poet named Wace) around 1155 and into Middle English (by a poet named Layamon) a few years later. Between 1160 and 1180, the French poet Chretien de Troyes (fl. 1170) wrote five major works about Arthur and his knights based on history and legend.

Chretien helped introduce and popularize the grail legend, but he died before completing a full account of the mysterious and powerful object kept in the Grail Castle. In his version, Arthur's knights Gauvain (Gwain in English) and Perceval (Percival in English, Parzeval and Parsifal in German) journey to the castle where the grail is kept. Chretien's unfinished manuscript was continued by others.

"Galahad and the Holy Grail" by Edwin Austin Abbey. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

Around 1200, the German poet Wolfram von Eschenbach (c. 1170–c. 1220) wrote a grail legend, *Parzeval*, about a youth who sets out to become a knight in King Arthur's court. Along the way the title character stops at the castle of the Fisher King, where Parzeval witnesses a procession bearing a glowing object (the grail) and a spear (the one that wounded Christ). In the presence of the grail, the Fisher King is struck dumb. Parzeval fails to inquire about the mysterious procession and the objects. Since Parzeval had a pure soul, he could have spoken in the presence of the grail and used its magical powers to heal the infirm Fisher King. Only much later, after many wanderings, does Parzeval learn about the true nature of the grail and his missed opportunity. He returns to the castle of the Fisher King, who is revealed to be his uncle, heals him, and restores the king's land, which had become barren when he became infirm.

Later stories concerning the Holy Grail reflect the influence of Christianity, most notably *Morte d'Arthur* by the fifteenth-century English writer Sir Thomas Malory (fl. 1470). In this most famous collection of Arthurian tales, the grail becomes the object of a quest among the knights of the roundtable at King Arthur's castle, Camelot. Sir Galahad, who is completely without sin, eventually realizes the grail quest. He is in the company of Sir Bors and Sir Percival (Parzeval), two other virtuous knights, but Sir Galahad, as an emblem of Christian virtue, alone achieves the grail.

Arthurian legends and the grail may be based to some extent on Celtic lore. The Holy Grail might well have been developed from references to magic cauldrons that appear in many Celtic myths and practices. In her book *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), Jessie Weston traced some similarities between Celtic myths and grail legends. Some Celtic fertility rituals,

Cast members of "Monty Python and the Holy Grail." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

for example, were designed to ensure the health and vigor of a community leader: the physical welfare of the land was connected with that of the king. The silence and sterility of the Fisher King in a tale like *Parzeval*, then, would indicate some transgression and physical failure of the king that affected his land. Celtic legends have references to the Fisher King as the leader of a barren land, referred to as the Waste Land and "the land laid waste." Other noted studies that trace Celtic sources for grail stories include *The Grail: From Celtic Myth to Christian Symbol* (1963), by Roger S. Loomis, and *The Evolution of the Grail Legend* (1968), by D. D. R. Owen.

THE legend of the Holy Grail has been perpetuated through literature since the twelfth century.

The legendary Holy Grail remains nearly as popular in modern culture as it was during the period from 1150 to 1250. Back then, grail stories were a hit in the courts of France, England, and Germany. Nowadays, books about grail adventures are popular, as are films ranging from *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975), to *Excalibur* (1981), to *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989). Whether magical or divine, the grail persists as a symbol of a higher order of being for which people are searching, a striving toward some ultimate achievement.

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PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

At the center of the alchemist's quest was the legendary philosopher's stone, a magical piece of the perfect gold, which could immediately transform any substance it touched into gold as pure as its own nature. The Emerald Tablets of the great **Hermes Trismegistus** spoke of such a marvelous catalyst, and ever since that secret knowledge had been made known to certain individuals, the philosopher's stone had become the symbol of the alchemical pursuit. According to tradition, **Albertus Magnus** actually came to possess such a wonder of transmutation, and **Helvetius** was given a small piece of the philosopher's stone by a mysterious man in black.

Some alchemists believed that the stone was somehow hatched like a chick from an egg if one could only find the proper ingredients with which to create the substance of the shell and the "yolk." Others believed that the philosopher's stone, that most marvelous of all catalysts, oozed somehow out of the moon or from one of the stars and fell to Earth where it solidified into the magical stone of transformation.

As the works of more of the alchemists have come to light, it becomes clear that the philosopher's stone wasn't really a stone at all—even though it is always referred to as such. Sometimes the catalyst of transmutation is described as a divine child, an angel, a drag-

The Prayer Wheels in Asia

The use of the prayer wheel as a mystical practice dates back to at least 400 C.E. in China. The idea itself of the prayer wheel might have originated as a play on words of *"turn the wheel of the daharma"*—a classical metaphor used for Buddha's teaching activity.

There are many types and sizes of prayer wheels. The most common one is a simple hand-held metal or wooden object, from four to six inches long, with a cylindrical body and a metal or wooden axle that serves as a handle at one end, while the other end is wrapped with a roll of paper on which a mantra or prayer is written. The prayer or mantras are repeated in a row, with the length of paper sometimes reaching twenty yards or more. An ornate cover protects the spool of prayers; the prayers cycle and turn with each rotation of the wrist, due to a weighted cord or chain. It is customary to turn prayer wheels in homes first thing in the morning and last thing before bed in the evening, and many people carry and rotate one while walking throughout the day.

Most common in Tibet, they are sometimes even referred to as "Tibetan Prayer Wheels" or *"Mani,"* derived from the mantra or prayer *"Om Mani Padme Hum."* Tibetan Buddhists believe these words sacred and its recital, silently or out loud, evokes a powerful, spiritual and benevolent blessing. Traditionally, even though the wheel itself and its practical uses for carts were known from other cultures, the Tibetans considered the wheel very sacred and did not allow its use for *any* other purpose other than that of the prayer wheel.

Ironically, in recent years the reverse is true, as much of Tibetan culture has had to seek refuge outside its homeland. Now the wheel is used largely for trucks, cars, busses, and tanks, and the spiritual uses of the wheel and other practices are severely restricted.

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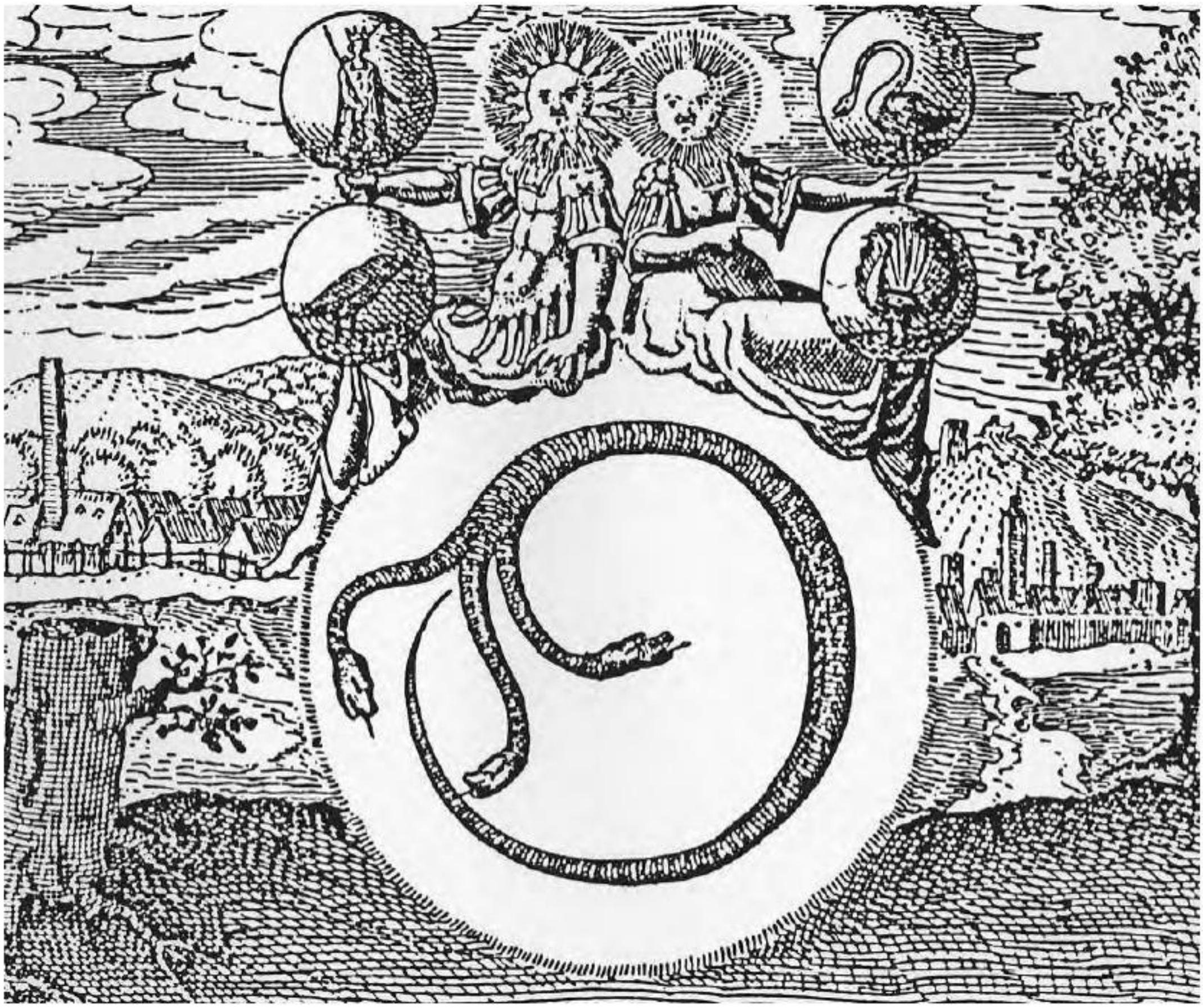

Philosopher's stone and the serpent of alchemy from the 1622 edition of *Philosophia Reformata* by J. D. Mylius. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

on, an elixir, a tincture, or an as-yet unknown chemical compound.

Many alchemists began to consider that somehow the philosopher's stone was not a thing at all, but a system of knowledge. Once the alchemist truly perceived the reality that lay behind the symbols, he would achieve an intellectual and spiritual level wherein he would become one with the power that existed within the mysterious goal for which he searched so long. Once he understood what the philosopher' stone represented, he would have found it at last—and he would have become one with it.

Many scholars have since insisted that the true alchemists sought not to turn base metals into gold, but to transform the dense material of their physical bodies into a spiritually evolved immaterial entity. In this perspective, the philosopher's stone becomes the Holy Spirit that mystically transmutes humans into true manifestations of God on Earth.

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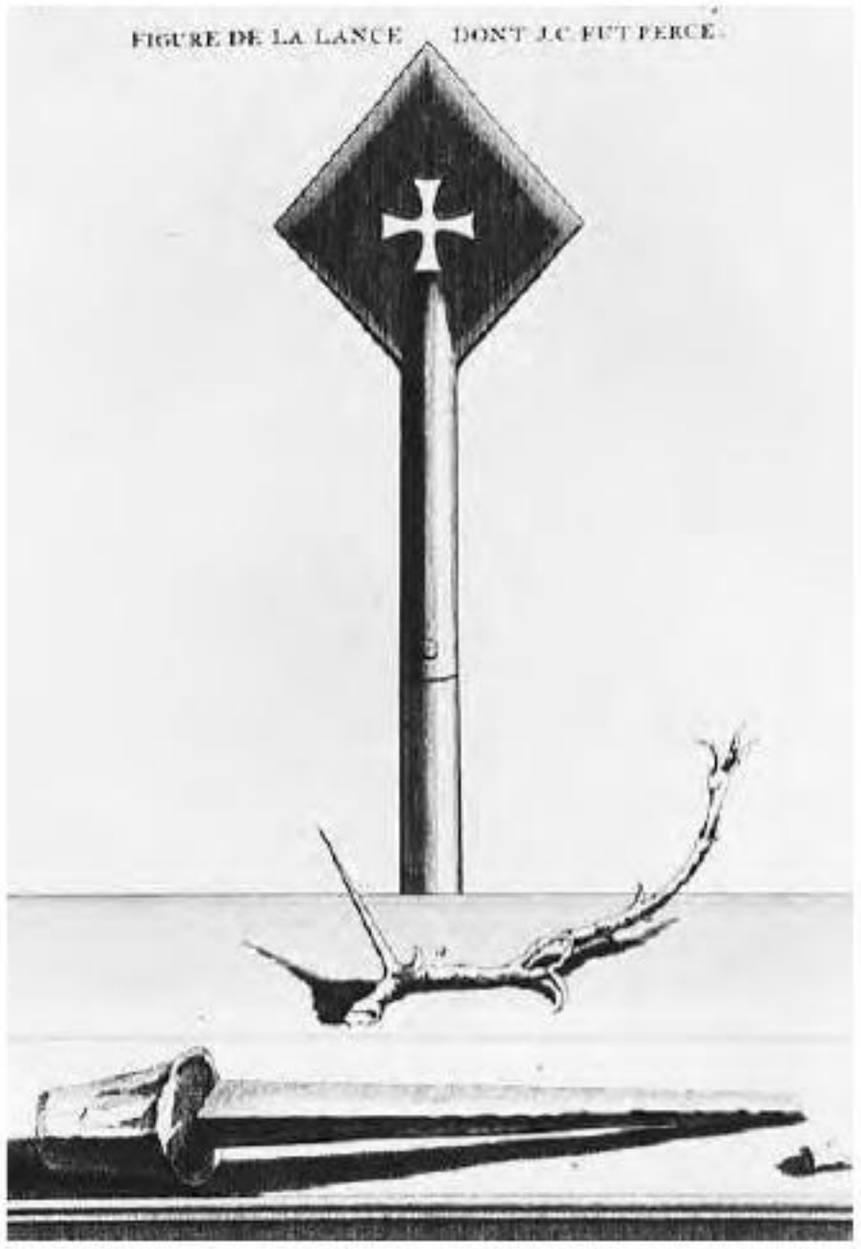
THE SPEAR OF DESTINY

The Spear of Destiny, also known as the Holy Lance, is in Christian tradition the spear that the Roman soldier Longinus thrust into the side of Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) as he hung on the cross. ("Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side and forthwith came out blood and water" [John 19: 32–34 KJV]). Christian knights discovered the Holy Lance at Antioch during the First Crusade in 1098. The sight of the sacred artifact in the Church of St. Peter so inspired the beleaguered Christian soldiers that they rallied and routed the Saracens from the city. From that time forth, according to legend, whoever claims the spear and solves its secret holds the destiny of the world in his hands for good or evil.

Although there are a number of relics in various European churches that claim to be the genuine Holy Lance, the spear that is on display in the Weltliches Schatzkammer Museum (the Hapsburg Treasure House Museum) in Vienna has been considered the most authentic and it has found a home there for 250 years. It is also known as Constantine's Lance, and it was employed as a symbol of the imperial power of Holy Roman emperors at the time of their coronation in much a similar manner as the orb and scepter are used in the coronation of the monarchs of Great Britain. According to Trevor Ravenscroft in *The Spear of Destiny* (1997), a 19-year-old Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) was first led to the lance in 1908 and from the moment of his first encounter with it in the museum, it became "the central pivot" in his life and the "very source of his ambitions to conquer the world." In addition to Constantine (d. 337), Hitler found that as many as 45 emperors had owned the lance before the great Charlemagne (742–814) had possessed it. Frederick the Great of Germany (1194–1250), who founded the Teutonic Knights on which Hitler allegedly based his SS, had also been an owner of the Spear of Destiny at one time. Ravenscroft claimed in his book that Hitler would often visit the museum, stare at the Holy Lance, and enter into a **trance state** in which he would view his future glory as the master of the Third Reich.



The spear of Longinus with Templar cross. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Thirty years later, on March 14, 1938, Hitler arrived in Vienna to oversee the annexation of Austria. He also observed the transfer of the Hapsburg Crown Jewel collection, which included the Holy Lance, from Vienna to Nuremberg, the Nazis' favorite city. With the Spear of Destiny now safely ensconced in Germany, Hitler declared that the war could begin in earnest. The lance would be well protected in the hall of St. Katherine's Church, where it had once rested for nearly 400 years.

However, later in the war when Allied bombers damaged a portion of St. Katherine's, the many treasures looted by the Nazis and stored there were taken to another hiding place. In the chaos and confusion, the Holy Lance was inadvertently left behind.

The Spear of Destiny fell into the hands of U.S. soldiers on April 30, 1945. A few hours after the Holy Lance passed from Nazi possession on to its next claimant to world power, Adolf Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker. Later, the United States officially returned the Holy Lance to Austria, along

with the other treasures that the Nazis had stolen. Today, the Spear of Destiny stands again in the Hapsburg Treasure House Museum in Vienna.

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SWASTIKAS

The swastika has an evil association in the twentieth century, but it has a long, rich positive history, for the meaning of the word *svastika* in Sanskrit means "good fortune" or "well-being." Swastikas were the symbol of the supreme God in ancient, southeast Asia and were used by Native Americans as a sign for good luck. Swastikas appear among artifacts of ancient Rome and Greece. Buddha's (c. 563–c. 483 B.C.E.) footprints were said to leave impressions in the shape of swastikas. To Central Americans long before contact with Europeans, the swastika represented good luck, long life, and prosperity. The symbol appears on Navajo blankets and on ancient Chinese coins.

THE earliest known swastikas date from 2500 or 3000 B.C.E. in India and Central Asia.

Helene Petrovna Blavatsky, founder of the **Theosophical Society,** included the swastika in the seal of the society. Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) combined the symbol in a circle with his signature to form his personal logo. Coca-Cola once issued a swastika pendant for patrons of its soft drink. The Girls' Club published a magazine entitled *The Swastika;* and until 1940, just before the United States entered World War II, the Boy Scouts awarded a swastika badge.

The earliest known swastikas date from 2500 or 3000 B.C.E. in India and Central Asia. It was the German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, who, during his excavation of Homer's Troy on the shores of the Dardanelles (1871–75), presumed that the swastikas he found on certain artifacts were somehow linked to religious symbols of his ancestors.

By 1914, the Wandervogel, a militarist anti-Semitic German youth group, began using a curved swastika on a cross as its insignia. In 1920, a dentist named Friedrich Krohn, a member of the Nazi Party, designed the official symbol of the party, the flag with a black swastika in its center. Adolf Hitler's (1889–1945) contribution to the insignia was to reverse the direction of the swastika so it appeared to spin clockwise. From that time onward, a once great symbol of good fortune became the most potent icon of racial hatred and violence the world has ever known.

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

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, inviting God's presence, at the beginning of a ceremony or meeting. In black magic, can be the casting of a spell or formula to invite an evil spirit to appear.

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.

sarcophagus From the Greek *sarx* meaning "flesh," and Greek *sarkophogos*, 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.

Chapter Exploration

Angkor Wat

Mt. Ararat

Atlantis

Avalon

The Bermuda Triangle

Chartres

Cursuses and Leys

El Dorado

Easter Island

Glastonbury

Hollow Earth

Jerusalem

Karnak

Lemuria and Mu

Lourdes

Machu Picchu

Mayan Temples

Mecca

The Nazca Lines

The Great Pyramid (of Kfhufu), at Giza

Sphinx

Stonehenge

Taos Pueblo

Tiahuanaco

Chapter 9
Places of Mystery and Power

This chapter visits many sites sacred to world religions, examines the theories of lost civilizations, and evaluates places that harbor ancient mysteries—both legendary and real.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout their history of cultural and religious development, humans have always discovered or created places that are special to them—sites where they might gather to participate in social rituals or where they might retreat for solitude and reflection. In such places, many people claim to experience a sense of the sublime, something larger than life. Others, while in a solemn place of worship or in a beautiful natural setting, attest to feeling a special energy that raises their consciousness and perhaps even heals their physical body.

Mysterious megaliths (from the Greek: "mega" means large, "lithos" means stones) are those placed at a site by ancient people who left no records explaining how they managed to lift and transport stones weighing several tons. Such sites include the standing stones of Brittany, the Bighorn Medicine Wheel in Wyoming, the monoliths of Zimbabwe, 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 the larger world, and the meaning of the megaliths remains unexplained.

The most popularly known megalithic structures are probably Stonehenge in Great Britain and the complex of pyramids and the Great Sphinx in Egypt. Like many ancient megalithic structures, those sites have been examined, written about, mythologized, and speculated upon for centuries, yet they still continue to conceal old secrets and occasionally yield surprising information that forces new historical interpretations of past societies.

Rising up on a plateau called Giza, 10 miles west of present-day Cairo, Egypt, the Great Pyramid, its two companion pyramids, and the Sphinx are probably the world's oldest and best-known enigmas. Among the mysteries of the pyramids are the questions of where the immense amount of rock forming them (11 million cubic yards of stone for the Great Pyramid alone) was quarried, and how it was moved and then erected into an astonishingly precise structure. Academic debates are ongoing concerning what surveying methods and equipment were used to ensure that the landscape was level and that measurements were accurate. Many researchers argue about the number of workers needed for such an undertaking and wonder how such an army of laborers could be mobilized, housed, and fed.

Other mysteries surrounding the pyramids are the contentions that the structures are situated at cardinal points on the compass, and their numerous astronomical uses show knowledge of mathematics in advance of other civilizations. In addition, the body of the pharaoh Khufu (Cheops) for whom the tomb was built, and precious objects that usually surround the bodies of royalty in Egyptian tombs, have never been found. In fact, all three of the pyramids at Giza were allegedly erected as tombs, yet not a single body has been found in any of them.

Other places have become mysterious sites because things have happened there that are impossible to document fully, yet physical evidence remains that promotes further speculation. The claimed miraculous healings at Lourdes, the accounts of spiritual illumination at Jerusalem and Mecca, and the sacred visions at Taos provide testimonies of faith and wonder that must be assessed by each individual.

This chapter also deals with accounts of vanished civilizations—places where ruins are found that offer mute evidence to the majesty and glory of prior cultures. No one can dispute the evidence of the Mayan temples, the splendor of Tiahuanaco, the mystique of Angkor Wat, but scholars fiercely debate the intricacies of the purpose of certain of these structures and the lifestyles of their inhabitants. Uncertainty also persists about why so many of these ancient peoples suddenly chose to abandon settlements that they labored so hard—sometimes for centuries—to build. The Mayans of Mexico and Central America left behind immense structures that were eventually overrun by the surrounding rainforest. In present-day Bolivia, the amazing structures of Tiahuanaco were constructed and abandoned before the great Inca dynasty conquered the area in the fifteenth century. The Great Houses of the Anasazi in the southwestern area of

the present-day United States were left behind more than five centuries before they were seen by the first white settlers.

Some sites acquire a reputation for being eerie because of their appearance or because of events that are alleged or rumored to have happened there. The Nazca Lines of Peru and various so-called "spirit pathways" are cloaked in mystery as to their actual purpose as places of worship, initiation, or contact with alien beings. Lines where spirits or natural energies pass have been traced in Great Britain (where they are called Ley lines) and Germany (where they are called holy lines). Based on the idea that earlier civilizations were more attuned to mysterious Earth energies and built their sites along those lines, proponents of leys attempt to recreate those lines by tracing alignments of ancient sites. Many ancient structures were erected with consideration for the surrounding landscape and adjacent structures. In that sense, the community erecting the structure viewed the area as a sacred landscape. The landscapes were integral to rites performed there.

More than 2,500 years ago, a legend first began to spread about an ideal society of the past 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. Called Atlantis, 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 evidence of Atlantis has been found, but its attributes have expanded to include engineering and technological feats that enhance its legendary status in the popular imagination. Atlanteans are commonly thought by enthusiasts to have had cosmic connections with extraterrestrial life.

The truth behind such alleged places of mystery and power as the Bermuda Triangle, an area off the coast of Florida where ships and aircraft are said to vanish without a trace; El Dorado, the city of gold which drove the Spanish conquistadors on endless fruitless searches; and Avalon, the mystical place where the legendary King Arthur was taken after receiving mortal wounds in battle are also examined. Although the stories of Camelot, Arthur, and the Knights of the Round Table are only myths, there are actual sites on which Avalon may well have been based. Some sources suggest that Avalon lies off the coast of Great Britain or is possibly the island of Greenland. Others have considered Arran, an island off the coast of Scotland, as a possible model for Avalon.

Sometimes legends really do come to life. The Lost City of Willkapanpa the Old, a principal 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. The ridge overlooks a sacred river and valley called Urubamba. The most accepted view of Machu Picchu is that it was a religious sanctuary that served high priests and "virgins of the sun" (Incas worshipped the sun). Even though many mysteries abound about Machu Picchu, many researchers have been inspired to call it "the eighth wonder of the ancient world."

Everyone has his or her own special and private place of mystery, power, and wonder. This chapter shall explore those sites—both sacred and secular—that have fascinated and inspired men and women for thousands of years.

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Angkor Wat is the main temple in northern Cambodia. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

ANGKOR WAT

Angkor Wat, in present-day Cambodia, formed part of the capital of the Khmer Empire from 802 until 1295, and is probably the largest religious monument ever constructed. Built over a 30-year period with sandstone and laterite (a dense, porous, iron-bearing soil that can be quarried like stone), the rectangular structure (2,800 by 3,800 feet) faces west, in Hindu belief the direction taken by the dead when going to their next life.

At the center of the complex stands a temple with five lotus-shaped towers, a larger central tower, and four smaller surrounding towers. They represent the five peaks of Mount Meru, the mountain where a pantheon of Hindu gods reside and from which, according to Hindu belief, all creation comes. Three square terraces surrounds the central tower. The entire complex is surrounded by a moat more than three miles long and rimmed by a causeway that leads to four gateways into the temple complex. Decorating the causeway are carvings that depict divine serpents, known as nagas.

Angkor Wat was taken by the Cham army from northern Cambodia in 1177, after which the complex began to fall into ruin. It was reclaimed, but not inhabited, in 1181. Pillaged by Thai invaders in the fifteenth century, the ruins were somewhat refurbished and expanded by later rulers of Cambodia. Angkor Wat was intermittently inhabited by Buddhist monks, and the former Hindu temple subsequently became a destination for Buddhist pilgrims from all over the world.

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MT. ARARAT

According to Genesis 8:4, after seven months and 17 days afloat in the ark upon the waters of the great deluge that destroyed all life on Earth, Noah, his family, and his massive living cargo of livestock came to rest upon the mountains of

THE SACRED CITY OF ALLAHABAD

Each year since the eighth century, Hindu pilgrims have traveled to one of the four sacred cities—Hardvar, Prayag, Ujjain, and Nasik—each located on a different sacred river—to seek forgiveness of sins as they bathe in the holy waters. According to Hindu mythology, the four cities became consecrated by the four drops of the nectar of immortality that fell upon them from the vessel that the gods used to carry the elixir of life away to heaven.

The ancient city of Prayag, now known as Allahabad, is a city of about 900,000 located on the Ganges River in southeast Uttar Pradesh in North India. Allahabad is called the Titharaja, "King of Tithras" (King of the Holy Cities), for it is located where three sacred rivers meet—the Ganges, the Yamuna, and the mythical Sarasvati, known as Sangam. (The Sarasvati, according to tradition, flowed from the Himalayas before it transferred its magical powers to the Ganges and disappeared into the north Indian desert.) The very act of bathing at the confluence (the Triveni) is believed to bestow a triple blessing upon the Hindu pilgrim.

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Ararat, near the headwaters of the Euphrates River in what is today eastern Turkey. So prevalent is the belief that Noah's Ark can be located on the slope of the tallest mountain in Turkey, Agri Dagi (Mt. Ararat), that some travel agencies include participation in expeditions to search for the ark as part of tour packages to Turkey. Two thousand years earlier, in the first century B.C.E., native Armenians of the region routinely declared that remnants of the ark could still be seen. The same declaration was made in the thirteenth century, as recorded in the notes of adventurer Marco Polo (1254–1324). Armenians told him of the ark as he crossed through the region during travels that took him as far east as China from his native Venice, Italy. Several claims of sightings of the ark in the twentieth century make it a modern-day mystery as well.

The rugged environment of the area that includes Mt. Ararat makes it difficult to sustain an expedition. Six to eight weeks of favorable weather are the most searchers can hope for as they try to maneuver along the treacherous paths of the 16,000-foot high mountain, where glaciers and deep pockets of snow have little time to begin thawing before the return of cold weather.

Even if the ark can be located on Mt. Ararat, the elements work against being able to reach it and excavate around it. Several years of drought might be needed to melt snow and lower water levels in areas where the ark is most often thought to rest. Meanwhile, some ark researchers believe the vessel landed further east, and others claim the ark came to rest in present-day Ethiopia. Others doubt whether the ark ever existed.

Mt. Ararat, Turkey. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

According to the Bible (Genesis, 6–10), God had become angered at the wickedness of humans and was determined "to end all flesh." He called on Noah, whom God deemed a just man, and told him to build a large barge with three interior decks. The barge was to be constructed of wood and sealed with bitumen. Its length was to be 300 cubits (about 450 feet), its width 50 cubits (about 75 feet), and its height 30 cubits (about 45 feet). The ark would be able to survive the deluge through which God would wipe out life.

In the first century B.C.E., native Armenians declared that remnants of Noah's Ark could still be seen.

The ark held Noah's family—his wife, their three sons, and the sons' wives—and at least two animals from every species to populate the earth again. All the food needed for their survival was provided for them. The ark and its inhabitants survived the deluge by sailing on the floodwaters, and all aboard returned to the land to repopulate the earth after the rain stopped and the water receded. What happened to the ark after it came to rest and all those aboard disembarked safely is not mentioned in the Bible.

Questions persist about where the ark finally landed. The Bible cites the mountains of Ararat, which could designate a region (then known as Armenia) or a specific mountain peak. Some biblical scholars locate it in Kurdistan, an area that encompasses Mt. Ararat and parts of present-day Turkey and Iran. The Babylonian account of the Deluge in the Epic of Gilgamesh names Mt. Nisir in that region. After the ark came to rest, according to the Gilgamesh epic, pilgrims would scrape off bitumen (a sealant against water) and make charms of it to guard against witchcraft.

Most evidence and sightings are based on locations on Mt. Ararat. As the Christian religion spread in the first century, the Christians of Apamea, in Phrygia, built the monastery of the ark, where a feast was celebrated annually to commemorate Noah's disembarking. Marco Polo, in journals of his journey to China in 1271, wrote, "In the heart of Greater Armenia is a high mountain, shaped like a cube (or cup), on which Noah's ark is said to have rested, whence it is called the Mountain of Noah's Ark." Identifying the place as Mt. Ararat, Marco Polo wrote, "On the summit the snow lies so deep all the year round that no one can ever climb it; this snow never entirely melts, but new snow is for ever falling on the old, so that the level rises."

Several ark sightings on Mt. Ararat occurred during the twentieth century, though none of them have been documented well enough to satisfy skeptics. During a thaw in the summer of 1916, according to one account, a Russian Imperial Air Force lieutenant noticed a half-frozen lake in a gully on the side of Mt. Ararat. World War I was raging and the Russian pilot was flying high-altitude tests to observe Turkish troop movements. Flying nearer to the lake, he saw half the hull of some sort of ship poking out above the lake surface. He reported it to his captain. The captain was flown over the site. Believing it was Noah's Ark, preserved because it was encased in ice most of the year, the captain sent a report to the Russian tsar at St. Petersburg. The tsar sent two corps of engineers up the mountain. It was nearly a month before the ark was reached.

Measurements by the engineers were allegedly taken and drawings and photographs were made, but none of those were ever officially documented. According to accounts, the photographs and reports were sent by courier to the attention of the tsar, but Nicholas II (1868–1918) apparently never

received them. The Russian Revolution was underway in 1917, and the results of the investigation were never reported publicly.

According to another story, the Turkish Air Force in 1959 conducted an aerial survey of the Ararat region. A photograph revealed the outline of a ship on one of the lower slopes of Mt. Ararat (just over 6,000 feet). The ship's dimensions were similar, though somewhat larger, than those of the ark. Another alleged aerial sighting was made in 1960. A Turkish army pilot and a liaison officer reported seeing evidence of an enormous, rectangular barge on the southeast slope at about 13,000 feet altitude.

A photograph taken in 1972 by the Earth Research Technical Satellite (ERTS) revealed an unusual feature at 14,000 feet on Mt. Ararat. It was reported to be the same size as the ark. The existence of the photograph is disputed, however. Even if it does exist in the files of a U.S. government agency, it has apparently been given no special designation to accommodate search requests: a request for "satellite image of ark," for example, brings the reply, "no responsive records."

In the 1980s, former NASA astronaut James Irwin participated in expeditions up the mountain, bringing much publicity to the search for the ark. He found only the remnants of abandoned skis. With the breakup of the former Soviet Union, expeditions up the mountain intensified during the 1990s. Previously, expeditions were considered a security threat by the Soviet government because the region bordered the former Soviet Union.

The search for Noah's Ark continues, as do questions concerning how best to understand the story of Noah and the ark: should the Bible's description of the ark, the extent of the deluge, and the capability of lodging every species of animal and bird be taken literally, or is the message most important? The deluge occurred, according to the Bible, because God had become disgusted with the wickedness of humankind. Those searching for the ark with the hope of making great profits probably missed that most enduring legacy of the story, a moral that persists regardless of whether or not physical remnants of the ark have been, or can be, found.

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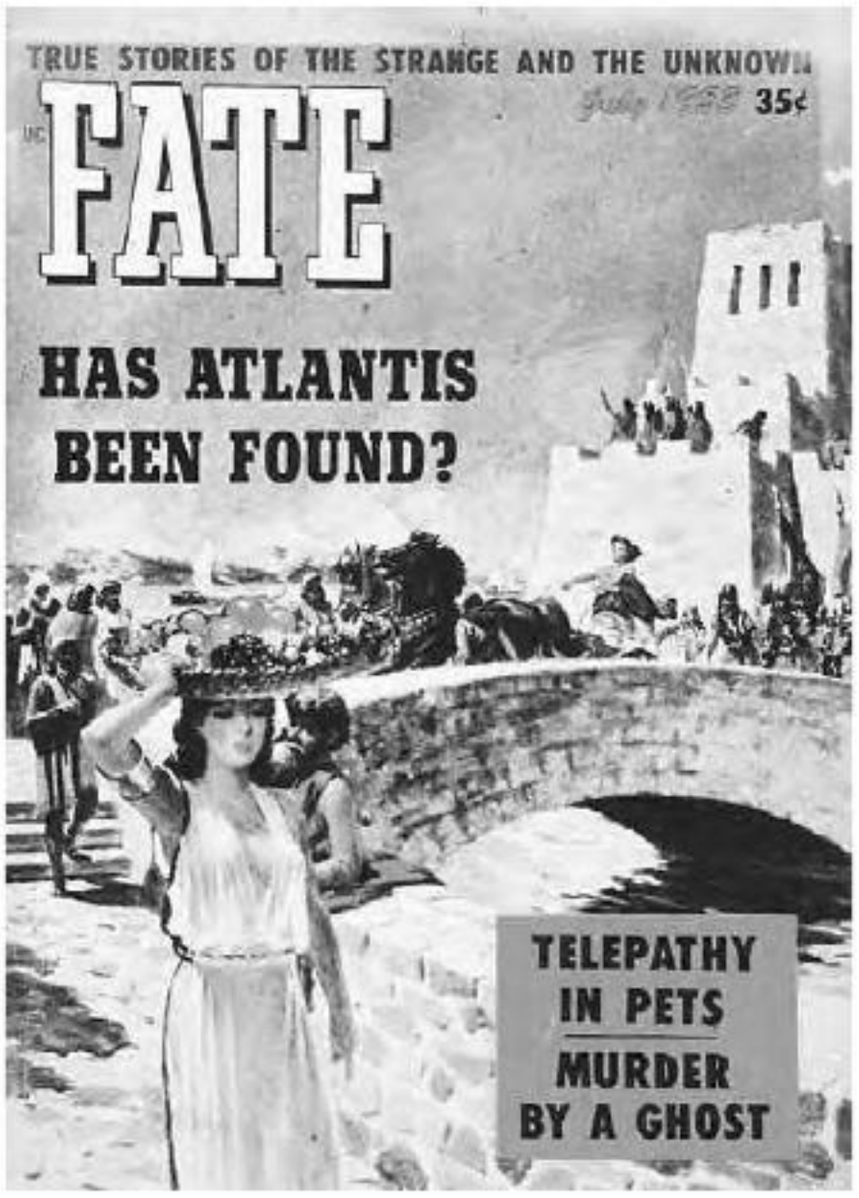
ATLANTIS

More than 2,500 years ago, a legend first began to spread about a society of the past 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. Called Atlantis, it was described as a continent-sized area with rich soil, plentiful pure water, abundant vegetation and animals, natural hot springs for health and vigor, and such mineral wealth that gold was inlaid in buildings and was among the precious metals and stones worn as jewelry. Slaves performed manual labor, allowing a large elite to pursue knowledge, enjoy sporting events, and continually improve upon an already thriving society.

THE idea of Atlantis was first expressed in the works of Plato.

In the ensuing centuries, no conclusive evidence of Atlantis has been found, but its attributes have expanded to include additional engineering and technological feats that enhance its legendary status in the popular imagination. In 1882, Ignatius Donnelly (1832–1901) published *Atlantis: The Antediluvian World*, arguing that all civilization is an inheritance from Atlantis. Listing numerous parallels between ancient cultures spaced far away from each other, Donnelly argued that their commonness resulted from contact with Atlanteans.



Fate magazine and its feature article on Atlantis. (LLEWELLYN PUBLICATIONS/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Similarities do indeed exist among various ancient cultures, as do significant differences. Flood myths and sun worship, for example, might be based on a shared teaching, or they might be separate reactions to beneficient and destructive elements of nature. Pyramids were built in Egypt and the Americas, but they are also significantly different in their structures. The walls of pyramids in the Americas did not converge to form a true point, as they did in Egypt; rather, the walls reached a certain level upon which a platform was built and often a temple erected. If Atlantis did indeed fall somewhere between 8500 and 9500 B.C.E., what accounts for the long time lag until the pyramids were erected in Egypt (generally dated around 2500 B.C.E.) and North America (generally dated after 200 C.E.)?

Since the 1800s, Atlanteans have been credited for having had the technology to generate electricity, build flying machines, and harness nuclear power for energy and warfare—all developed more than 9,000 years before such things came into being in modern society. Other claims have Atlanteans knowledgeable about a formidable death ray, secrets for levitation, and pure forms of energy through crystals. Many Atlantis enthusiasts firmly believe that the inhabitants of the lost continent had cosmic connections with extraterrestrials and may actually have been a colony established on Earth by alien explorers.

Since Atlantis was first described, claims have been made that certain members of the civilization escaped destruction during its catastrophic final days and managed to impart their knowledge to other peoples of the world, helping civilize primitive societies, passing on the secret of written language, and supervising construction of some of the world's most mysterious structures of the ancient world. The pyramids of Egypt and the Americas, the Sphinx in Egypt, and the megaliths of western Europe are among the structures attributed to the genius of Atlanteans.

According to most accounts, Atlantis was suddenly destroyed by a cataclysm of earthquakes and floods and swallowed up by the sea. No definitive remnants have ever been found, and the exact location of the "lost continent" remains debatable. The idea of Atlantis was first expressed in the works of Plato (c. 428–348 or 347 B.C.E.), the Greek philosopher, who stressed that a perfect world exists in Ideas. For example, a shoe, according to Plato, exists as an idea before a craftsperson makes the material object identified as a shoe. The material world, then, is a reflection of ideas, never quite reaching the perfection of ideas, but which serve as models for which the adepts might strive.

While Plato used the model of Atlantis to represent a world of perfect order in contrast to all that was imperfect in the world around him, he labeled the story of Atlantis "literally true"—a significant declaration. For Plato was suspicious of fiction and art. If ideas are the primary reality, and the material world is a reflection of ideas, then art, as a reflection of the material world, is twice removed from reality, according to Plato. His claim that the Atlantis story is literally true helps sustain the continuing legend of Atlantis. It remains a legend, or an Idea, however, until some material proof shows that Atlantis existed in the material world. Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), another of the great Greek philosophers, viewed the Atlantis legend as fiction.

Plato's writings comprise several letters and 25 dialogues. His views and those of his mentor, Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.E.), were presented as dramatic conversations exploring such topics as truth, the origin of the world and its composition, the purpose of humankind, and what an individual should choose as an aim of life. Atlantis is discussed in two of Plato's dialogues, *Timaeus* and *Critias*. *Timaeus* provides a description of the island continent and how Atlanteans conquered all the known world except for the Athenians (Plato was an Athenian). *Critias*, named after the primary speaker in the dialogue, Plato's great-grandfather, presents a history of Atlantean civilization and describes the ideal society that flourished there. Critias notes that the stories were originally passed on by an ancestor, Solon (638–558 B.C.E.), a politician and poet who traveled widely. Critias and Solon were both ancestors of Plato.

Solon, as the story goes, was informed by Egyptian priests in the city of Sais, located in the Nile delta, that there was once a land even older in history than Egypt, which the Greeks acknowledged as being centuries older than their own society. The priests described a large island continent called Atlantis that prospered some 8,000 years earlier, which dates Atlantis before 8500 B.C.E. The continent was located beyond "the Pillars of Hercules," the Greek term for the rocks that form the Straits of Gibraltar, the westernmost point of the Mediterranean Ocean. Beyond the straits is the Atlantic Ocean.

Nineteenth-century map of Atlantis. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

There were several cities on the continent. The primary city, also called Atlantis, was located in the center of a series of concentric rings that alternated between rings of water and land. The water rings served as canals for trade and helped form a series of natural defenses that made an invasion of Atlantis extremely difficult.

The city of Atlantis, in the innermost circle, had palaces and temples where wise and powerful rulers lived. The ruling coalition descended from Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea. Poseidon and Clieto had five sets of twin sons, according to Greek mythology, each of which was given a region of Atlantis. Atlas, the firstborn son, was given the largest province, which became the city of Atlantis, a name that derives from Atlas. The finest structure on the island, the Temple of Poseidon, honored the god and served as the home of the primary ruler.

Atlantis had a powerful army of professional soldiers, as did each of the other nine regions of the continent. The culture of Atlantis promoted learning, through which advances in engineering and science made the land bountiful, beautiful, and powerful. In addition to magnificent architectural structures, a network of bridges and tunnels linked the rings of land, and clever uses of natural

Floorbed of Atlantis. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

resources provided security and abundance. Many groves provided solitude and beauty, racetracks were used for athletic competitions, and irrigation systems ensured great harvests.

In Plato's account, the people of Atlantis eventually became corrupt and greedy, putting selfish pursuits above the greater good. They began invading other lands with the idea of world domination. Angered by these developments, Poseidon set about destroying the civilization, battering the continent with earthquakes and floods until Atlantis was swallowed up by the ocean.

That description of the destruction of Atlantis has been linked by some to other cataclysmic events—stories of a great deluge in the Bible, the Epic of Gilgamesh, and flood myths in other societies. Some contend that the end of the Ice Age between 12,000 and 10,000 B.C.E. likely resulted in rises of water levels in various parts of the world and that earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and climate changes, either incidental or associated with the Ice Age, occurred during the time identified with the destruction of Atlantis.

The location of Atlantis has been claimed on each of the seven continents, and in several spots in the world's oceans and seas. Additionally, many of the ancient world's wonders have been attributed to Atlanteans who, presumably, escaped the destruction of their homeland and spread their advanced engineering skills elsewhere.

The text of Plato's dialogue suggests the Atlantic Ocean "beyond the pillars of Hercules" as the location of Atlantis. As late as the twentieth century, a belief persisted that a landbridge once existed in the ocean and ran between Europe and Africa and North and South America. Such a land-link concept helps explain similarities in flora and fauna existing on continents spread thousands of miles apart. The mid-Atlantic ridge, a series of undersea mountains, has been presented as a remnant of the land bridge, or as the remains of Atlantis.

Jacques Collina-Girard of the University of the Mediterranean in Aix-en-Provence had been studying patterns of human migration from Europe into North Africa at the height of the last Ice Age, 19,000 years ago, when his reconstruction of the area revealed an ancient archipelago with an island at the spot where Plato wrote Atlantis existed. The island was named Spartel, and it lay in front of the Pillars of Hercules to the west of the Strait of Gibraltar at a time when the sea level was 130 meters lower than it is today. According to Collina-Girard (*New Scientist*, September 2001), the slow rise of post-glacial sea levels would gradually have engulfed the island and the archipelago 9,000 years before Plato.

While the concept of an island being swallowed by the sea in the area before the Pillars of Hercules seems a viable theory, there is as yet no evidence discovered to prove that a continent existed in the mid-Atlantic Ocean. The shallow waters around the northwest coast of Africa and extending to the Canary Islands is an area that may have been above the ocean at one time and has been suggested as a location for Atlantis, but no physical remains of human habitation have been located there.

Alan F. Alford, a leading authority on ancient mythology, spent five years investigating Plato's account of Atlantis, and, in December 2001, announced his conclusion that the myth of the lost continent took place only in Plato's mind. In Alford's theory, the Greek philosopher invented Atlantis as a metaphor for the ancient version of the contemporary "Big Bang Theory." Atlantis, as a symbol for a lost paradise, represented a kind of cataclysm of all cataclysms that brought about the beginning of all time.

The discouraging theories of the skeptical do little to diminish the enthusiasm of those who earnestly believe in the physical reality of Atlantis. The Atlantic Ocean location for the lost continent received renewed attention in the late 1960s, specifically the region near Bimini Island in the Bahamas, an island chain off the coast of the United States. Fueling the excitement over what appeared to be discoveries of actual roadways, walls, and buildings under the water was the fact that they were found in the exact location and at the same point in time as prophesied by **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945), a psychic, whose "life readings" for clients revealed that many of their presentlife psychological traumas were being caused by a terrible incident that the sufferer had experienced in a past life. Many of the presentlife traumas of his clients, according to Cayce, were due to the sufferings they had experienced as people who lived in Atlantis in a previous life.

Cayce helped popularize a modernized view of Atlantis as a superior civilization that had developed planes, submarines, x-ray, antigravity devices, crystals that harness energy from the sun, and powerful explosives. He theorized that an explosion in 50,000 B.C.E. blew Atlantis up into five islands; another occurred in 28,000 B.C.E.; and the third, the one described by Plato, occurred around 10,000 B.C.E. Cayce claimed that he had been an Atlantean priest from around 10,500 B.C.E. who had foreseen the coming destruction and sent some of his followers to Egypt. Those followers directed the building of the Sphinx and the pyramids.

In 1940 Cayce predicted that remnants of Atlantis would rise again near the Bahamas in the late 1960s. In 1967, two pilots photographed a rectangular structure in the ocean off the coast of Andros, the largest island of the Bahamas. Another configuration of stone, in the shape of a "J," was found by divers off the island of Bimini. The J-shaped formation was believed to be a road of stone. Extensive diving expeditions became common in the area, and some divers claimed to have seen remnants of temples, pillars, and pyramids. However, none were documented by extensive excavations.

The J-shaped structure became popularly known as the Bimini Road and was a cause of celebration among enthusiasts of Atlantis and Cayce. Geological tests, however, show that the J shape is actually a limestone beachrock. Fractures in the formation give it the appearance of a construction of blocks, but the entire formation shows the same grains and microstructure—a quality difficult to replicate in a series of blocks. Radiocarbon testing of shells in the stone show that the formation is relatively young—about two or three thousand years old, some 9,000 years younger than the alleged final destruction of Atlantis. Finally, the curve of the J parallels the beachline of the nearby island, showing it has been shaped by the same currents affecting the island.

The rectangular structure off the coast of Andros, on the other hand, was indeed manmade—it was a storage facility built in the 1930s where sponges could be deposited after they were collected in the surrounding ocean. Despite these explanations, enthusiasm over the Bahama site continues among believers.

Another theory suggests that Antarctica was once located in the mid-Atlantic and had a more temperate climate where a civilization once thrived. Antarctica, thus, has been claimed as the site of Atlantis and of a similar type of advanced civilization.

The question of where Atlantis was located still persists. Among the many possible sites for Atlantis on the seven continents or under the seas, two popular locations are based on areas that, like Atlantic Ocean regions "beyond the pillars of Hercules," can be related to Plato's time. One site is the island of Crete, where the thriving Minoan civilization fell into disarray around 1400 B.C.E. The other site is in present-day Turkey, known in ancient times as Anatolia, where associations with Atlas and his descendants were strong.

Little was known about Minoan culture before the discovery in 1900 of a great palace at Knossos on the island of Crete by the British archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans (1851–1941). He named the culture that created Knossos and thrived on Crete "Minoan civilization" after Minos, the legendary king of Crete. The palace at Knossos was probably

damaged by an earthquake about 1700 B.C.E., a date that marked the end of one phase of the early history of Crete. Minoan civilization had regular contact and trade with ancient Egypt, which lies southeast, across the Mediterranean, from Crete. Crete, then, qualifies as a land far to the west (in those days) of Egypt where Atlantis was said to be by the Egyptian priests who spoke of the continent to Solon.

Archaeological excavations early in the twentieth century unearthed remarkable artifacts of Minoan civilization. Then, in 1939, Greek archaeologist Sypridon Marinatos (1901–1974) discovered pumice, volcanic ash, on Crete. Marinatos connected the ash to the tremendous eruption of a volcano on Thera, a nearby island. The eruption was reported in ancient histories. The explosion would have created havoc on Crete and perhaps a tidal wave that swept over the island. To illustrate that possibility, Marinatos likened the Thera explosion to the 1886 eruption of Mt. Krakatoa that could be heard a thousand miles away and created tidal waves that killed 36,000 people. The volcanic ash on Crete helped preserve excellent artifacts of Minoan civilization, including whole streets and houses as well as frescoes and pottery.

However, while Plato's text cites earthquakes and floods as having destroyed Atlantis, there is no mention of a volcano. The date of the Thera volcano, around 1500 B.C.E., does not match the period of the downfall of Atlantis, which Egyptian priests told Solon had occurred 8,000 to 9,000 years earlier. The 1500 B.C.E. date does coincide if the claim of 8,000 years is reduced to 800 years. That tactic was suggested by Greek geologist Angelo Gelanpoulous in 1969: he theorized that all dates and measurements related by Solon were exaggerated and were actually one-tenth as large as claimed. Gelanpoulous' theory provided some neat correlations, but they work only in a few circumstances.

Another problem with identifying the fall of Atlantis with the destruction of Minoan civilization is an inexact correlation between the eruption of Thera and the demise of ancient Crete, where Minoan civilization continued on for another century after the volcanic eruption. In fact, during twentieth-century excavations, some volcanic ash was found beneath an elaborate palace, showing that construction soon continued after the eruption. Furthermore, there was no apparent disruption in trade between the Minoans and Egyptians. The volcanic eruption caused havoc on Crete, but it did not destroy Minoan civilization.

The kings of Knossos attained their greatest power about 1600 B.C.E., when they controlled the entire Agean area and traded extensively with Egypt. The subsequent destruction of Knossos and the collapse of Minoan culture coincided with the beginning of the most flourishing period of Mycenae civilization in Greece; this coincidence suggests that it may have been the warlike Mycenae who attacked and destroyed Minoan civilization.

Lydia, an ancient country of Asia Minor (now Turkey), was located in the valleys of the Hermus and Cayster rivers (now the Gediz and Büyükmenderes rivers). Known earlier by the name Maeonia, it had fertile soil, rich deposits of gold and silver, and a magnificent capital, Sardis. Lydia prospered as a powerful dynasty beginning about 685 B.C.E. During the sixth century B.C.E., Lydia attained its greatest splendor under the rule of King Croessus. The empire ended when the Persian ruler Cyrus the Great (c. 585–c. 529 B.C.E.) captured Sardis about 546 B.C.E. After the defeat of Persia by Alexander III (c. 356–323 B.C.E.), king of Macedonia, Lydia was brought under Greco-Macedonian control, and then in 133 B.C.E. it became part of the Roman province of Asia.

Lydia was across the Agean Sea from Greece. A legendary king of Lydia was named Tantalis: his name sounds similar to Atlantis, and he shared many mythic attributes among Lydians that the god Atlas had among Greeks. Like Atlas, Tantalis was a leader of the Titans, the group of gods who were overthrown by Zeus. In Greek mythology, Zeus punished Atlas by banishing him to the west and made to hold up the sky. A similar fate was shared by Tantalis in myths of Anatolia (an old name for the region in Asia Minor that includes Turkey).

According to that myth, Tantalis ruled over a fabulously wealthy city he founded on Mt.

Sipylus in Lydia. His city was shattered by earthquake and flood and was reputed to have sunk when he lost the favor of the Olympian gods.

During the 1990s ruins were found on the northern slope of Mt. Sipylus. The area had undergone several phases of change through the centuries. Among the ruins was a statue of the goddess Cybele that was dated around 1400 B.C.E., a time when the Hittite rule over the area was overthrown by locals affiliated with the Mycenae civilization of Greece. The area of Tantalis had been conquered, and perhaps razed. Or, it subsequently was buried during an earthquake, and eventually submerged by a lake. The area is in a major fault zone, and heavy earthquake damage to the cities of Lydia was documented in 17 C.E. Among the hardest hit of twelve ancient Lydian cities was Magnesia at Sipylus, in the region where Tantalis was located.

Lake Saloe in Turkey has long been identified with the lost city of Tantalis. The lake was pumped out in modern times to provide more land for farming. It is now a fertile plain with nearby rivers. An old caravan route was found, certainly not a remnant of a mighty empire, but the tantalizing prospect that Tantalis was Atlantis remains.

Enthusiasts of the lost continent were tantalized once again in December 2001 when explorers using a miniature submarine to probe the sea floor off the coast of Cuba announced their discovery of stone structures deep beneath the ocean surface that were suggestive of ruins left by an unknown human civilization thousands of years ago. Representatives of the Canadian-based Advanced Digital Communications, together with experts from the Cuban Academy of Sciences, said that the structures were discovered at a depth of around 2,100 feet and were distributed as if remnants of an urban area. Estimates of the ancient city under the sea were somewhere in the vicinity of 6,000 years, thereby making them about 1,500 years earlier than the great Giza pyramids of Egypt. Whether this new intriguing site proves to be Atlantis or evidence of a land bridge that once linked Cuba to mainland Latin America, it is certain to be controversial.

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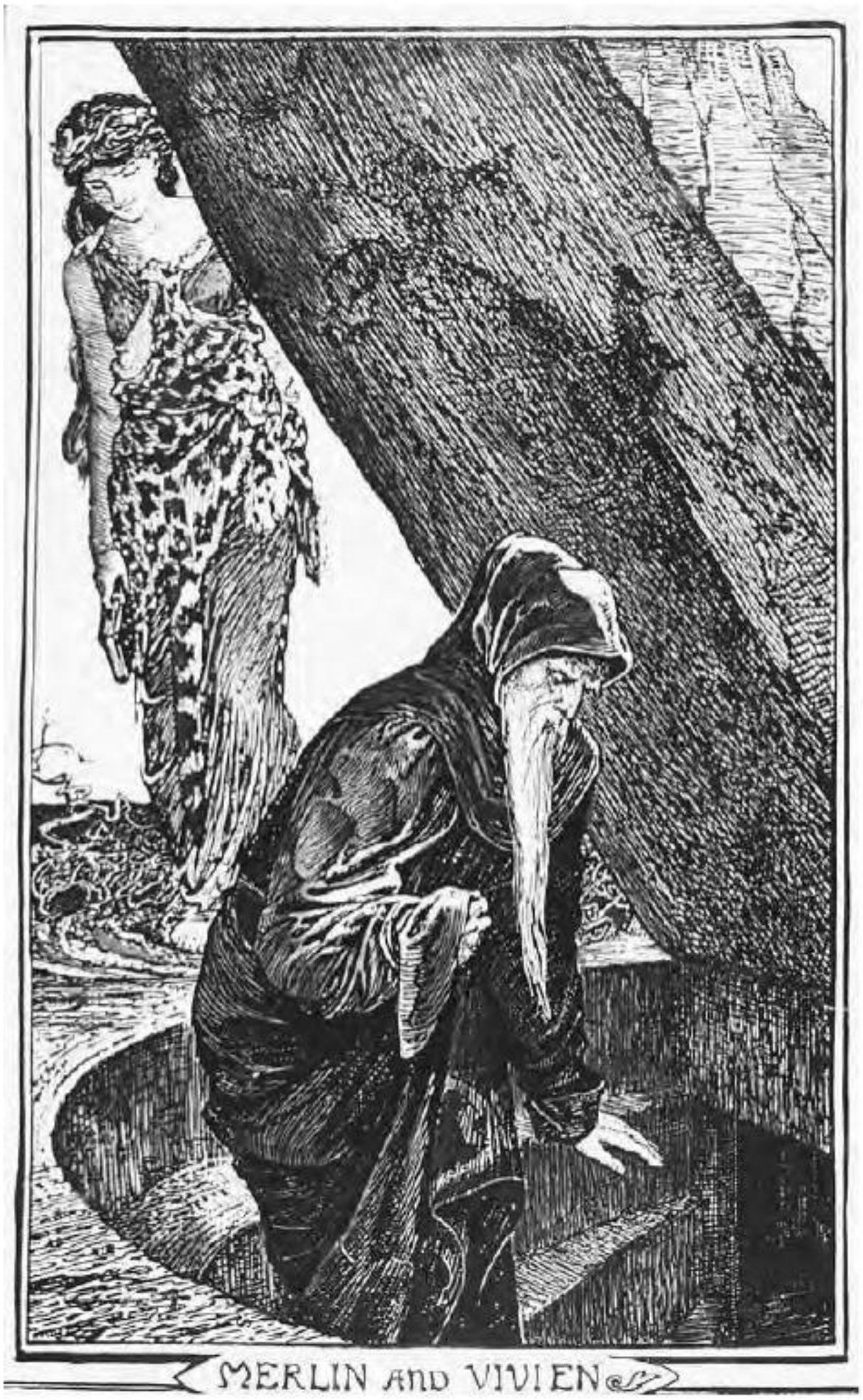
AVALON

Avalon is the place where the legendary King Arthur was taken after receiving mortal wounds in battle. Although it is a mythical place, there are sites on which Avalon may well have been based.

Avalon is mentioned in a widely read text in *History of the Kings of Britain* (1138), written by Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1100–1154). Part fiction, part history, and partly based on Celtic folktales, Geoffrey's work was the first popular source to depict the exploits of King Arthur, a leader believed to have ruled in Britain during the fifth or sixth century. That era falls within the Dark Ages, a period after the Roman Empire retreated from northwestern Europe and the area was assailed by invaders from eastern Europe and Scandinavia. Not much is known about the history of that period.

Geoffrey's work helped bring attention to myths of the Celtic people, who were overwhelmed by Romans and then other invaders



Merlin and Vivien, the fairy queen of Avalon. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

during the first six centuries. His recounting of the exploits of King Arthur inspired a trend of tales written and told about Arthur and his knights. The tales were especially popular in the courts of Europe from about 1150 to 1250, and have enjoyed several revivals since.

After Arthur received mortal wounds in battle, he was tended to by a maiden and placed aboard a boat bound for Avalon. The location of Avalon, usually called an island, varies according to which of the many Arthurian tales is being read. Some sources suggest Avalon lies off the coast of Great Britain, or "across the sea," a term some have interpreted as the Atlantic Ocean, with Avalon possibly being the island of Greenland or a location in North America.

Geoffrey likely took the name from "Avallon," a Celtic term equivalent to "apple place." Celtic myths had identified a paradise in terms that translate to an "island of apples." The old Welsh language, where the word "Avallach" referred to a mythical island, is another possible source.

Arran, an island off the coast of Scotland, has been considered a possible model for Avalon. The name Arran derived from "Emhain of the Apple Trees." Another popular claim for the site of Avalon is Glastonbury, a longtime apple-growing area in England.

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THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE

The Bermuda Triangle, also called the Devil's Triangle, is an imaginary area that can be roughly outlined on a map by connecting Miami, Florida; San Juan, Puerto Rico; and the Bahamas, an island chain off the coast of the United States. Within that triangular area of the Atlantic Ocean have occurred a number of unexplained disappearances of boats and planes. Additionally, readings on directional devices do not operate normally inside the triangle.

Unusual events in that area date back in recorded history to 1493 and the first voyage of Christopher Columbus (1451–1506) to the New World. In his log, Columbus noted that his compass readings were askew within the area now called the Bermuda Triangle, and he and his crew were confused by shallow areas of sea with no land nearby.

JAPAN'S DRAGON'S TRIANGLE

The "Devil's Sea" and the Dragon's Triangle located in the Philippine Sea off China's eastern coast is known for vanishing ships and seamen similar to the legendary **Bermuda Triangle.** While sensational theories for the mysterious disappearances speak of extraterrestrials and lost kingdoms under the sea wreaking havoc, others believe that the region displays the same magnetic anomalies as the Bermuda Triangle. The area, which can be marked off on a map by connecting Japan, Taiwan, and Yap Island, has become known as the Dragon's Triangle after a centuries-old Chinese myth. According to the myth, dragons live deep beneath the surface and their movement can suddenly churn up waves, whirlpools, thick fog, and sudden storms.

In 1950, Japanese officials declared the triangle a danger zone for shipping. In 1952, a research vessel, the *Kaio Maru No. 5,* sent by the Japanese government to investigate the troubled waters, vanished without a trace, and 22 crewmen and nine scientists were lost.

Like the Bermuda Triangle, the Devil's Triangle area may be volatile, subject to sudden weather changes and ocean swells not yet understood. Undersea volcanoes are believed to influence the area's sudden environmental changes. Others cite *mikakunin hiko-buttai,* Japanese for UFOs.

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The term "Bermuda Triangle" was first used in an article written by Vincent H. Gaddis for *Argosy* magazine in 1964. Gaddis claimed that several ships and planes had disappeared without explanation in that area. The article was expanded and included in his book, *Invisible Horizons: True Mysteries of the Sea* (1965), where he described nine mysterious incidents and provided extensive detail. Many newspapers carried a story in December of 1967 about strange incidents in the Bermuda Triangle after a National Geographic Society news release brought attention to Gaddis's book. The triangle was featured in a cover story in *Argosy* in 1968, in a book called *Limbo of the Lost* (1969) by John Wallace Spencer, and in a documentary film, *The Devil's Triangle,* in 1971. Charles Berlitz's 1974 bestseller *The Bermuda Triangle* marked the height of the disaster area legend, but some of its sensationalized claims were quickly proved inaccurate.

THE Bermuda Triangle is also known as the Devil's Triangle.

As early as 1952, George X. Sands had noted in a report in *Fate* magazine that an unusually large number of strange accidents had occurred in the region associated with the Bermuda Triangle. That many of the accidents in the area are intriguing, and that the area does have some natural conditions that sailors and pilots need to be aware of, has not been challenged. However, neither statistics nor documented evidence indicates that the num-

ber of accidents is unusually high or without explanation.

In March 1918, during World War I, the *USS Cyclops* vanished in the Bermuda Triangle. That ship may have been a casualty of war, but the December 1945 disappearance of Flight 19, a training squadron of five U.S. Navy torpedo bombers, became the most notorious of disappearances associated with the Bermuda Triangle. The squadron left Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with 14 crewmen and disappeared after radioing in several distress messages. A seaplane sent in search of the squadron also vanished. Those two airplane disappearances were frequently cited as the Bermuda Triangle legend grew during the 1960s and 1970s.

THE Bermuda Triangle has claimed over 1,000 lives during the twentieth century.

Few of those stories included telling details. All of the crewmen of Flight 19 were in training, for example, except for their patrol leader, who had tried to withdraw from his flight duty that day because he was feeling ill. After his compass malfunctioned soon into the flight, the flight leader decided to navigate by landmarks below on the islands of the Florida Keys, with which he was familiar. Visibility became a problem because of a sudden storm, and the leader became disoriented. Flight 19 was still in radio contact with the Fort Lauderdale air base, but after some mechanical difficulties they failed to switch to an emergency frequency. Radio recordings indicate that some of the crew believed they were heading out over the Atlantic Ocean, instead of the Gulf of Mexico as their leader reported.

A search plane took off and was claimed to have disappeared into the Bermuda Triangle with Flight 19. The plane actually blew up 23 seconds after takeoff. Wreckage from Flight 19 has never been recovered.

Other aircraft that have disappeared in the area include a DC-3 carrying 27 passengers in 1948 and a C-124 Globemaster with 53 passengers in 1951. Among the ships often listed among the mysteriously disappeared are the *Mary Celeste* (1872), the Marine tankership *Sulphur Queen* with 39 men aboard (1963), and the nuclear-powered submarine *Scorpion* with a crew of 99 (1968). The *Mary Celeste* entered the list of supposed Bermuda Triangle mysteries many decades after its odd tragedy. The ship set sail from New York to Genoa, Italy, but was found sailing unmanned some 400 miles off course, off the coast of Africa. Personal articles of the crew were found and food storage areas showed no sign of upheaval. A tattered sail and a missing lifeboat suggested the boat had encountered a storm, but the ship's log, in which information was recorded as late as nine days before the ship was found, made no mention of any kind of catastrophe.

There is no evidence, however, that the *Mary Celeste* ever entered the area of the Bermuda Triangle. Still, the eerie, unanswered questions concerning its fate are often cited by those who attribute a malevolent force as being responsible for odd and tragic events of the triangle.

Nevertheless, there are many documented disappearances that occurred within the triangle. They include a four-engine Tudor IV airplane lost in 1948, with 31 aboard; an American freighter, the *SS Sandra* (1952), which sunk without a trace; a British York transport plane, disappeared in 1952, with 33 aboard; a U.S. Navy Lockheed Constellation airplane, vanished in 1954 with 42 aboard; a U.S. Navy seaplane, 1956, with a crew of 10; a French freighter in 1970; and a German freighter, *Anita*, lost in 1972 with a crew of 32.

Theories about why so many air and water ships disappeared in the Bermuda Triangle involve strange magnetic fields, time warps, the lost continent of Atlantis, and alien abduction. Other proposed explanations include physical forces unknown to science, a "hole in the sky," and an unusual chemical component in the region's seawater. Several books have suggested that an intelligent, technologically advanced race living in space or under the sea has been responsible for jamming equipment and leading ships and planes to disaster.

Bermuda Triangle.
(DEZSO STERNOCZKY/SUFOI)

Many books and articles play up mystery angles concerning vanished ships by depicting the disappearances as having occurred in calm weather and daylight. Such particulars of Flight 19 as an inexperienced crew, a faulty compass, a squadron leader who failed to follow instructions, and conditions of deteriorating weather and visibility are often not mentioned. Larry Kusche, a librarian at Arizona State University, examined claims of mysterious disappearances and recorded evidence from each example. The results, published in *The Bermuda Triangle—Mystery Solved*, showed that many of the accidents happened during raging storms, or were later explained.

The area known as the Bermuda Triangle is one of the two places on Earth where a magnetic compass does point towards true north, a phenomenon called compass variation. Navigators must compensate the amount of variation or the craft they are on will go off course. A region commonly called the "Devil's Sea" in the Pacific Ocean is the other area of compass variation.

The Gulf Stream that runs through the Bermuda Triangle area is swift and turbulent, and can quickly erase evidence of a disaster. The unpredictable Caribbean-Atlantic weather can suddenly change into thunderstorms or create waterspouts. Many short and intense storms build up quickly and dissipate quickly, undetected by satellite surveillance. The ocean floor has shoals around islands as well as some of the deepest marine trenches in the world. The interaction of the strong currents over reefs promotes a constant flux and the development of new, uncharted navigational hazards.

These factors can confuse even experienced sailors. A large number of pleasure boats travel the waters between Florida's coast and the Bahamas. The U.S. Coast Guard receives more than 8,000 distress calls per year, averaging more than 20 per day from that area, often from sailors who have run out of gas.

The Bermuda Triangle claimed more than 1,000 lives during the twentieth century. That averages to about 10 per year, a figure similar to other areas of high water traffic or volatile

Selection of books on the Bermuda Triangle. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

natural conditions. Scientific evaluations of the Bermuda Triangle have concluded that the number of disappearances in the region is not abnormal and that most of the disappearances have logical explanations. Paranormal associations with the Bermuda Triangle persist, however, in the popular imagination.

CHARTRES

The gothic cathedral that stands in the French town of Chartres is the sixth church or cathedral constructed on that site over 1,500 years. Although the present cathedral is recognized as a place for Christian pilgrimages, it is considered mysterious.

Before the Gauls inhabited this region on the River Eure about 60 miles southwest of Paris, some ancient priests of an unknown religion constructed a dolmen (two or more large upright stones with a space in between and covered by a large horizontal rock) and a well within a mound. The Druids, Celtic priests of Gaul and Britain, made the mound and dolmen a center for the study of their religion. Here a Druid priest had a vision of a virgin who would bear a child. To honor the

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Cahokia and Its Woodhenge

Cahokia Mounds State Historical Site in Illinois is the site of the largest prehistoric Native American city north of Mexico. The city covered six square miles of settlement and may have been inhabited by as many as 20,000 people sometime between 800 and 1400. The site includes Monks Mound, the largest earthwork in North America, rising 100 feet and consisting of four terraces that covered 14 acres and contained an estimated 22 million cubic feet of earth. Atop the great mound stood a ceremonial building 100 feet long and 50 feet high. Named for the Trappist monks who grew vegetables on the site circa 1809, it was later discovered that the mound served a forgotten people as both a temple and a palace.

It has been determined that the city was the principal ceremonial center of a vanished culture known as the Mississippian who occupied the area from around 1050 to 1250. At its peak around 1150, the city supported a population of as many as 20,000 people.

Many scholars believe that the customs of the Natchez people who inhabited the lower Mississippi Valley when French explorers encountered the tribe in the latter part of the seventeenth century may offer some insight into their ancestors. Unlike the other Native American tribes, the Natchez had distinct social classes who were governed by a ruler-priest known as the Great Sun, who was regarded as the representative of the Sun on Earth and was treated with godlike reverence by the members of his tribe. The Great Sun wore a headdress-crown of white swan feathers and was born aloft on a litter by devotees so his feet would not be defiled by contact with the earth. The Natchez, and it is supposed their vanished Mississippian predecessors, had elaborate funeral ceremonies which involved certain sacrifices. When Mound 72 was excavated, the burial pits of nearly 300 people were discovered, including what may have been as many as 53 young women who were sacrificed to honor the death of a great ruler-priest.

In 1961, Dr. Warren Wittry unearthed the remains of a circle of red cedar posts that may have been used as a solar calendar to note coming seasons and to help determine when to plant and when to harvest crops. The discovery was dubbed "Woodhenge," in recognition to its similarity to the circular arrangement known as **Stonehenge** in Great Britain.

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Chartres Cathedral, France. (F. C. TAYLOR/ FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

vision, an image of the virgin with the babe resting on her knee was carved from a peach tree and placed next to the well and the power point within the dolmen.

When the first Christians appropriated the area in the third century, they built the first church dedicated to Our Lady on the site of the dolmen, mound, and well and placed the image of the Black Virgin in the church's crypt. The Duke of Aquitania burned the first church in 743; Vikings destroyed the second in 858. The third and fourth churches were burned in 962 and 1020, and the first of the cathedrals was destroyed by fire in 1194. Each time the place of worship was burned or crumbled, faithful Christian townspeople, builders, and architects appeared to rebuild the structure. But the identity of the master builders who constructed the majestic Chartres Cathedral that stands there today remains unknown.

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CURSUSES AND LEYS

There exists substantial evidence that some ancient societies wanted their landscapes to reflect the interconnectedness of life—imitating patterns they noticed in constellations, in changing seasons, or in rituals they performed. Ritual paths are found near some of Great Britain's ancient megalithic sites and are called cursuses. Unlike geoglyphs, which are marked clearly on the land, patterns formed by structures are detected by plotting them on the map of an area and looking for connections—literally, connecting the dots to determine whether or not a pattern emerges.

Ley lines is a term coined by Alfred Watkins (1855–1935), an Englishman who noticed in 1921 that several hilltops with ancient ruins on them in Herefordshire formed a straight alignment. He found several other instances where standing stones, burial mounds, and other ancient sites were aligned, criss-crossing the countryside. He called the straight alignments "leys" and published his findings in a book, *The Old Straight Track*, in 1925. The theory of ley lines promotes the belief that ancient structures in Great Britain were built on specific sites to form patterns and were so well aligned that if one continued in a straight line after walking from one structure to another one would soon find a third site.

Watkins believed that such alignments were intended as trade routes: the quickest way to get from one point to another is by a straight line. By the mid-twentieth century, however, leys became associated with cosmic lines of force—the belief that unknown forms of energy run in channels through the terrain. The practice of "ley hunting," plotting ancient sites and looking for patterns—straight lines, in particular—became popular in Great Britain during the twentieth century.

Reports of a curious feature found near megalithic sites in Great Britain date back to the 1720s, when William Stukeley (1687–1765), a British antiquarian, noticed parallel lines of banks and ditches at Stonehenge. He called the phenomenon a cursus, a Latin word for racetrack, since the lines were thought to run parallel and were joined at the ends to form an oval. The straight tracks he found were later dated as having been built in the same neolithic period as Stonehenge. Cursuses became a subject of study in the twentieth century when many more of them were discovered through aerial photography, and curiosity was piqued as to what their purpose might be.

The cursus at Stonehenge had chamber graves at both ends. So, too, did a cursus found at Dorset, England. The Dorset Cursuses follow a crescent pattern, each passing by chamber graves dated earlier than the ones at either end of the cursus. Other cursuses waver even further off the straight track, but all of them have burial graves at either end or point to graves or standing stones.

The Dorset Cursuses were called an "Avenue of the Dead" by archaeologist Richard Bradley, who suggested that ancients believed spirits of the dead passed along those lines, which he called avenues. Those wishing to communicate with the dead could meet them on the avenue. It is likely that the cursuses were used in ancient processional rituals in ceremonies honoring the dead.

In Britain, many of the ancient sites on ley lines were erected by Celts, a people who had rituals involving nature. Since the Celts were more attuned to the natural world than modern humans, according to those who believe in cosmic lines of force, their structures were purposefully erected on sites of pulsating energy. Some UFO proponents believe that ley lines were energy forces on which ships from outer space were able to harness energy and move quickly around Earth.

Ley hunting, the act of researching ancient sites to discover straight alignments, has also inspired detractors. Many supposed leys had sites built at various times and by various societies: a Celtic hill-fort from 200 B.C.E. might be followed on a ley by a Christian church erected in medieval times. Watkins countered by noting that Christian sites were often built on places of pagan worship. He also took a practical approach, believing the ley lines indicated trade routes, rather than cosmic lines of force. Interested in establishing sound criteria for leys, Watkins argued that leys involving three sites might just as likely be a chance occurrence as a planned pattern. Five aligned sites, he determined, were necessary to consider a purposeful pattern.

Many claims of ley lines were proven inaccurate: they were not quite straight, or they lumped together many different kinds of things from many different time periods. Even though quite a few intriguing leys were discovered, the theory began losing support because of extravagant claims.

Ley hunting enjoyed a revival beginning in the 1970s. By then, much more information was known about prehistoric civilizations and their capacity for great engineering feats and mastering of sophisticated astronomical and mathematical techniques. The enthusiasm for the pastime was channeled through a magazine, *The Ley Hunter*, which Paul Devereux took over as editor in 1976. Devereux set up a system where all prospective leys could be catalogued and researched. Hundreds of claims were submitted and checked, and the results were published in *The Ley Hunter's Companion* (1979). Forty-one leys, each including at least four sites, were presented in that book as being worthy of further research. Virtually all of them failed the test of being straight alignments.

LEY lines were previously believed to be trade routes.

Meanwhile, statisticians showed that the possibility of chance alignments was greater than expected. Random patterns were just as likely to be straight as planned sites because of the large number of items available to be considered. The question concerning leys is whether the sites arise from random connection or whether they were planned to form a pattern. Even if they were not planned, a simple combination involving many sites will form patterns and several straight alignments.

Statistical methods based on rigorous standards for alignment and ensuring that sites on leys were from a certain time period all worked to compromise the theory of leys. Taking the practical and scientific approaches to the ley theory proved to be its undoing. Although the belief that many megaliths erected by neolithic peoples were placed along energy lines persists among a number of ley hunting enthusiasts, except for a few isolated cases, most claims do not match the criteria of

straight alignment, and they often incorporate structures from vastly different eras.

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EL DORADO

Europeans of the sixteenth century presumed that somewhere deep in South America was a vast city called El Dorado that contained unimaginable mineral riches. Several Spanish conquistadors made perilous, often deadly journeys to find it. Sir Walter Raleigh (1554–1618), the English raconteur, explorer, and visionary, claimed in a book he published in 1596 that he knew the whereabouts of El Dorado. But in spite of such valiant efforts, El Dorado seems to persist only as a symbol of the rapacious greed with which the English and Spanish beheld the New World.

THE Chibcha people blew gold dust all over the new priest chief's body until he resembled a statue of pure gold.

Europeans first learned of El Dorado through word-of-mouth tales that circulated among South America's indigenous peoples. There was a small grain of truth to the story: high in the eastern range of the Andes, in what is now Colombia, lived the Chibcha people. Geographically isolated, they mined gold and emeralds freely, and built a highly stratified and developed society. When they anointed a new priest-chief, they covered the man in balsam gum, and then blew gold dust all over his body through cane straws until he resembled a statue of pure gold. The new priest-chief then ceremonially bathed in Lake Guatavita, a sacred place to the Chibcha. This practice ended around 1480 when they were subdued by another tribe. But the story of the "gilded one" became part of the oral folklore traditions in South America, and in its retellings, the tale took on added dimensions: the gilded one supposedly ruled over a vast kingdom where nearly everything was made from gold, silver, or precious stone.

Spanish colonization of Latin America began not long after the end of this practice. Francisco Pizzaro (c. 1475–1541), who conquered the powerful Inca civilization in the 1530s in what is today Peru, saw the technically advanced and lavishly prosperous city of Cuzco that the tightly organized indigenous culture created. He believed that the continent held enormous mineral wealth, and he took bags of gold and stacks of silver bars back to Spain from his plunder of the Inca. Not long after the conquest, a messenger from an unknown Indian tribe appeared in Peru with a message for the Inca emperor, unaware the empire had been defeated. Interrogated by the Spanish, he told them he came from the Zipa people in the Bogota region, but knew of another kingdom, high in the mountains to the east, a tribe so rich that they covered their chief in gold.

The Spanish, who had already heard about the Chibcha, became increasingly certain that El Dorado, their translation of "the gilded one," really existed. Adding to the mystery was a rumor that a renegade Inca faction had managed to escape the violent Spanish conquest and had fled to the mountains. Supposedly they had migrated into the Amazon River jungle. There, according to folklore, was an empire richer than that of the Inca. The Spanish assumed that the rebels took large amounts of mineral wealth with them, and that this fugitive empire was flourishing somewhere in what is today Venezuela.

Between 1536 and 1541, the Spanish sent out five major expeditions in search of El Dorado. After the journeys proved fruitless, the Spanish became certain that El Dorado must lie in the northern part of the continent into which they had not yet ventured—the jungle basin between the Orinoco and Amazon rivers.

Meanwhile, another mysterious appearance of a man who spoke of a city of gold he

called "Manoa" only fueled their desire. His name was Juan Martinez, and he had been a munitions master on board a Spanish ship exploring the Caroni River that branched off from the Orinoco at San Thome. His group headed deeper into the jungle, but the journey was aborted when its gunpowder stores exploded. Martinez was left behind in an open canoe as punishment for the accident.

He claimed to have met friendly Indians, who blindfolded him for days and led him to their kingdom, called Manoa, where everything in the royal palace was made of gold. Martinez said that riches had been given to him as a departing gift, but they had been stolen by Indians on his way back.

This story was told to Sir Walter Raleigh in England around 1586. Raleigh had established an ill-fated colony in North America on Roanoke Island and had fallen out of favor with Queen Elizabeth I (1533–1603). Wishing to restore his reputation and status at court, he set sail for South America. After arriving in March of 1595, Raleigh and his party spent weeks sailing along the Orinoco River, but found nothing but a massive Spanish anchor, which had been lost when Martinez's ship had exploded.

Raleigh brought back to England exotic flora and fauna and some blue-tinged rocks that hinted at great ore deposits. But when Raleigh told his extraordinary tales of the jungle, his enemies ridiculed him, claiming that he had been hiding in Cornwall the entire time. In response, he wrote a book, *The Discovery of the Large, Rich and Beautiful Empire of Guyana with a Relation to the Great and Golden City of Manoa*.

The book was absorbing, but the English expedition had not ventured into any parts of the Orinoco that the Spanish had not already explored. Raleigh claimed that the city of Manoa was on Lake ParÌma, behind a mountain range. He provided a map so remarkably accurate that most atlases of South America showed the mythical lake for the next 150 years. Raleigh also wrote of a tribe of headless, club-wielding warriors with eyes and mouths on their torsos. That brought further discredit to his book, but it sold well, even in translation.

Raleigh's claims failed to interest Queen Elizabeth I or potential investors who might finance a further search for El Dorado. After the monarch died in 1603, Raleigh was imprisoned in the Tower of London by her successor, King James I (1566–1625), on charges of treason. Convinced in the very least that vast gold mines existed close to the Orinoco River, Raleigh continually petitioned for release; only when dire financial straits fell on Great Britain did the king allow Raleigh a second chance. Raleigh's 1618 expedition battled the Spanish, and Raleigh's son died in battle. When Raleigh returned to England empty-handed, he was jailed again, tried in secret, and executed on the 1603 treason charge.

The term "El Dorado" became part of Renaissance-era English culture; John Milton (1608–1674) wrote of it in *Paradise Lost*, and William Shakespeare (1564–1616) mentioned the headless warriors in *Othello*. El Dorado has become synonymous with a place of fabulous wealth or inordinately great opportunity. Accepted theory holds that El Dorado existed only in the minds of the Europeans who were eager to discover the quickest path to riches.

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EASTER ISLAND

In one of the most remote spots on Earth, separated by more than two thousand miles of ocean from the nearest centers of civilization, is a lone, triangular-shaped island that occupies about 64 square miles of the Pacific Ocean, which spans 70 million square miles. On the island's southeast coast stand nearly a hundred huge, megalithic monuments carved in a stylized manner to resemble male human heads with elongated facial features. Some 800 additional statues remain in a quarry or scattered about the island.

The statues average about 13 feet in height, 5 feet in width, and weigh an average of 14 tons; they stand on stone platforms aver-

Face carvings on Easter Island. (SUSAN D. ROCK)

aging 4 feet in height. Islanders call the statues "moai," and the platforms are called "ahus," but the megaliths abound in mystery: who carved them and what is their significance?

EASTER *Island was reached by Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen in 1722.*

Inhabitants call the island Rapa Nui. Europeans have known it as Easter Island since the first recorded contact in 1722 by the Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen (1659–1729). The island is also known as Isla de Pascua in Spanish, the language of Chile, the South American country that annexed the island in 1888. But Chile, on the closest continent to Easter Island, lies 2,300 miles to the east. Tahiti, the nearest large island to the west, is 2,500 miles away from Easter Island. It is 1,500 miles to the nearest area of human habitation, Pitcairn Island. Another mystery, then, is how the island came to be populated, and how the isolated island people managed to make and move the immense moai.

The island inhabitants could tell little about the moai to European visitors. Evidence of a once-thriving culture existed on the island, but when Roggeveen named the island on Easter Sunday, 1722 the several thousand Polynesian inhabitants were struggling for survival. At the time of this first contact with Europeans, islanders called their home Te Pito O Te Henua, which has been variously translated as "naval of the world," "end of the world," and "lands' end." The population and land were even more impoverished 50 years later when British explorer James Cook (1728–1779) arrived there. Islanders were readily willing to trade old, elaborate wood carvings for food and cloth. Noting that the statues were not part of the inhabitants' sacred rituals, Cook called them "monuments of antiquity" in his notes.

The engineering feat of moving moai from the quarry to their sites remains unexplained,

particularly since there is no evidence of wheels or a pully system through which such massive blocks could be transported. No evidence of advanced engineering skills exists on the island. Islanders told Captain Cook and more modern visitors that the moai walked from the quarry to their sites on the ahus.

Some theorists have speculated that the monuments are remnants of the lost continent of **Mu.** According to that account, Lemurians, an intellectually advanced race of people, were responsible for crafting, moving, and erecting the monuments. The stones were moved from quarry to ahu using ancient secrets known to the Lemurians, perhaps involving levitation or the secret for liquifying stone.

The two most prominent theories with some scientific evidence have the island becoming inhabited by seafarers, moving east to west from South America or west to east from Polynesia, who settled on the island, established a thriving community, and erected the monuments. The east to west theory was popularized in the late 1940s by anthropologist Thor Heyerdahl (1911–2002) who made a daring journey across the Pacific in a primitive balsa wood craft called the *Kon Tiki*. By doing so, Heyerdahl successfully overturned the notion that prehistoric South Americans could not have made the ocean journey to Polynesian islands in the eastern-central Pacific Ocean. Heyerdahl's voyage with a crew of five took 101 days and covered 4,300 miles and proved that such a journey could be made. Favorable winds blow east to west across the south Pacific Ocean. Those winds cross Easter Island and keep it warm year round.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, anthropologist Jo Ann Von Tilburg made important contributions to the study of the Easter Island megaliths. Her research has been featured in documentaries on Easter Island broadcast on the Public Broadcasting System's *Nova* series, as well as The Learning Channel, Discovery Channel, The History Channel (appearing with Thor Heyerdahl), and the syndicated *Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious World*. In 1998 she completed an experimental archaeology project using a computer to simulate the crafting and transporting of an average-sized moai. Her project showed that an average moia could be moved about six miles in under five days by a team of 70 people. In the simulation, the statues were laid on two long poles that form a track and were rolled forward over smaller logs within the track. Polynesians had long been adept with hinges and levers to help lift and prop large objects through their construction of large canoes. Such devices could be used to place the moai on the ahus.

The megaliths on Easter Island stand with their backs to the sea. Many archaeologists believe that signifies the edge of the Polynesian's world. The statues are believed to be the spirits of ancestors and high-ranking chiefs. That the faces are standardized perhaps indicates an archetype of a powerful individual. Van Tilburg suggests that the moai are positioned on platforms to indicate they are links between heavenly gods and the material earth. Polynesians erect such statues as "sky props" that help hold up the heavens, and their leaders are considered the props that hold up the community.

The monuments on Easter Island were believed to have been erected between 1400 and 1550, until radiocarbon dating in the 1990s pushed that date back some 700 years. A history can be sketched beginning around 400, with the arrival of Polynesians. The community on Easter Island fell into decline after 1550, and resources were nearly exhausted at the time of first contact with Europeans in the eighteenth century.

Geology professor Charlie Love, of Western Wyoming Community College, with a crew of 17 students, archaeologists, and islanders, spent much of the summer of 2000 attempting to solve the mystery of how the great stone heads, some weighing as much as 90 tons, had been moved from the quarry to the ceremonial centers on the coast of Easter Island. Although the roadways have not been firmly dated, Love agreed with previous estimates that the statue-moving activity ended about 1500. After several months of on-site investigation, Love readily conceded that the mysteries of Easter Island had not been solved.

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GLASTONBURY

Glastonbury, in the Somerset region of England, seems always to have been a spiritual center, from Celtic May Day festivities, to Christian worship, to present-day New Age festivals. Human habitation dates back many centuries before the contemporary era, based on findings of flints, the remains of two lake villages that rose above the marshes on artificial islands, and hundreds of planks that formed walkways held by pegs driven into the soil. Those remnants date back to at least 2500 B.C.E., the same period in which many other sites, such as Stonehenge and Silbury Hill, the tallest prehistoric man-made mound in Europe, were being erected.

GLASTONBURY Abbey was long established when it became a focal point for Arthurian legends in 1190.

Romans conquered Great Britain during the first century B.C.E. and established wharves on nearby Bristol Bay, thus enabling Glastonbury to become a shipping area. A legend has it that Joseph of Arimathea, who is mentioned in the Bible as the person who prepared Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) for burial after his crucifixion, landed in Bristol Bay and established the first Christian church at Glastonbury. Later, according to some accounts, he traveled by sea and landed in Great Britain, bringing with him the Holy Grail. Several centuries later, according to legends, King Arthur's knights undertook quests to find the lost Holy Grail.

When Joseph arrived in Glastonbury, according to tradition, he pushed his staff into the soil on a ridge called Wirral. That staff miraculously became a tree, the famous Glastonbury Thorn. It flowers around the beginning of winter, usually around Christmas time. It is not known when the original Glastonbury Thorn first appeared, but it was already centuries old and revered in the sixteenth century, when a Puritan cut it down because it represented a prideful icon of veneration. The Glastonbury Thorn is unlike any native species of tree in Great Britain and is reputed to be related to a thorn tree of the eastern Mediterranean area.

The most distinctive and highest of the hills in the area is the Glastonbury Tor ("tor" is an old word for "hill"). An imposing hill, the tor can be seen from as far as 25 miles away. A ruined tower of a Christian chapel is perched on the top of the tor. Nearby are the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey and, reportedly, the oldest Christian church in England.

Glastonbury Abbey, a Christian monastery, was long established at the site when it became a focal point for Arthurian legends in 1190. King Henry II (1133–1189) had claimed that a bard told him that King Arthur's bones were buried deep at Glastonbury. In 1190, two monks at the monastery had a vision about a site where Arthur was buried in Glastonbury. After digging a hole sixteen feet deep, they claimed that they uncovered two stone markers and a giant coffin. Inside the coffin were the bones of a man and a woman together with a tablet identifying the remains as those of King Arthur and his wife, Guinevere.

The find was widely heralded, but was also quickly regarded as a hoax and the authenticity of the grave strongly debated. Nevertheless,

Glastonbury Abbey. (JANET AND COLIN BORD/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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the Norman kings, whose invading armies had conquered Britain a century earlier and were still attempting to solidify their power, embraced the find. By the sixteenth century, when King Henry VIII (1491–1547) dissolved all Christian monasteries in Great Britain, the bones and artifacts alleged to be Arthur's were looted and the authenticity of the burial find was generally disproved. In the popular mind, however, the claim continued to be taken seriously because of the area's associations with Arthurian legends. Even to this day, the Pomparles Bridge that spans the River Brue that runs through Glastonbury is reputed to be the site where Arthur's sword, Excalibur, was returned to the Lady of the Lake.

During the twentieth and into the twenty-first century, Glastonbury remains the site of official festivals and unofficial gatherings that celebrate its Celtic roots. Beltane Day, as the Celts called May Day, is celebrated with a festival for the rebirth of the sun.

DELVING DEEPER

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HOLLOW EARTH

Edmund Halley (1656–1742) is best known for having calculated the orbit of a comet that passes by Earth every 76 years. The comet known as Halley's made its first appearance under that name in 1682. During the next decade, Halley turned his attention away from the celestial in favor of the subterranean. He claimed that the Earth was hollow and populated by humans and beasts.

Halley's Hollow Earth idea was developed further during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and sometimes backed by sound scientific reasoning. None of the claims of Hollow Earth proponents have been substantiated, however. Those still holding to the belief in the twenty-first century are part of a long

history of people who believe human life exists beneath the surface of the Earth.

Halley's theory was based on the fact that the earth's magnetic field varies over time. Halley suggested that there were several magnetic fields, one of which emanated from a sphere within the earth. Halley eventually developed the idea that there were four concentric hollow spheres within the earth. He believed the inner earth was populated with life and had a luminous atmosphere. The aurora borealis, he concluded, was actually an emanation of radiant gases from within the earth that escaped through thin layers of crust at the poles.

EDMUND Halley claimed the Earth was hollow and populated by humans and beasts.

During the eighteenth century, Halley's Hollow Earth theory was adapted by two other famed mathematicians, Leonhard Euler (1707–1783), a Swiss, and John Leslie (1766–1832), a Scotsman. Euler abandoned Halley's concentric spheres idea. He postulated that a glowing core some six hundred miles wide warmed and illuminated the inner earth, where an advanced population thrived. Leslie, on the other hand, believed there were two concentric spheres within the earth each with their own sun, which he named Pluto and Proserpine after the Greek god of the underworld and his mate.

Perhaps the most enthusiastic proponent of the Hollow Earth idea was John Cleves Symmes, who was born in 1780 in New Jersey. He was named after an uncle who fought in the American Revolutionary War. Symmes fought in the War of 1812, after which he moved to St. Louis, Missouri, and established a trading post. He immersed himself in reading books in the natural sciences. By 1818 he was publicizing his version of the Hollow Earth, which had concentric spheres and received light and warmth from the sun through large holes in the planet open at each of the poles.

Symmes proved relentless in publicizing his views: he was a prolific lecturer and writer of letters and articles; wrote fictional accounts of the Hollow Earth, including *Symzonia: Voyage of Discovery* (1820), which he published under the pseudonym Adam Seaborn; and advocated expeditions to the poles. His Hollow Earth illuminated by openings at the poles became the most popularly known version, and one that would be tested as humans began struggling to reach the poles.

Symmes was able to impress two influential men who would take his cause further. James McBride, a wealthy Ohio man, wrote articles supporting the concentric spheres version of the Hollow Earth. He lobbied a U.S. senator from Kentucky to support a bill funding a proposed expedition to explore trade routes in the southern hemisphere (where McBride hoped the expedition would continue on to the open pole). The senator he had lobbied, Richard M. Johnson (1790–1850), later became vice president of the United States under Martin Van Buren (1782–1862). In 1828, President John Quincy Adams (1767–1848) indicated that he would approve funding for the expedition. However, when Adams left office in 1829, his successor, Andrew Jackson (1767–1845), stifled a bill funding the proposed expedition.

Symmes died in 1829, but his cause was continued by Jeremiah Reynolds, an Ohio newspaper editor. After the failure to get government funding for the expedition in 1829, Reynolds joined a crew sailing to the south seas to hunts seals, but seven years later in 1836, he helped renew efforts for funding of a Southern Hemisphere expedition. Reynolds spoke before Congress, emphasizing the national glory that would accompany scientific discoveries and expanded foreign relations, but he became so impatient with the methodical planning and a series of delays that he was fired from the crew.

What became known as the Wilkes expedition, named after its commander, Charles Wilkes (1798–1877), launched in 1838. When the expedition was completed in 1842, they had effectively mapped a landmass where Symmes had envisioned a large hole in the

Books on the hollow earth concept. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

earth. The world's seventh continent, Antarctica, was officially recognized for the first time.

The open poles theory promoted by Symmes had been effectively undermined, but the belief in the Hollow Earth would only grow more popular. In 1846, the remains of a woolly mammoth, a creature long extinct, were discovered perfectly preserved in ice in Siberia. So suddenly had it been frozen, that the mammoth had not yet digested pine cones it had recently eaten. It was theorized that the animal had been caught by a climate change, but many questioned that such a change could have happened so quickly and thoroughly. Some people believed the animal had wandered out from the Hollow Earth through a hole at the North Pole.

As late as 1913, even after the North Pole had been reached, Marshall Gardner published *A Journey to the Earth's Interior, or Have the Poles Really Been Discovered?* which claimed that many creatures thought to be extinct were still thriving within the earth. Gardner theorized that the interior earth was warmed by materials still spinning since earth's creation. Based on the law of centrifugal force, Gardner argued that earth was originally a spinning mass of matter. An outer layer of matter had hardened and continued to revolve around a central axis, while an inner layer also hardened and was warmed by heat continually generated by the earth's spinning.

That same year, William Reed published *The Phantom of the Poles* (1906), in which he promoted the idea that a ship can pass from outer Earth to inner Earth. The effect of gravity pulls a ship against the interior in the same manner as it works on the exterior. He claimed that some sailors had already passed into inner Earth without knowing it. Gravity had pulled them to the interior side, where a 600 mile-long sun continued to keep them warm, as the outer sun had done.

In between the woolly mammoth find and those publications of 1913, fascination in the Hollow Earth was exhibited by scientists and science fiction writers. Jules Verne (1828–1905) published *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (1864), in which characters enter the Earth's interior through the chimney of an inactive volcano in Iceland. In 1873, *The Coming Race*, a novel by the occultist Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1831–1891), was set in the Earth's interior, where an advanced civilization of giants thrived. In this story, the giants had built a paradise and discovered a form of energy so powerful that they outlawed its use as a potential weapon. The paradise is threatened, nevertheless; not by weapons, but by a lack of conflict that has resulted in general boredom.

One of the more interesting variations on the Hollow Earth theory during the late nineteenth century was expounded by Cyrus Read Teed (1830–1908). In *The Cellular Cosmogony, or The Earth, A Concave Sphere*, Teed claimed a civilization inhabited the concave inner surface of Earth. Dense atmosphere prevents viewing across the surface. The Moon, according to Teed, reflects the larger, uninhabitable surface of Earth.

Teed made a religion of his discoveries and changed his name to Koresh, the Hebrew equivalent of his given name, Cyrus. As the messiah of Koreshanity, he formed a church, started a magazine, *The Flaming Cross*, which continued to be published regularly into the 1940s, and founded a community on a 300-acre tract in Florida in 1894. He lived there with about 250 followers until 1908. Upon his death, his followers waited for him to rise again, as he had prophesied. After four days, health officials appeared on the scene and ordered his burial.

Hollow Earth theories continued to be promoted by enthusiasts even as explorers reached the North and South Poles during the first decade of the twentieth century. The open poles theory was further undermined when aviator Richard E. Byrd (1888–1957) became the first to fly over the North Pole (1926) and the South Pole (1929) and reported nothing but unending whiteness. In 1959, a U.S. submarine journeyed beneath the polar ice cap and actually surfaced at the North Pole, based on precise calculations. Since then, year-round research stations have been built on several sites at both poles. No large holes have been found.

Hollow Earth enthusiasts continue to believe. Teed's Concave Earth theory, for example, was tested during World War II (1939–1945) by a Nazi scientist. He aimed a camera at a 45-degree angle into the sky from an island in the Baltic Sea, hoping to catch an image of a British fleet on the other side of the concave Earth. The experiment was unsuccessful.

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JERUSALEM

Jerusalem stands in the middle of the nation of Israel, a holy city to three of the world's great religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Before Muslims underwent pilgrimages to **Mecca,** the most venerated holy place in all of Islam was the Dome of the Rock, a magnificent mosque built over the sacred rock where Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac to the Lord and where the Prophet Muhammad (c. 570–632) is believed to have ascended to Paradise. For the Jews, Jerusalem is the site of King David's (d. 932 B.C.E.) ancient capital of Judea and a massive wall, called the "Wailing Wall," which is all that remains of the great Temple that was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E.. Christian pilgrims revere the city as the place where Jesus (c. 6 B.C.E.–c. 30 C.E.) was crucified and is believed to have risen from the dead, and for more than 1,600 years they have visited the most revered of all Christian holy places, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was built over what was believed to be Christ's tomb.

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Listings of the greatest architectural achievements of the world date at least as far back as the time of Herodotus (484–425 B.C.E.), who mentions such an inventory. Later Greek historians wrote about the great monuments of their time, and the list of seven ancient wonders of the world was finalized from among those opinions during the Middle Ages. The Seven Wonders include:

- *The Great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops).* The oldest of the Seven Wonders and the only surviving one, constructed about 2630 B.C.E.
- *The Hanging Gardens of Babylon.* Part of the palace of King Nebuchadnezzar II and built about 600 B.C.E., it featured a series of terraces with stone arches. The terraces were filled with plants, and an elaborate tunnel and pulley system brought water from the nearby Euphrates River.
- *The Statue of Zeus.* Dated to the mid-fifth century B.C.E. and credited to the Greek sculptor Phidias, it was located at the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, Greece.
- *The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus in Greece.* Erected in 356 B.C.E. in a marshy area where several earlier temples had stood, it was destroyed by the Goths in 262.
- *The Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.* Built around 353 B.C.E., it was a marble tomb for King Mausolus of Caria in Asia Minor. It was damaged by an earthquake, and during medieval times its marble was used to fortify a castle.
- *The Colossus of Rhodes.* A 100-foot-high bronze statue of the Greek Sun god Helios, it was erected about 280 B.C.E. to guard the entrance to the harbor at Rhodes, a Mediterranean island, but it was destroyed about 55 years later.
- *The Pharos of Alexandria.* A lighthouse erected around 280 B.C.E., it fell into ruins by the mid-1300s because of a series of earthquakes. Located on an island in the harbor of Alexandria, Egypt, and rising 440 feet, it was the tallest building of the ancient world.

SOURCES:

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According to Hebrew tradition, Jerusalem was chosen to be the earthly headquarters for the Lord's work among humankind in very ancient times, for Melchizedek, a priest, a survivor of the pre-flood world, the oldest living human at that time, was living there as King of Salem even before Father Abraham set out on his quest for the Promised Land. Obeying a commandment of the Lord, Melchizedek had come out of Babylonia to south central Canaan to build a city on the summit of the watershed between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean. Salem was constructed on the southeast hill of a mountain ridge with deep valleys on its east, south, and west sides. With the spring of Gihon at its feet to provide fresh water easily available for its inhabitants even during times of siege, the location of Salem made it a naturally impregnable fortress.

JERUSALEM is the holy city to three of the world's great religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

As the city of Jerusalem grew, it sprawled out over the two larger and three smaller hills of the ridge. With Egypt about 300 miles southwest; Assyria, 700 miles northeast; Babylon, 700 miles east; Persia, 1,000 miles east; Greece, 800 miles northwest; and Rome, 1,500 miles northwest, Jerusalem became a very cosmopolitan city with a steady flow of merchants and traders arriving from nations throughout the known world. David established Jerusalem as Israel's national capital in about 1000 B.C.E., and in about 950 B.C.E., his son Solomon built the magnificent temple that housed the **Ark of the Covenant.** The city and the temple were destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E., but by the time that Jesus walked its streets in about 29 C.E., Jerusalem had been restored to its former glory. In 70, a series of Jewish revolts against Rome brought the imperial army to the walls of Jerusalem on the day of Passover. After a five-month siege, the city walls were brought down, the Temple of Herod destroyed, and Jerusalem was left in ruins and desolate.

In 135, Barcocheba, a self-proclaimed messiah of the Jews, led another revolt against the Romans. He managed to gain control of the city and set about rebuilding the Temple, but his ambitious project was short-lived when the Roman army arrived in force and squelched the rebellion with great loss of life for the Jews. The conquerors decreed that no Jews could enter Jerusalem on pain of death, and a temple to Jupiter, father of the Roman gods, was built where the Temple had stood.

In 326, after the Roman emperor Constantine (d. 337) converted to Christianity, he traveled to the Holy Land to view the sacred sites for himself. Helena, his mother, received a vision that showed her the exact spot where Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy follower of Jesus, had buried him after his crucifixion. The site lay beneath a temple to Venus that had been erected by a Roman army of occupation, but Constantine perceived the edifice as only a minor impediment. He ordered the temple of the goddess torn down and replaced by the Basilica of Constantine, the original Church of the Holy Sepulchre, near the Tomb Rotunda, which covered the tomb of Christ. In time, the Basilica, the tomb, and Calvary, the site of the crucifixion, were all brought under the roof of a vast Romanesque cathedral. For the next three centuries, Jerusalem remained a Christian city, and in the fifth century, it dominated Christendom as one of the seats of the Five Patriarchs, along with Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria.

In 638, a Muslim army under Caliph Omar Ibn al-Khattab (ruled 634–644) conquered Jerusalem. A devout follower of the Prophet Muhammad, the caliph was also tolerant of other religions. He ordered that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre be respected as a Christian place of worship and forbade it to be converted into a mosque. When he was taken to the Temple Mount, he was shocked to discover that the holy rock where Abraham had taken Isaac to be sacrificed, the place that had held the Ark of the Covenant in Solomon's Temple, and the spot where Muhammad had ascended to Paradise, lay exposed to the elements. After the area had

been purified by prayers and a rainfall, the caliph ordered the Dome of the Rock to be built to shelter the sacred rock. The shrine with its massive dome gilded with gold mosaics was completed in 691.

The golden dome collapsed in 1016, but it was soon rebuilt. In 1099, Christian crusaders massacred the Muslim inhabitants of Jerusalem and converted the Dome of the Rock to a Christian shrine, replacing the crescent on the top of the dome with a cross and constructing an altar on the rock. The shrine returned to Muslim possession in 1187 when the great Muslim military genius Salah al-Din, known to the crusaders as Saladin, captured Jerusalem. In 1537, the Ottoman Turks replaced the gold mosaics on the outside of the dome with 45,000 Persian tiles. Today's visitor to the shrine will see the sunlight reflecting from sheets of gold-plated aluminum, imprinted with selected verses from the Koran, which were placed there during a complete restoration of the Dome of the Rock in 1956-1962. In 1967, the Old City of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount, was seized by Israeli soldiers, but the Dome of the Rock remains available for worship by Muslims and visitation by others at scheduled times.

Interestingly, the Dome of the Rock plays a significant role in the end-time beliefs of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim Fundamentalists. Jews and Christians envision the site as one of the places in which **Armageddon,** the last great struggle between the forces of good and evil, will begin before the Messiah appears—or for the Christians, returns in a Second Coming. For the Muslims, it is here that Jesus will conquer the **Antichrist** and the chief eschatological figure, the Mahdi (Guided One) will appear to help destroy the forces of evil and to bring about the conversions of all Jews and Christians to Islam.

When the Muslims assumed control of the sacred rock of Abraham and the site of Solomon's Temple in the seventh century, the Jews began to focus their devotion on the huge blocks of stone along the western edge of the Old City, all that remained of the retaining wall of the temple built by King Herod (73–4 B.C.E.). Herod had begun the construction of the Temple in 19 B.C.E. and the main building was completed about 18 months later. However, Herod's intentions to build the most magnificent of all temples in the history of the Jewish people did not cease at that time. Construction continued until about 64 C.E. For centuries, the wall has been a place where Jews might gather to mourn the destruction of the Temple and the onset of the great Jewish Exile. Because it is a place of tears and sorrow, the name "Wailing Wall" was attached to the ruins, and it has become a site for Jewish pilgrimages, especially during Passover, Sukkot, and Shavuot.

Since 1968, Jerusalem has been a city divided by uneasy truces and sporadic fighting. Perhaps as the twenty-first century progresses, a lasting peace can be achieved and Jerusalem may truly become the City of God.

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KARNAK

On the banks of the Nile, between the ancient cities of Luxor and Thebes, lie the remains of Karnak, one of the most magnificent temple complexes ever constructed. In ancient Egyptian, Karnak means "the most select of places," and it became a religious center during the period known as the New Kingdom (founded c. 1550 B.C.E.). Dedicated to the sun deity Amon-Ra (also

Entrance to the Temple of Karnak. (DR. G. T. MEADEN/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Amun-Re) and built around 1500 B.C.E., Karnak consists of massive pillars, towering columns, avenues of sphinxes, and a remarkable obelisk that stands 97 feet tall and weighs 323 tons. The Great Hypostyle Hall, one of the largest single chambers ever built, covers an area of nearly 54,000 square feet. The entire Cathedral of Notre Dame could fit comfortably within its walls.

Nearby ruins suggest that Karnak was considered a sacred site much earlier than the time during the New Kingdom when it became the center of worship for Amon-Ra. The remains of temples dated c. 1971 B.C.E. prove that predecessors of the devotees of the ram-headed Amon-Ra also found the area to be a special place to honor their gods.

The worship of Amon-Ra and the influence of Karnak remained strong until Akhenaton's reign in 1379–1362 B.C.E., when the pharoah decreed all Egyptian gods banished but one supreme being—Aten, the god of the fully risen sun. Throughout all of Egypt the images of all the gods were defaced and the temples of Amon-Ra were desecrated or destroyed. In addition to denigrating the ancient gods of Egypt, Akhenaton moved his capital city to Tel el Amarna, thus denying the region of Thebes and Karnak their prestige as sacred ground. Akhenaton's crusade against the plurality of Egyptian religion was short-lived, however, and when he died, the boy-king Tutankhamen (c. 1370–1352 B.C.E.) spent his brief reign restoring the hierarchy of the old gods, including Amon-Ra.

Construction on the Great Hypostyle Hall was begun during the reign of Ramses I (reigned 1320–1318 B.C.E.), continued by his son Seti I (reigned 1318–1304 B.C.E.), and completed by Ramses II, one of the longest-reigning of Egyptian pharaohs (1304–1237 B.C.E.) and a devotee of Amon-Ra. Ramses II also extended the temple of Amon by adding a series of courtyards and ceremonial halls.

At the time of Ramses III (reigned 1198–1166 B.C.E.), the size of the temple estates covered almost 700,000 acres of land, from the Nile Delta in the north to Nubia in the south. Eighty thousand servants and slaves were designated to serve Amon-Ra in Karnak, and more than 5,000 statues reflected his glory throughout the vast temple complex. Large numbers of animals considered sacred to Amon were kept on the site at Karnak, including thousands of geese and rams and over 421,000 head of cattle.

From about 1080 B.C.E. onward, Egypt suffered a number of invasions from the Nubians, Libyans, Kushites, and Assyrians. Many of the conquerors respected the sacred site at Karnak and some, such as the Kushites, even added some buildings of their own. However, even those invaders who sought to carry away some of the stone to implement building projects of their own or even to deface some of the statuary had not removed or destroyed enough of Karnak to spoil the magic of the place for the generations yet unborn. The whole of the ancient site remains in good condition today, and each year convinces thousands of tourists from all over the world that Karnak is indeed "the most select of places."

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LEMURIA AND MU

Lemuria and Mu are sometimes distinct and sometimes interchangeable names for a legendary lost continent, which, according to its proponents, existed in the Caribbean Ocean and had many of the attributes associated with **Atlantis.** The mysterious lost lands of Lemuria and Mu were conceived of during the nineteenth century, when the theory of evolution was introduced and was among the advances in the sciences that challenged conventional ways of understanding life. Archaeological discoveries among the ruins of the Egyptians, Mayans, and other societies were forcing new interpretations of history, and radical forms of mysticism, such as **Theosophy,** were becoming popular.

References to the lost continent of Mu can be traced back to 1864 and a French archaeologist named Charles-Etienne Brasseur de Bourbourg. He had become fascinated by hieroglyphics found on Mayan ruins that dated back several centuries. By the time Spanish explorers had reached the New World areas of Mexico and Central America in the 1500s, the great centers of Mayan civilization had long been abandoned and were being reclaimed by the rainforest.

Brasseur traveled to Spain to look at artifacts of Mayan civilization. In a library in Madrid he discovered a purported guide to Mayan hieroglyphics. Using the guide to decipher a rare Mayan manuscript, he learned about an ancient land that had sunk into the ocean after a volcanic eruption. Figures corresponding to letters "M" and "U" were connected with the lost land, and Brasseur determined that the lost continent was named Mu. Using that same guide, however, later scholars were unable to decipher such a story, or to even make sustained and meaningful text from the hieroglyphics. It was not until the mid-twentieth century that a thorough guide to interpreting Mayan hieroglyphics was established.

BY the 1500s, the great centers of Mayan civilization were abandoned and were reclaimed by the rainforest.

Nevertheless, Brasseur's version of a lost continent won some favorable attention. An archaeologist named Augustus Plongeon (1825–1908) used a similar key to decipher hieroglyphics at one of the first excavations of Mayan sites. He allegedly uncovered a story about two brothers who vied for a queen named Moo (which he connected with Mu). One of the brothers was killed, and the other took power just before a catastrophe struck Mu. Queen Moo fled before the catastrophe. Speculations quickly added that she had reached Egypt, became revered as the goddess Isis, founded Egyptian civilization, and directed the building of the Sphinx.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Charles Darwin's (1809–1882) theory of evolution, *Origin of the Species*, was published. Although the theory became widely accepted among scientists, it was also extremely controversial. One point of contention concerned an animal and layers of sediment found in South Africa, the island of Madagascar, and India—all of which are in the same region but separated by expanses of water. The lemur, a predecessor of monkeys, had the same traits in each locale. According to Darwin's theory, the animal should have developed some unique traits respective to the different environments. Similarities in sediments in each of the areas also raised questions. Scientists began to speculate that a land bridge once existed in the Indian Ocean that connected the three areas.

English zoologist Phillip L. Schlater proposed the name Lemuria after the lemur for

this former land now sunk in the Indian Ocean. The land bridge idea was supported by noted scientists, including German naturalist Heinrich Haeckel (1834–1919) and Alfred Russell Wallace (1823–1913), who had developed a theory of evolution similar to Darwin's. Seas and continents were thought to be immobile in those days before the theory of continental drift, and no fossils of early humans had yet been found. Haeckel used Lemuria, which had sunk into the sea, to explain the absence of early human fossils. Lemuria became a respected term among educated people in Europe and America.

Thus, the lost continent of Lemuria began with science, but its renown spread and has been sustained through mysticism. Science has since discounted the land bridge and lost continent theories, and evidence of early humans was found during the twentieth century in Africa.

James Churchward (1832–1936) was among the first mystics to promote Lemuria as the lost continent of an advanced human race. Beginning in the 1870s, Churchward said Lemuria was a paradise of 64 million people, and that it was destroyed around 10,000 B.C.E. According to Churchward, Lemurians developed homes with transparent roofs, lived to be hundreds of years old, and were capable of telepathy, astral travel, and teleportation. Lemuria, according to Churchward, was about 5,000 miles long and 3,000 miles wide and stretched to the Pacific Ocean, where islands of the present day are former mountain peaks of the lost continent.

In the 1880s, **Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** (1831–1891) formed the **Theosophical Society** with psychic investigator Henry Steel Olcott. In her book *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), she claimed to have learned of Lemuria in *The Book of Dzyan*, which she said was composed in Atlantis and shown to her by survivors of that lost continent. Her source may have been Sanskrit legends that tell of the former continent of Rutas that sank beneath the sea.

Lemurians, according to Blavatsky, were the third of seven root races of humankind. They were hermaphrodites with psychic abilities and a third eye. Atlanteans, she stated, were the fourth root race. They evolved from Lemurians after much of Lemuria sank, and they lived on the edge of the continent in the northern Atlantic. Atlantis sank around 8,000 B.C.E., according to Blavatsky, and its inhabitants fled to central Asia.

Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), who founded **Anthroposophy,** was another proponent of Lemuria. Other mystics have envisioned the Elders of Lemuria, known as the Thirteenth School, who moved to an uninhabited plateau of Central Asia now called Tibet before the catastrophe that wiped out their land. They established a library and a school of spiritual adepts known as the Great White Brotherhood.

Certain land masses on the planet are supposedly the last remains of Lemuria, from Pacific islands (Fiji, Hawaii, and Easter Island) to the west coast of the United States. According to some Lemurian enthusiasts, in 1972 the ruins of a submerged Lemurian city was found between Maui and Oahu in the Hawaiian island chain and was covered up in a top-secret project by U.S. Naval Intelligence.

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LOURDES

The healing Grotto of Bernadette at Lourdes, France, was constructed on the site where 14-year-old Bernadette Soubrious (1844–1879) claimed to have conversed with Mother Mary in 1858. Since the time that the miracle occurred to the young miller's daughter, pilgrims have journeyed to Lourdes to seek healing from the waters of the natural spring that appeared in the grotto next to the Gave de Pau River. Consistently, for decades, an average of 200,000 people visited the shrine each year. The celebration of the 100th anniversary of Lourdes in 1958 brought more than two million persons into the small

community in southern France. In the 1990s, annual attendance rose to more than five million per year.

On February 11, 1858, Bernadette Soubrious and her two sisters were gathering firewood outside Lourdes when she fell behind the younger girls. That was the first time that Bernadette saw the apparition of a lady dressed in white with a blue sash and a yellow rose on each foot standing in a grotto next to the river. The lady did not speak, but made the sign of the cross before she disappeared.

Bernadette returned to the grotto a second time, but it was not until the lady's third appearance that she spoke and asked Bernadette if she would like to meet her every day for two weeks. Bernadette enthusiastically agreed, and word of her visitations soon spread throughout the entire village. Crowds gathered to observe the girl and hear what messages she would relay from the lady. The apparition insisted again and again that priests must build a chapel in the grotto and that Bernadette was to drink from the spring there. Since there was no spring in sight, Bernadette began to scrape at the muddy ground until a spring bubbled forth with waters that were immediately believed to contain curative powers. Water from that same spring is still piped to a bathing house where pilgrims gather to receive its healing blessings.

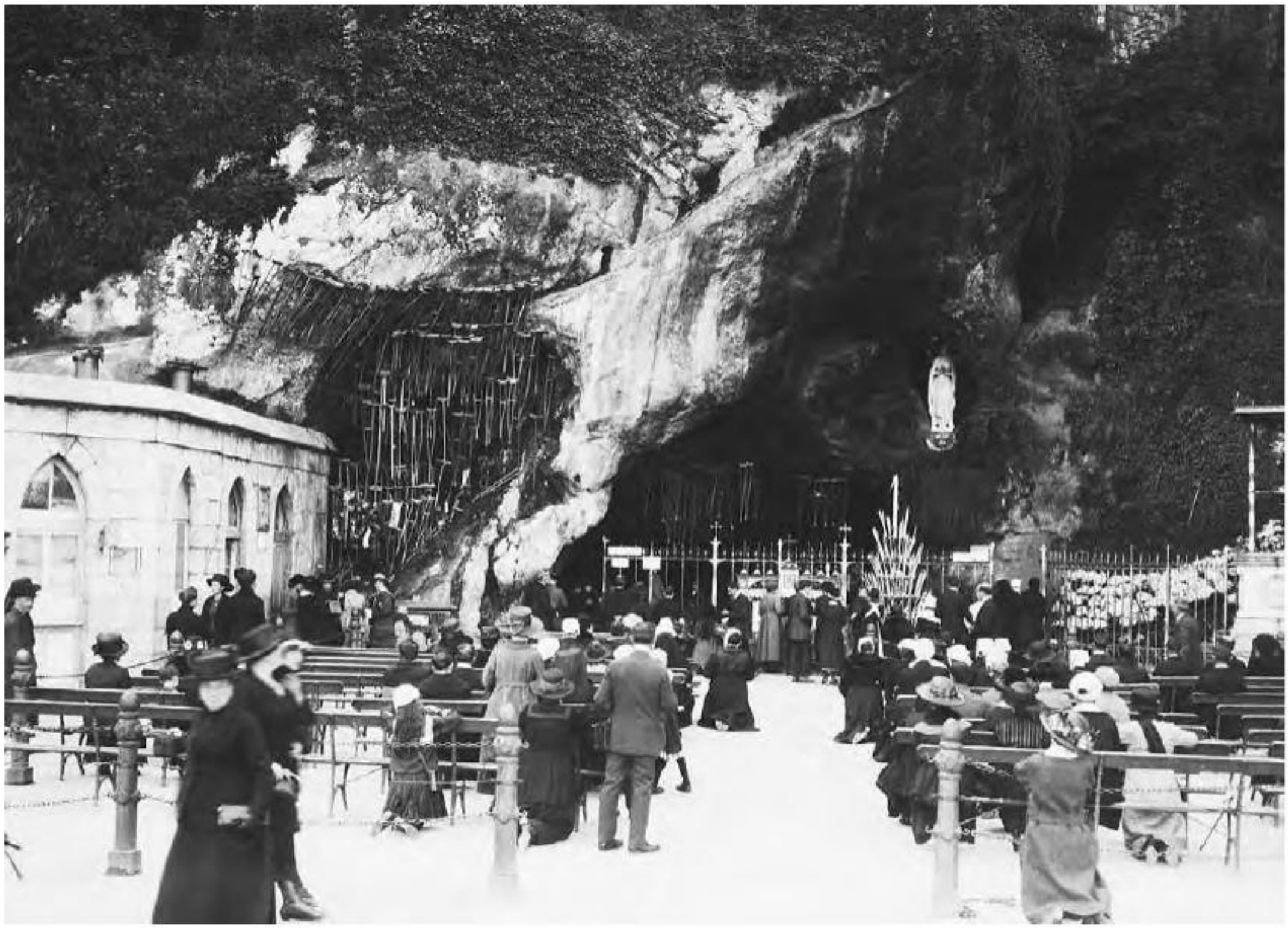
Upset by the disturbances that she was causing in the town, the local police and civil authorities interrogated Bernadette, but they could not dissuade her from continuing her meetings by the grotto. The local parish priest, Father Peyramale, also did his best to convince Bernadette that she was only imagining the visions. Then, on March 25, after her sixteenth visit, the lady revealed her name to Bernadette, who, when questioned by the skeptical priest, relayed the lady's identity as "The Immaculate Conception." Because that title had been applied to Mother Mary by Catholic theologians only four years before and was only known to the clergy, Father Peyramale thought it highly unlikely that a teenaged girl who could not read or write and spoke only a crude, provincial form of French would know the phrase used to define the doctrine that declared Mary free from the taint of original sin.

Exterior view of a chapel in Lourdes, France. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

With the official endorsement of the clergy, the grotto at the edge of the river would soon support a healing chapel and begin to attract pilgrims from great distances. After 1866, when a railway line was completed to Lourdes, many thousands of those afflicted with various illnesses began to arrive in the little French town. In that same year, 22-year-old Bernadette Soubrious left for a convent in Nevers, hundreds of miles to the north. She died there in 1879.

AFTER Bernadette's sixteenth visit, the lady revealed her name as "The Immaculate Conception."

Since the 1860s, thousands of pilgrims have left their crutches and canes at the shrine. Thousands more claim to have been cured of advanced cancers. On May 3, 1948, the Bishop of Nice acted at the request of the Lourdes Medical Commission and declared Rose Martin's healing to be a miraculous cure. When Rose Martin arrived at Lourdes in 1947, her total weight was a scant 70 pounds. She had undergone surgery for cancer of the uterus in February 1947, and the cancer had continued to spread despite several subsequent operations. Doctors could prescribe only morphine to enable the suffering woman to endure the pain of her affliction.



Worshippers at the Lourdes grotto. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

On July 3, 1947, after three baths in the waters of the shrine, Rose Martin returned to her hotel. Her appetite had suddenly returned. The awful pain had disappeared. Several of her medical complications had vanished. In 1948, Madame Martin was examined by the medical bureau at Lourdes and declared to be totally free of cancer. In the interim she had gained 34 pounds. She had become the picture of health and vitality. More than 20 leading French doctors and surgeons confirmed the unusual healing. Annual checkups and subsequent physical examinations revealed that she remained free of the disease.

Dr. Alexis Carrel (1873–1944), an American surgeon who won the Nobel Prize in 1912 in physiology and medicine for his extensive work in suturing blood vessels, transplanting organs, and inventing the mechanical heart, witnessed a miracle healing firsthand when he visited Lourdes in the 1940s. Only an hour before a young woman named Marie Bailly had been carried to the waters of Lourdes, Carrel had examined her and saw that she was dying of tuberculosis, a disease that had afflicted her for years. As he observed her, Carrel saw her pain-wracked body suddenly surge forward as if filled with a powerful force. Her paleness was replaced with a rosy hue, and as the surgeon and his colleagues watched in astonishment, they saw her swollen abdomen transformed from a misshapen lump and flattened to a smooth stomach. Her pulse calmed, her respiration returned to normal, and she asked for the first food she had been able to consume in almost a week. Marie Bailly was found to be cured of her terminal illness.

Although there are thousands of cures and healings claimed by men and women who have immersed themselves in the cold spring waters of the shrine, the Lourdes Medical Bureau has established certain criteria that must be met before they will certify a cure as miraculous:

- The affliction must be a serious disease. If it is not classified as incurable, it must be diagnosed as extremely difficult to cure.
- There must be no improvement in the patient's condition prior to the visit to the Lourdes shrine.
- Medication that may have been used must have been judged ineffective.
- The cure must be totally complete.
- The cure must be unquestionably definitive and free of all doubt.

Such stringent requirements set by members of the medical profession in order to qualify as a miraculous healing do little to deter the five million visitors each year who travel to the small town in the foothills of the Pyrenees in search of their own miracle.

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Machu Picchu

At its height during the 1400s, the Incan empire was the largest in the world, stretching 2,500 miles north to south and supporting a population of more than ten million people. The temples, extensive roads, elaborate masonry, and treasures of gold and silver associated with the Incas date from around 1200 through the 1400s. The city of Cuzco became the powerful center of an empire that spread to encompass more than 100 small nations.

Roads were built to criss-cross the entire empire, running through valleys and along the sides of mountains. The Incas never developed the wheel, but the roads provided the means to move large amounts of stone and goods used to build and sustain great cities. Trained runners were used to communicate messages throughout the empire. The Inca cultivated maize and potatoes, domesticated the llama as a beast of burden, crafted boats of balsa wood to travel on rivers and streams, and built suspension bridges of rope, among their many accomplishments.

The empire was primarily expanded by three emperors, Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui and his descendants Topa Inca Yapanqui (ruled 1438–1471) and Huayna Capac (ruled 1493–1525). The latter's sudden death in 1525 came before he named a successor, and the nation became bitterly divided, a situation that still raged when the Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro (c. 1475–1541) and his army of about 400 men arrived in 1532. Lured by vast amounts of gold they found in Inca cities, the conquistadors kidnapped an Inca leader and held him for ransom. The ransom, estimated at about $50 million in gold and silver, was paid, but the leader was executed anyway.

DURING the 1400s, the Inca empire was largest in the world, stretching 2,500 miles and supporting a population of over ten million people.

Diseases such as smallpox, previously unknown in the New World, had begun spreading as early as the 1520s. The combination of disease, estimated to have killed two-thirds of the Incan population, and military reinforcements from Spain after Pizarro showed off the great treasures he had found, allowed the Spaniards to subdue the Incan empire, systematically sweeping through and plundering all the great Incan centers. They missed one, however, and it would remain lost to the world until 1912. The majestic site is called Machu Picchu, a city in the clouds that rests at 8,000 feet in altitude between two mountains, Huayana Picchu ("young mountain") and Machu Picchu ("ancient mountain"), and overlooks a sacred river and valley called Urubamba.

In 1911, Hiram Bingham (1875–1956), a historian from Yale University who was per-

An aerial view of the ancient Incan city Machu Picchu. (JOHN M. BARTH)

forming research in Peru, was alerted by a local farmer, Melchior Artega, about ancient ruins high up in the mountains. Bingham followed the lead and rediscovered the site of Machu Picchu. He publicized his findings in 1912, and in April of 1913 *National Geographic* magazine devoted an entire issue to the site.

THE *Temple of the Sun is believed to have an astronomical significance.*

Even though many mysteries abound about Machu Picchu, what has been discovered about the site since 1911 has led some to call it "the eighth wonder of the ancient world." Machu Picchu features religious shrines and temples, baths and water systems, plazas, fountains, and elaborate masonry work. Stones are fitted so tightly in structures that they have withstood almost five hundred years of weathering and the lush growth of vegetation. Machu Picchu, situated on a long, narrow strip between mountains and above a valley, has a series of open plazas, and was divided into three sections—agricultural, urban, and religious.

The agricultural section comprises a series of terraces bordered with irrigation channels. Crops were cultivated on levels above the channels to avoid erosion. The farm area is dotted with small buildings believed to be lookout huts. The urban area is on the part of the ridge that descends abruptly into the valley. A 67-step staircase rises up from the valley to the largest urban sector. Most of the structures have one room with solid walls of intricately fitted stones. The finest structures are believed to have housed high-ranking teachers. Many of the walls have niches the size of adult humans sculpted into them; the purpose of the niches is unknown.

A plaza with a large rock in the center separates the urban and religious areas. Among the structures in the religious center is the

Intihuantana Shrine, a temple carved from granite. The temple is considered a shrine to sun and stone, both of which were worshipped by Incas, and is also believed to have served as an astronomical observatory. Some of the buildings in the religious center are three-walled structures, including what is called the Great Central Temple and the Temple of the Three Windows. The latter building is believed to be associated with an Incan legend that their original ancestors emerged from a cave that had three windows. Also located in the religious center is the Temple of the Sun, a circular tower believed to have an astronomical orientation.

The most accepted view of Machu Picchu portrays it as a religious sanctuary serving high priests and "virgins of the sun." More than 80 percent of the graves found on the site contain the bones of females, considered to have been "chosen women." Machu Picchu was thought to have been visited by selected members of Incan royalty who were transported along special roads that could only be used with their permission. Since the roads were seldom used, few Inca knew about them. The conquistadors never found the way, nor did they find Incas who could lead them to the site. The reason why Machu Picchu was abandoned remains a secret lost to time.

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MAYAN TEMPLES

When the Spanish conquistadors claimed areas of Central America and Mexico in the sixteenth century, they discovered the ruins of a great civilization, that of the Mayans, who had vanished and left evidence of their lost grandeur in massive structures that had been overwhelmed by the surrounding rain forest. The native people could not explain the significance of the sprawling, vacant cities to the conquistadors. Unlike the great Incan cities, the Mayan centers had long been abandoned.

The ruins of the Mayans did not begin to reveal their secrets for 300 years. Since the nineteenth century, enough information has been gathered about the Mayan structures to sketch a history of their development, but the reasons why the great structures were suddenly abandoned, and the exact purposes of the massive and elaborate buildings, continue to remain trapped in the past.

The Mayan empire stretched south from the present-day Mexican states of Veracruz, Yucatán, Campeche, Tabasco, and Chiapas to almost all of Guatemala and parts of Belize and Honduras. Ruins in the Guatemalan highlands include Copán, a typical Mayan center with plazas, pyramids, a court for ball games, and blocks of stone inscribed with hieroglyphics. Tikal, another Mayan center in Guatemala, had more than 3,000 structures in a six-square-mile area. Vast palaces with hundreds of rooms, rows and rows of wooden huts, and increasingly larger buildings approaching the center of Tikal accommodated a surrounding community that may have numbered as many as 90,000 people.

Palenque is among the centers in the middle area of the Mayan region, where the rain forest is thickest. Among the finds there is the Temple of Inscriptions, a 65-foot-high pyramid. A secret passageway was found by archaeologists in 1952 that led to an elaborate tomb. Riches of jade, finely carved, life sized statues, and an elaborately sculpted sarcophagus were discovered. When modern archaeologists finally mastered Mayan hieroglyphics in the 1970s, inscriptions on the wall of the temple were deciphered. They identified the corpse as Sun Lord Pacal and described his life. Tracing references of dates with the Mayan calendar, another example of Mayan achievement, archaeologists were able to determine that Sun Lord Pacal was

born in 603, ascended to the throne in 614, and died in 683. The 69 steps that run up the front of the temple each represent a year of his reign.

The Yucatan peninsula along the Gulf of Mexico forms the northernmost region of Mayan settlement. Among the ruins there are Chichen Itza, which feature a collection of pyramids, temples, and other common Mayan structures as well as an observatory where the movements of the Sun and Moon and the planets Mars, Venus, and Jupiter were charted. Further inland lies Uxmal, site of two temple pyramids, a complex of four buildings around a courtyard, and the Palace of Governors with magnificent terraces and a stone mosaic frieze more than 300 feet long (a mosaic consists of small, inlaid materials of various colors that form a pattern or a picture, and a frieze is a richly ornamented band or line on a building).

The various ruins were not excavated and examined until the latter half of the nineteenth century. They show that Mayans developed systems of mathematics, writing, and astronomy and erected monumental forms of architecture. Subsequent discoveries showed their calendar recorded dates as far back as 600 B.C.E. By the first century B.C.E., they specifically used a calendar that had 18 20-day months—matching the Mayan base-20 mathematical system (the contemporary mathematical system used in the West is base-10).

FROM *800 to 500 B.C.E., the Mayans began erecting modest burial monuments.*

Because of the state of decline in which the conquistadors found Native Americans of the region, and fueled by cultural bias that made Europeans skeptical that less-advanced people could create such monumental structures, many early explorers believed that the engineering feats of the Mayans had been directed by peoples from the eastern Mediterranean region. Phoenicians and Egyptians had been seafaring people in ancient times. Perhaps they had sailed across the Atlantic Ocean. Those who believed such theories speculated that the Mediterranean seafarers had directed the Mayans to build pyramids, taught them hieroglyphics, and brought them social order.

Variations on the theme of an external influence on the ancient Mayans continued to develop. Instead of Egyptians or Phoenicians, however, it was advanced Asians who first reached the Mayans and taught them secrets of architecture and mathematics, written language and astronomy. Or perhaps inhabitants of the legendary continent of Atlantis spread their knowledge to various peoples of the world, including the Mayans.

Excavations helped clarify some of the mysteries involving the Mayans. They had distinctive cultural traits evident in similarities of architecture—including pyramids, terraces, and ball courts—and artistic styles of paintings and pottery spread throughout their empire. When modern archaeologists learned how to read Mayan hieroglyphics by establishing meanings and patterns in the images, a history emerged that showed the Mayan centers were not occupied by peaceful astronomers and the large structures did not serve specifically as ceremonial sites. Instead, the hieroglyphics boasted of the accomplishments of a war-like elite. Many of the great Mayan buildings were monuments to great military leaders. Settlements with large structures served as centers for trade, but primarily for the accumulation of riches for the elite of Mayan society. Those who contributed to culture, artisans and astronomers among them, were highly esteemed, but a ruling elite held the riches and the power.

The Mayans learned to grow maize, beans, squash, and cacao. They raised cotton and developed a textile industry for spinning, dyeing, and weaving cloth, but they did not develop metal tools, domesticate large beasts of burden, and, in spite of building an elaborate system of roads, did not develop the wheel. Over the centuries, the Mayans domesticated the dog and the turkey, and they discovered how to mine copper, gold, silver, and jade, creating valuable and prized items.

From 800 to 500 B.C.E., the Mayans began erecting modest burial monuments, which by

Mayan temple in Tikel, Guatemala. (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

circa 400 B.C.E. to 250 C.E. had evolved into terraced, pyramidal shapes. The Mayan pyramids differ from those in Egypt, where the sides of the structures converge to form a pointed top. The pyramidal structures of the Mayans reach a certain height, then level off to form a flat platform on which temples were built.

Mayan civilization thrived until around 800 when a decline began. Tikal was abandoned, and the process of recording events stopped there by 900. Building began in another center, Seibal, in the southern lowlands in 830 but ended abruptly around 900. Uxmal showed more development around 850, but it was abandoned around 925. Chichen Itza was abandoned around 987. It was subsequently occupied, like some of the other centers, but new massive structures were not built and the old temples did not serve the same functions as they had in the past.

In 2000, near the present-day village of Cancuen, Guatemala, a Mayan palace was discovered in a long-abandoned city named the Place of Serpents that is estimated to cover an area as large as two football fields. With 170 high-ceiling rooms and 11 courtyards, the palace was revealed to have been a prosperous center of commerce and crafts. Inscriptions on the palace walls showed that it was completed by a leader named Tah ak Chaan, who ruled over Cancuen from 740 to around 790. Unlike other Mayan centers, there are as yet no indications that the rulers of the area engaged in warfare. There are no pyramids in the area, or outdoor plazas, and there appears to be a complete absence of religious symbols or any indications of the ceremonies evident in other Mayan centers. Rulers of the city appeared to specialize in commerce, not warfare, and a larger working-class group of people seemed to live in the Place of Serpents than at other Mayan centers. Hundreds of workshops where artisans plied their crafts were found.

What factors caused the demise of the Mayan empire remains a mystery. Destruction from earthquakes is evident in some Mayan centers, but not all, and earthquakes are not believed to have leveled any of the major centers. There is no evidence of mass burials that

would indicate an epidemic, such as plague, small pox, or other infectious diseases that swept through Europe during the same time as the Mayan's golden era and downfall. An isolated disruption caused by conquerors from the north, a natural catastrophe, or war among leaders of Mayan centers would have affected trade routes that ran through the interior. Tikal, a major inland center dependent on trade, would certainly have been affected by such a disruption. Twice, in the sixth and ninth centuries, Tikal seems to have undergone some form of chaos.

The great success of the Mayan culture may be a plausible reason for their downfall. As the population grew, the stress on agriculture became greater, for an expanding population requires consistently more food production. Soil erosion or drought would have greatly affected the large settlements. A decrease in production would have led to malnutrition, increasing the likeliness of disease. Some human skeletal remains from the period show signs of malnutrition, but no conclusive evidence has been found to determine a sudden, widespread catastrophe.

Strange as it may seem, the Mayan calendar may have played an influential role in the culture's decline. The calendar was used for prophecy, as well as marking the date. The Mayan calendar begins with a date relative to 3114 B.C.E., when, according to the Mayans, the world began and the first Great Cycle got underway. Thirteen future cycles were recognized, and bad things often happened at the end of such cycles. For example, one cycle ended during the 500s, at about the same time that the city of Tikal went into decline. Another decline occurred in Tikal 256 years later, also at the end of a Great Cycle, and the city was all but abandoned.

Whatever happened to the Mayans was an event of such magnitude that it caused a fracture in the long-standing practices and social order of the entire culture. The great cities continued to be occupied for decades after the hieroglyphics stopped reporting triumphs, and then the majestic temples, stately pyramids, and massive edifices were abandoned completely to the surrounding jungle. Whether or not the unknown dire events were prophesied or became self-fulfilling prophecies by the belief of a superstitious people accepting their fate is not known. According to Mayan prophecy, the end of the most current Great Cycle —2012— will end with a cataclysmic flood.

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MECCA

Mecca, known to the Muslim faithful as *Umm al-Qura*, the Mother of Cities, is the holiest place in the Islamic world. It was here that Muhammad the Prophet (c. 570–632), the Messenger of God, the founder of the Muslim faith, was born in 570, and it is here within the Great Mosque that the Ka'aba, the most sacred shrine of Islam, awaits the Muslim pilgrim. Throughout the world, wherever they may be, all devout Muslims pray five times per day, each time bowing down to face Mecca. All able-bodied Muslims who have sufficient financial means and whose absence from their families would not create a hardship must undertake a pilgrimage, a *hajj*, to Mecca once in their lifetime during the Muslim month of Dhu-al-Hijah (the twelfth lunar month).

Physically, Mecca is located about 45 miles east of the Red Sea port of Jedda, a city surrounded by the Sirat Mountains. Born into a well-to-do family, Muhammad married Khadija, a woman of means, and became the manager of her caravans. It was when he was about 40 years old and was meditating in a cave on Mount Hira that he had the first of a series of visions of the angel Gabriel who instructed him concerning the oneness of God. Later, Muhammad's many revelations and visions

The Energies of Holy Lines

About the same time ley lines were first introduced by Alfred Watkins (1855–1935) in the 1920s, a German evangelical parson named Wilhelm Teudt proposed a similar theory he called *heilige linien* (holy lines) that linked a number of standing stones, churches, crosses, and other objects of spiritual significance in Germany. Teudt's holy line theory met the same fate as Watkins's ley lines. There were so many possibilities for connecting a variety of objects on a landscape that the odds were better of finding alignments than not finding them.

Teudt made another observation that had more lasting significance. He noted that an ancient chamber constructed in the naturally formed megaliths called the Extersteine had a circular window that formed a point where rays of light at the midsummer solstice shone through, and where the moon was visible when it reached its northernmost position. He believed the Neolithic peoples (before 2000 B.C.E.) had used the site as an astronomical observatory and a calendar.

The Extersteine, which lies at the approximate latitude as Stonehenge in Great Britain, is a natural site of five sandstone pillars rising 120 feet above an area filled with caves and grottoes. It served as a ritual center for nomadic reindeer hunters, and later was the site of pagan rituals until the eighth century, when such rituals were forbidden by law. Christian monks took over the site and set up crosses and reliefs depicting biblical scenes. They abandoned it after about 1600. Many people continued to visit the Extersteine, claiming they were aware of its energy and that their physical ailments had been cured by walking among or rubbing against the stones.

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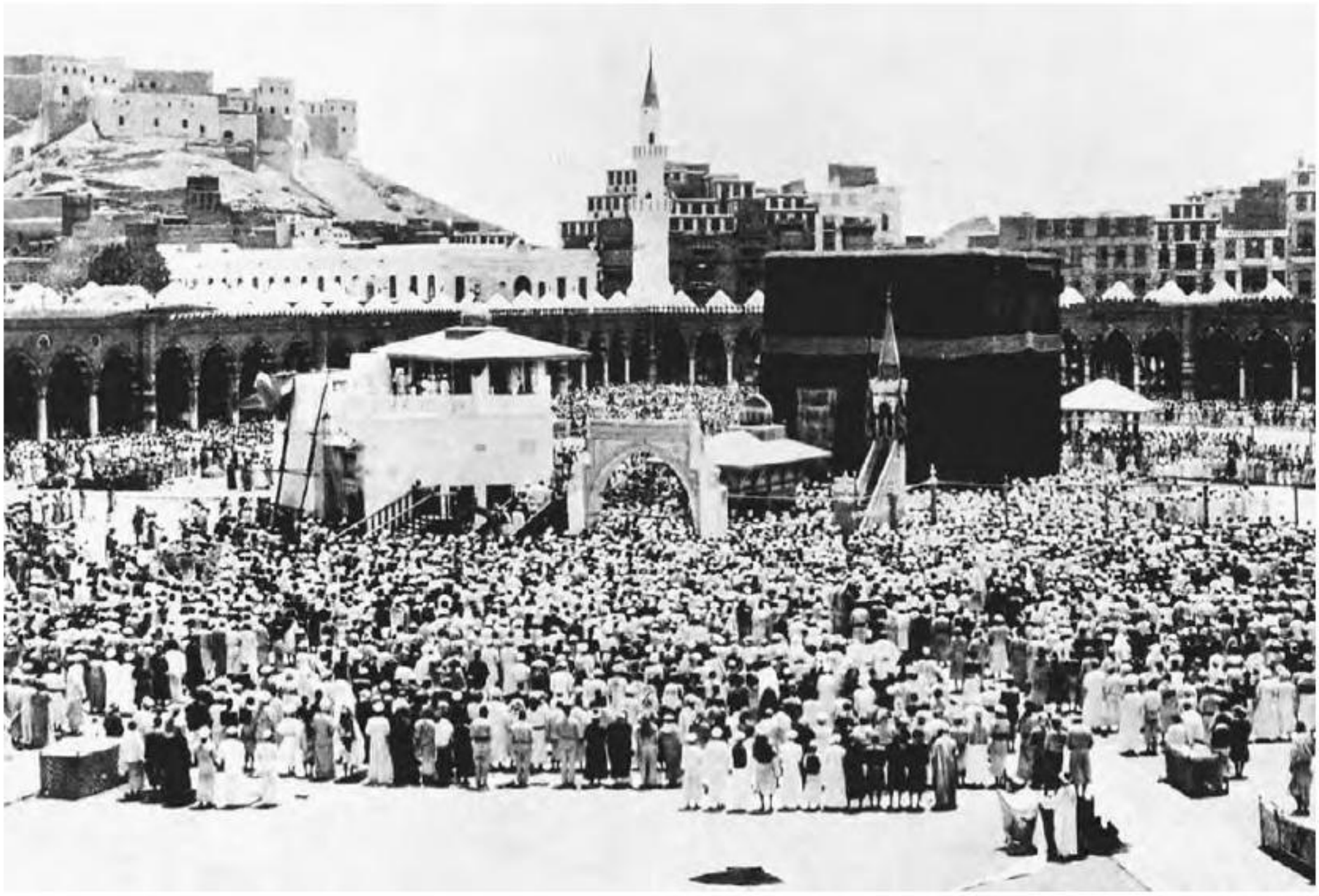
would be collected into the sacred book of Muslims, the Qur'an (or Koran), but when he first began sharing the essence of his revelations with his fellow Meccans, they rejected the teachings and reacted with great hostility when he began to lecture them concerning their vices and pagan practices.

In 622, Muhammad left Mecca for Yathrib, which was later renamed Medina, City of the Prophet, where he began to amass many followers. After eight years of strife between the people of Mecca and Muhammad, he returned to the city of his birth with an army and met with little resistance when he proceeded to cleanse the Ka'aba of pagan idols and dedicate the shrine to Allah, the One God.

On the plains of Arafat in 632, Muhammad preached to an assembled crowd that tradition numbers as some 30,000 of his followers. After he had completed his message, he declared that he had now fulfilled his mission on Earth. Two months later, he died at Medina. Within 100 years, the Muslim faith had spread from Spain to India. In the twenty-first century, Islam is one of the world's largest religions with an estimated membership of 1.2 billion.

ALL Muslims who are able to do so are required to make at least one pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca during their lifetime.

The pilgrimage (hajj) to the sacred city of Mecca and experience of worshipping at the mosque containing the Ka'aba is strictly limit-



Large crowd of Muslims making their pilgrimage to Mecca. (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

ed to those who follow the Islamic faith. There is an area of several miles around Mecca that is considered to be *haram* (restricted), and non-Muslims are forbidden to enter this sacred zone. Those Muslims who travel into this area as they progress toward the Mother of Cities must profess their having undergone a state of ritual purity and consecration. It is at this point that they set aside the clothes in which they have traveled and don a special article of clothing consisting of two seamless white sheets.

The hajj begins with a procession called the *tawaf*, which takes the pilgrim around the Ka'aba seven times. The Ka'aba is a cube-shaped structure that stands about 43 feet high, with regular sides from 36 to 43 feet. The building is draped in a black cloth (*kiswah*) that bears a band of sacred verses embroidered in gold and silver thread. In the southeastern corner of the Ka'aba is the sacred Black Stone, an ancient holy relic about 11 inches wide and 15 inches high that has been mounted in silver. Muslims believe that Allah sent the Black Stone from heaven. It is the fortunate pilgrim who manages to break free from the press of the crowd and kiss the Black Stone. Because of the great mass of humanity crowding into the Ka'aba at any given moment, it had been decreed centuries ago that the gesture of a kiss toward the stone will suffice and merit a great blessing.

The second element of the hajj is the run seven times between two small hills, al-Safwa and al-Marwa, which are enclosed and connected with a walkway immediately adjoining the mosque courtyard. The third aspect of the pilgrimage involves walking about five miles to the town of Mina, then onward to the plain of Arafat, 10 miles farther to the east. The time of the journey is spent in prayer and meditation. As the pilgrims walk back toward Mina, they stop to throw small stones at three pillars, an act which symbolically recalls the three occasions when Abraham threw stones at Satan, who was tempting him to disobey

Medicine Wheel of the Big Horn Mountains

Above the timberline in the Big Horn Mountains of northern Wyoming exists a massive Medicine Wheel whose pattern of stones etches an imperfect circle with a diameter of about 25 meters. A group of stones about four meters in diameter establishes the hub of the wheel. Twenty-eight "spokes" angle out from the hub and connect with the outer rim. The Big Horn Mountains was significant to the Crow, the Sioux, the Arapaho, the Shoshone, and the Cheyenne Indians—but none of these tribes were known for building stone monuments. Bits of wood found in one of the six smaller groups situated unevenly about the rim indicates that the Medicine Wheel has been there since at least 1760 and was likely constructed around 1700. The monument has been known to non-natives for over a hundred years, but speculation about its true purposes has only inspired mysteries and tales.

John A. Eddy, a solar physicist and astronomer on the staff of the High Altitude Observatory, National Center for Atmospheric Research, in Boulder, Colorado, became interested in the site, especially after he discovered a large, crude pile of stones oriented to the summer solstice sunrise at over 11,000 feet on the Continental Divide. Interested by this discovery, he wanted to investigate just how much the pre-contact native people might have known of astronomy, and it occurred to him that the wheel might have been an observatory. Research over two summers on the site convinced him that the Big Horn monument may have been a primitive astronomical observatory that served its creators at least as well as **Stonehenge** served its primitive astronomers. The high altitude (9,640 feet) and the clear horizons of the monument make visible the marking of sunrise and sunset at the summer solstice. The accurate knowledge of the first day of summer would have been an important for a nomadic people whose lives depended on awareness of seasonal changes.

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God's command to sacrifice his son. After they walk the five miles back to Mecca, the final stage of the hajj is achieved with a festival in which a sheep, goat, cow, or camel is sacrificed to commemorate the moment when God rescinded the command to Abraham to sacrifice his son and permitted him to slay a ram and offer its blood in Isaac's stead. The hajj concludes with a final procession around the Ka'aba. The hajj generally lasts about 13 days, but when as many as two million pilgrims crowd into Mecca to observe the annual event, it may last a day or two longer to accommodate the vast numbers of the faithful.

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THE NAZCA LINES

On the western side of the Andes mountain range are a modern town and a river named Nazca, as well as the mysterious remains of an ancient civilization also identified as the Nazca (sometimes spelled Nasca). Remnants of the Nazca civilization include a strip of impressive buildings, but they are more famous for leaving their mark on the earth in a different way—with geoglyphs, which literally means markings on the earth ("geo" for earth; "glyph" for a symbolic figure or character). Throughout a 150-square-mile area in the foothills of the Andes, the Nazca made long, straight, single lines that eventually cross other straight lines to form geometrical figures, such as trapezoids, triangles, and rectangles. Other lines lead to images of a bird, a whale, assorted human figures, and even such everyday objects as an ancient loom.

The Nazca Lines are located in an extremely arid area in Peru between the Andes mountain range and the Pacific Ocean. The territory lies between two rivers, the Nazca and the Grande, that border two valleys and an alluvial plain (a dry area composed of silt, sand, and gravel). Underground channels of water that surfaced to forms wells (puquios) were tapped by an ancient people long vanished by the time the lines were rediscovered in the 1920s.

The extent of the Nazca Lines was not appreciated until the 1930s, when pilots of the first airplane flights in Peru reported a more extensive and varied collection of geogylphs than had previously been known. The geoglyphs were originally thought to mark channels for water, but the reports from pilots indicated the lines were much more complex. Torriba Mejìa, a Peruvian archaeologist, introduced results of the first modern scientific examination of the area to an international conference of archaeologists in Lima, Peru, in 1939.

The layout of lines shows a sophistication with such geometrical figures as trapezoids—a rectangle where one end is larger than the other—triangles, and rectangles. Additionally, they lead to the more than 40 animal figures (including a monkey, a spider, a dog, a llama, and a bird with a tail 160 feet long) and some spiral patterns. The three most prominent explanations of the lines connect them either with the acquisition of water, with astronomical purposes, or with sacred rituals of the Nazca people.

The connections between the Nazca Lines and the acquisition of water dates to the rediscovery of the lines in the 1920s, when scientists were studying ancient irrigation techniques. A local myth about a huge sand dune called Cerro Blanco, which supposedly conceals a vast lake that feeds underground water channels, or that once erupted and watered the region, reflects the local preoccupation with water.

The "radiating centers" where many lines meet are located at bases of hills and at the elevated rim of a valley, where seasonal rivers run. Many lines parallel watercourses and

often end abruptly, close to a river. A trapezoid appears at the edge of a river valley; the larger end of the trapezoid is located right near the edge where a seasonal river flows, perhaps serving as a marker.

This connection between the lines and sources of water has been interpreted in terms of religion, when ancient ritual processions were made to places where water can be expected to accumulate. The Nazca people, according to the theory, walked along the lines leading to areas from which water came, where they may have paid tribute to their gods or chanted prayers to them to bring them water.

The ancient Nazca people formed the lines by raking away the topsoil to uncover a lighter-colored clay, and they piled the topsoil along the sides of the yellow-white grooves. The results were grooves etched into the ground that remained lighter in color than the surrounding area. The densest concentration of Nazca Lines occurs in a place called Ingenio Valley, where seasonal rivers run from accumulated moisture in the Andes. The Ingenio Valley site became the focus for study by archaeologists, primarily to help trace irrigation routes to seasonal rivers.

Remains were found of two primary settlements, Cahauchi and La Estaqueria. Cahauchi had a complex of buildings two miles long and about two-thirds of a mile wide that included pyramids reaching 70 feet high, village squares, and cemeteries. Based on carbon dating of pottery found at the site, the community thrived from about 100 to 600. Similar pottery found along lines leading to Cahauchi date as late as 800, suggesting the center may have been abandoned by 600 but still remained an important ceremonial site for a couple of centuries afterward. Radiocarbon dating shows that La Estaqueria was begun after Cahauchi was deserted.

Historian Paul Kosok of Long Island University, New York, came to Nazca in 1941 to research the topic of irrigation among ancient civilizations. As he paused to rest on a hilltop, he noticed a line running directly to the setting Sun. The date was June 21, the day of the winter solstice in the southern hemisphere. The line marked the point on the horizon where the Sun set and the line leading in the opposite direction corresponded with the sunrise on that day.

LEY LINES AND ENERGY ALIGNMENTS

In 1921, Alfred Watkins (1855–1935) coined the term "ley lines" when explaining his theory that such ancient sites around Britain as various stone circles, stone groupings, burial mounds, and places of worship had been deliberately constructed to form certain alignments between and across the landscape. Except for a few isolated cases, most ley claims did not match the criteria of straight alignment, and often incorporated structures from different eras.

Neverthless, the belief that many megaliths erected by neolithic peoples were placed along energy lines persists. Others take a more practical view: such alignments could have served as signaling devices where watchers could provide advance alert miles away about approaching armies.

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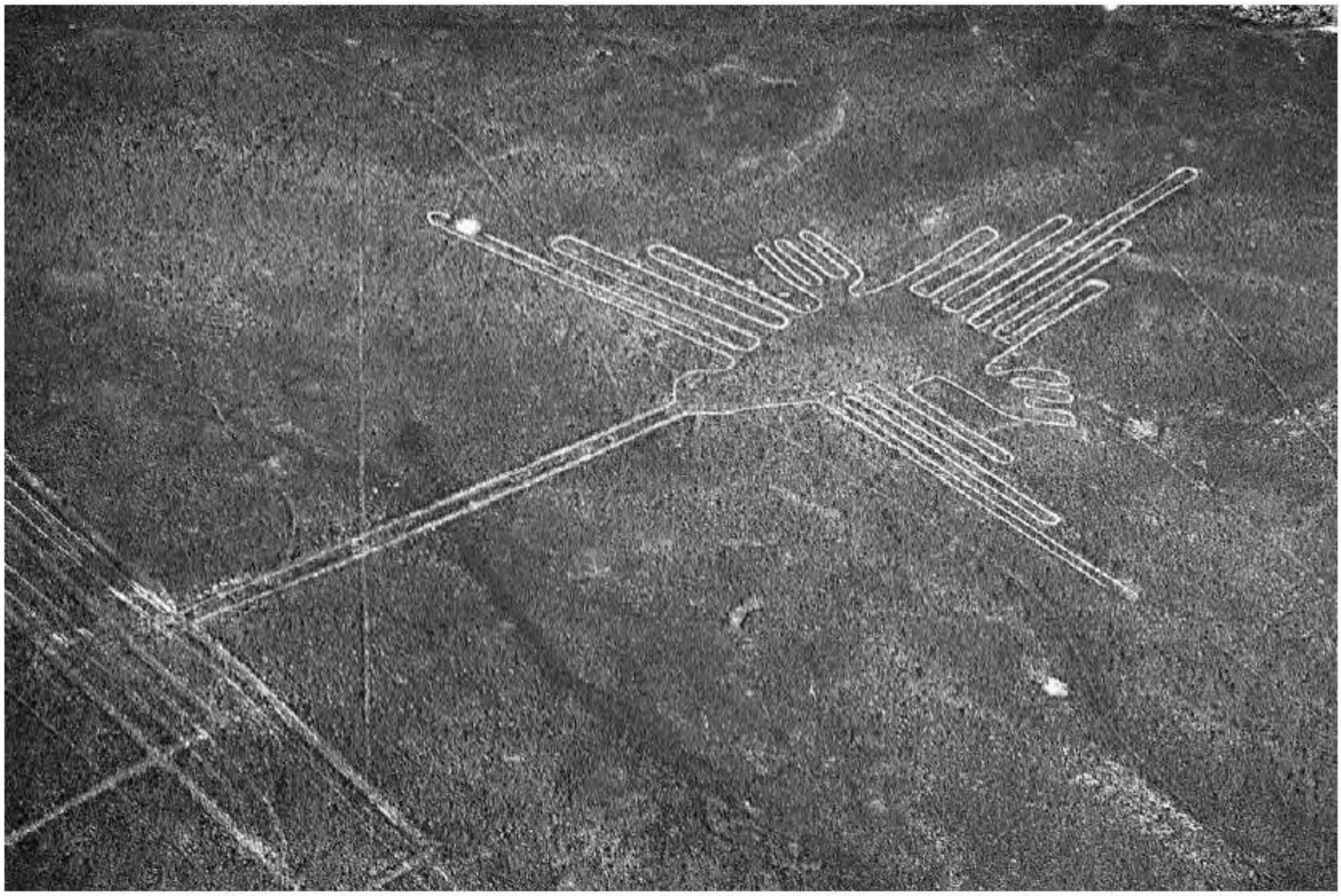
THE *Nazca Lines are located in Peru between the Andes mountain range and the Pacific ocean.*

Archaeologists began to link the geoglyphs with constellations: the figure of a large monkey was believed to correspond to the Big Dipper (or the Great Bear in northern climes), and other figures were believed to correspond to Pleiades and Orion. Maria Reiche, a translator and mathematician living in Lima, was



Aerial view of a Nazca line depicting a hummingbird. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

brought to the site by Kosok. She remained there for the next 50 years and made the study of the Nazca Lines her life work, represented in *Contributions of Ancient Peru to the History of Geometry and Astronomy* (1993).

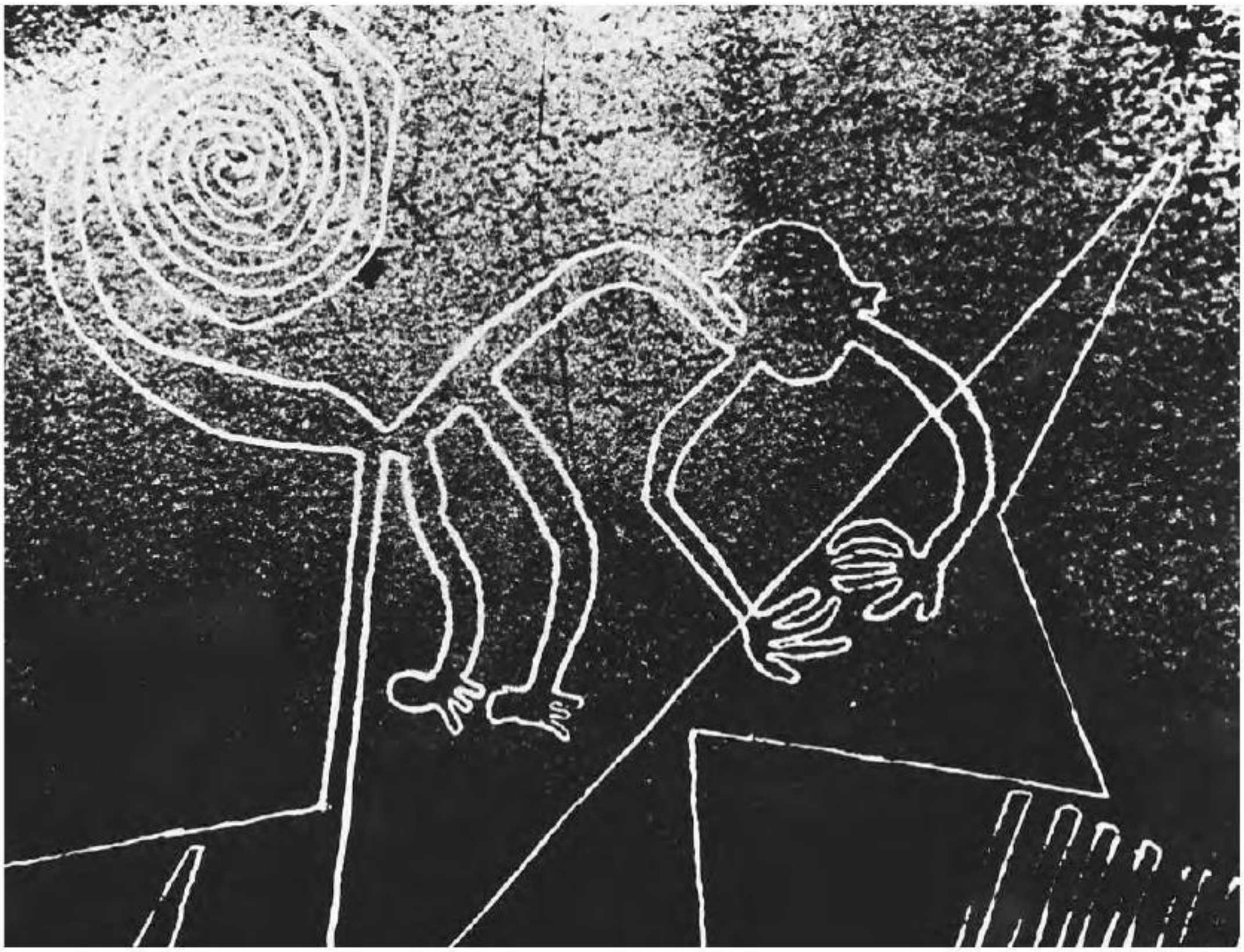
THERE *are over 800 Nazca lines made by an unknown culture.*

The theory that the Nazca Lines have astronomical purposes has been effectively challenged. In 1967, for example, Gerald Hawkins, an astronomer based at Boston University, used a computer to create a map of the sky over Nazca covering a 7,000-year period. The figures and lines on the ground were matched against actual settings of the solar system and constellations. Only 20 percent of the lines aligned with the rising and setting of the Sun and Moon for practical purposes, and there was no consistency between figures and constellations.

Nevertheless, the lines that do match the rising and setting of the Sun suggest the lines could have served as a calendar. Being alerted about an upcoming season when the rivers were going to run, and when they would be dry, helped the community organize—knowing when to clear irrigation ditches, and when to plant seeds, for example.

During the 1970s, archaeologist Helaine Silverman of the University of Texas theorized that the lines were marked out only after a period of drought. The gods had failed, or perhaps, as she contended, priests living at the ceremonial center in Cahauchi lost the veneration of the people when prolonged drought set in. If indeed the lines were formed after Cahauchi fell into decline, she argued, the lines represent the practical purpose of a community struggling to tap a basic necessity.

The idea that the Nazca Lines served a spiritual function can encompass the water



Monkey figure among the Nazca desert figures in Peru. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

and astronomy-related theories. Similar ancient lines found in present-day Bolivia, which borders Peru, were to be used in ritual processions. That rituals related to water took on spiritual dimensions in Nazca would hardly be surprising, for the area averages one-half inch of rainfall every two years.

In addition to geoglyphs that seem to correspond to constellations, a number of the figures resemble water animals (a frog, a duck, a whale, for example), all of which are replicated on Nazca pottery. In addition to rain dances and rituals, the Nazca, like many other ancient societies, had a priestly caste that included shamans. Entering trances or performing rituals to get in touch with animal spirits is a common practice among shamans, and the bestiary images of the Nazca could reflect the animals they respected and the animal spirits a shaman would want to tap.

In October 2001, Colgate University professor Anthony Aveni said that his 30-year aerial and ground survey of the more than 800 Nazca Lines had led him to conclude that the unknown culture that made the strange markings had been practicing water magic. According to the results of his research, the approximately 62 points where the lines converge occur at bends and kinks in rivers or high places in the Andes from which water would flow. The lines were intended to be walked on, by the people while they prayed to the gods to make the land fertile.

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THE GREAT PYRAMID (OF KHUFU), AT GIZA

When the Greek historian Herodotus (c. 484–between 430 and 420 B.C.E.) reported on the Great Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops, in Greek) during the fifth century B.C.E., his inquiry was impeded because the door leading into the pyramid was concealed. That door has since been found, but the results of passing through it and exploring the pyramid have opened up as many mysteries as those that have been explained.

Rising up on a plateau called Giza, 10 miles west of present-day Cairo, Egypt, the Great Pyramid, its two companion pyramids, and the **Sphinx** are probably the world's oldest and best-known enigmas. Among the questions swirling about the pyramids include the location of the sites from which the immense amount of rock forming them (11 million cubic yards of stone for the Great Pyramid alone) was quarried, and how it was moved and then erected into an astonishingly precise structure. What kind of surveying methods and equipment did the ancient Egyptians use to ensure that the landscape was level and their measurements were accurate? And how could the vast number of workers required for such an undertaking be mobilized, housed, and fed?

Other mysteries abound: the pyramids are situated at cardinal points on the compass, and numerous astronomical uses show knowledge of mathematics in advance of other civilizations. In addition, the body of the Pharaoh Khufu (Cheops) (twenty-sixth century B.C.E.) for whom the tomb was built, and precious objects that usually surround the bodies of royalty in Egyptian tombs, have never been found.

In fact, all three of the pyramids at Giza were erected as tombs, yet not a single body has been found in any of them. A baffling series of chambers, tunnels, and shafts, blocked passageways, corridors leading to empty spaces, and false leads confront pyramid explorers. The bodies of the pharaohs and their queens might still be buried somewhere in the pyramids—or, perhaps their remains fell victim to tomb robbing, a crime so old it is mentioned in Egyptian texts and on papyrus dating back centuries before Herodotus reported on the pyramids.

The Pyramid of Khufu, largest of ancient Egypt's 70 pyramids, stands 481 feet high, measures roughly 756 feet on each side, and covers 13 acres of land. If the blocks that form the pyramid were reduced to foot-sized square cubes and lined up, the cubes would stretch for 16,600 miles. It is generally agreed that all three pyramids at Giza, including those of the Pharaohs Khafre (Chephren, in Greek) and Menaure (Mycernius, in Greek) were built during the Fourth Dynasty of Egypt, which spanned from 2613 to 2494 B.C.E. It was a custom then that as soon as a new pharaoh ascended to the throne he began building a pyramid as a final resting place. The pyramid of Khufu is the grandest of them all and is the sole survivor among the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Having been built within seven hundred years after Egyptian civilization became stabilized, the vast structure has inspired many theories. Egyptian records, in the form of hieroglyphics, provided some information about the pyramids (for whom they were built, for example), but much information was lost during subsequent periods of decline. So much was forgotten that Egyptians themselves were speculating about some of the purposes of the pyramids by the time Greek civilization began thriving, some fifteen hundred years after the period in which the Great Pyramid is believed to have been erected.

Speculation then and now casts the pyramid as a gigantic sundial and astronomical observatory, as a symbolic stairway to heaven,

its shape simulating the way rays of sun spread from a cloud. Other scholars see the pyramid as a secret temple where rituals were performed that transformed new leaders into god-kings.

An astonishing employment of mathematics agreements bolster the mystery of the Great Pyramid. The distance of Earth to the Sun, for example, was believed to match the height in "pyramid inches" (slightly less than the common inch) of the pyramid multiplied by 10 to the 9th power (10 to 9 is also the proportion of height to width of the pyramid). The latitude and longitude lines that intersect at the pyramid run across more land than any others, leading some to believe that Giza and the monuments there represent the center of the inhabitable world. Ancient Egyptians would have had to determine the world was round in order to reach such a conclusion, a possibility accepted by some scholars. Lines extending northwest and northeast from the Great Pyramid neatly encompass the Nile Delta, the naturally formed area of deposits where the Nile River branches to flow into the Mediterranean. Deltas are formed by streams and become triangular-shaped, the same shape as the pyramids themselves.

The perfect pyramidal shape has been cited as the purpose of the Great Pyramid in that it embodies and represents a universal system of measurement in material form. One such set of calculations suggests the Egyptians were aware of the constant pi, the figure used to determine the circumference of a circle, some two thousand years before it was formulated by the Greek mathematician **Pythagoras** (c. 580–c. 500 B.C.E.).

Englishman John Taylor (1808–1887), a well educated editor who had read voraciously about Egyptian culture and the measurements of the pyramids, discovered a formula whereby dividing the length of the perimeter of a pyramid by twice its height produces 3.14159+, the numerical equivalent of pi (a constant figure used to determine the circumference of a circle: pi times a circle's diameter produces its circumference). Taylor believed that the Egyptians not only knew the formula for pi thousands of years before the Greeks, but he contended further that they knew the circumference of Earth and derived standard units of measure from Earth's circumference.

THE Great Pyramid alone contains 11 million cubic yards of stone.

The ratio of the pyramid's height to its perimeter, argued Taylor, is the same as the polar radius to Earth's circumference, 2≠. He viewed that equation, embodied in the pyramid, as an expression of the wisdom of ancients. It was the biblical God, concluded Taylor, who had instructed the pyramid builders, just as God had instructed Noah to build the ark.

Astronomer Charles Piazzi Smyth conducted studies at the pyramid and came up with another startling conclusion, expressed in his book *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid* (1980). He claimed the pyramid was also an expression of time. Through his studies, Smyth devised a measurement called the pyramid inch—an ancient measurement within one-thousandth of a British inch. The perimeter of the structure in pyramid inches equals 365,200, or 1000 x 365.2. The latter figure is the number of days in a year. Smyth concluded that the pyramids were an expression of time spanning one thousand years.

In 1894, J. Norman Lockyer (1836–1920), director of the Solar Physics Observatory in London and founder of the journal *Nature*, published *The Dawn of Astronomy*. The book argued, based on his investigations, that ancient temples and monuments in Egypt were oriented for stellar observations and served as calendars—to determine the summer solstice, for instance.

Many centuries ago, ancient Roman and Arabian historians noted the interest of Egyptians in studying the heavens and the possible uses of the pyramids as astronomical tools. Egyptian hieroglyphics make numerous references to the stars. A constellation called Sahu (corresponding to Orion) was called the home for the dead, and two pharaohs who built

pyramids outside of Giza have stellar associations in hieroglyphics (Nebka is "a star," and Djedefra is "a Sehetu star," or a star of Sahu).

THE *largest pyramid of ancient Egypt is the Pyramid of Khufu.*

During the ninth century, a caliph named Abdullah Al Mamun became convinced the Great Pyramid held astronomical charts, maps, and mathematical tables, as well as treasures. In 820, he gained entrance into the pyramid by breaking through the outer stone. After heating limestone bricks, workers doused them with cold vinegar, creating cracks in the pyramid that allowed the caliph's men to break through a wall and discover a passageway that led upward to the original entrance of the pyramid. Turning around, they descended until they located rooms identified as the King's chamber and another as the Queen's chamber. In the King's chamber they found an elaborate sarcophagus, but nothing was inside, as if it had never been used. The tombs had been looted, or they served as a purposeful deception, with the bodies and treasures located somewhere else in the pyramid. The mystery of the missing bodies and treasures continues to perplex to this day.

Subsequent findings and theories during the twentieth century tend to confirm astronomical and calendrical orientations of the Great Pyramid. The passageway discovered in the ninth century by Abdullah Al Mamun may have had an astronomical orientation as a kind of stationary telescope. The passage runs at an angle downward from the opening. From that corridor an ancient astronomer could watch and chart the passing night sky.

Two narrow shafts that were originally believed to provide ventilation in the pyramid may have had a similar astronomical purpose as the passage. It has been determined through calculations by astronomer Virginia Trimble, based on the angle of the shaft and the positions of stars from 3000 to 2400 B.C.E., that one of the shafts pointed to the Pole Star, which could have been used by Egyptians to determine the true north. Another shaft would have provided a view of the Orion/Sehu constellation every 24 hours during that same period in time.

Such findings and references contributed to a theory proposed by Robert Bauval and Adrian Gilbert in *The Orion Mystery* (1994). Noting that the third and smallest pyramid at Giza is somewhat out of line with the other two, they compared the alignment with that of three stars in the Orion constellation, and found a match. Bauval and Gilbert argued that two other pyramids also from the Fourth Dynasty—the Pyramid of Nebka (north of Giza) and the Pyramid of Djedefra (south of Giza)—together with the pyramids at Giza, form a pattern of five pyramids that align with five of the seven stars of Orion. However, the alignment does not fit quite precisely, and two corresponding pyramids are missing.

According to Herodotus, 100,000 men were needed to build the Great Pyramid. They were organized in groups that worked on the project for three-month stints. For many centuries it has been commonly believed that the workers were slaves forced to perform hard labor.

Modern scientific studies tend to support an ancient Egyptian civilization capable of acquiring the knowledge and the extended social system required for the building of such massive and sophisticated structures as the pyramids. Recent discoveries support a view that skilled engineers and masses of peasants were fed, housed, and clothed while performing work for a leader they revered as a god-king. Evidence that some of the laborers took great pride in their work is reflected in ancient graffiti. An inscription on one block of the pyramid has been translated as a signature for "The Craftsman Gang."

Egyptian civilization of the period had no beasts of burden and no wheel to assist in moving and erecting the 11 million cubic yards of stone used in the Great Pyramid. The transporting of the stone may not have been overwhelming, however. Limestone used for

the pyramids distinctly matches a large bedrock on which the nearby Sphinx was sculpted. The limestone may have been quarried, moved, and then chiseled into blocks for the pyramid. A 50-foot drop-off, now filled in by sand, occurs just beyond the temples in front of the Sphinx, perhaps a result of quarried stone. Additional stone may have arrived through shallow boats. Dry canals have been discovered that lead from Giza to the nearby Nile River, where a harbor may have been located that was subsequently obscured by the steadily encroaching desert sands.

Contemporary experiments have demonstrated that the copper chisels and stone hammers used by workers were sufficient to chip away at limestone. Tests have determined that 2.5-ton limestone blocks can be transported a fair distance in a fair amount of time to match the estimated construction time of the Great Pyramid. In the experiments, quarried rock was fashioned into blocks and transported by rope pulled by 20 to 50 men.

Taking the view that the pyramids were built from the ground up, engineers have theorized that ramps were built as the level of building rose. Using water as a lubricant, workers pushed blocks up ramps and moved the stones into place. The ramp theory is popular, considering that 96 percent of the total mass of the Great Pyramid occurs in the bottom two-thirds of the structure. With the use of ramps, work actually became easier as the pyramid rose higher.

During the 1990s, archaeologists Mark Lehner and Zahi Hawass (1947–) developed theories for the pyramid building that reduced the workforce from the 100,000 laborers cited by Herodotus to a much smaller skilled crew of laborers that worked on the Great Pyramid year-round, but were joined by thousands of other workers only during the late summer and autumn months when the Nile River overflowed and drenched agricultural fields. When the annual flooding occurred, farmers and villagers left the fields to work on the Great Pyramid for their god-king.

Teams led by Lehner and Hawass found further remains of bakeries and buildings where fish may have been processed to help feed the workforce. They also discovered bones of young male cattle and evidence that grains were delivered to the site, rather than processed there. Beef from young male cattle was thought to be food only for the wealthy. The permanent crew of workers may have enjoyed the finest food and grains as reward for the skills they were employing to erect the pyramids.

In 1997, a grid of rooms was excavated. In addition to discovering more bakeries, and many molds used for bread, the crew found shops where artisans worked. One mudbrick wall led to another complex where a seal on a wall is believed to represent the Pharaoh Khafre (2558–2532 B.C.E.). Lehner believes an entire additional complex might be unearthed, which will provide more answers, and probably more questions, about the pyramids of Giza.

In July of 2000, two mini-replicas of the pyramids were unearthed at Giza in a spot between the Sphinx and the pyramids. They contained bodies of supervisors and laborers. "Ordinary people were also allowed to use the pyramid design to construct their own tombs," concluded Hawass, director of the Giza plateau. Inscriptions in the mini-pyramids identified one corpse as a building inspector. The upper level of the tombs were reserved for technicians and craftsmen, and the lower tombs housed bodies of workmen. Some of the bodies of workmen bore splints to repair broken bones. Among inscriptions were curses, and some frescoes showed laborers at work. "This care would not have been given to slaves," noted Hawass.

ACCORDING to Greek mythology, the sphinx was a half-woman, half-lion creature that guarded the gates of Thebes.

Lehner, an archaeologist associated with the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the Harvard Semitic Museum, first traveled to Egypt during the 1970s. He

Pyramids and the Sphinx in Cairo, Egypt. (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

was inspired then by the theories of **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945), who believed that the pyramids were actually thousands of years older than they were credited. Cayce was among those mystics who believed that people from the legendary, advanced civilization of Atlantis built the pyramids not long after 10,500 B.C.E., just prior to the time when their own homeland was destroyed by a natural or human catastrophe. Lerner, while searching for evidence of Cayce's prophecies, discovered, as have so many researchers before him, that there exist many intriguing possibilities to further broaden the mystery, and the achievement, of the pyramid builders.

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THE SPHINX

The Sphinx at Giza faces due east and is referred to in some Egyptian hieroglyphics as Hamachis, the god of the rising Sun. Later, Hamachis evolved into the name Hor-em-Akhet. The akhet is an Egyptian hieroglyph in the image of two triangles, both open at the base, connected by a line, which represents where the sun rises and sets—an image that comes to life when looking out from the Sphinx to the pyramids of Cheops and Cephren at sunset on the summer solstice. As the Sun sets between the pyramids, it highlights the image of two triangles (the pyramids) connected by a line (the earth).

The Sphinx has the head of a man in Egyptian headdress sporting a spiraling beard, a feature found on many likenesses of pharaohs. It has the body of a lion, with two paws resting beneath the head and chest, and it rises 66 feet high; the leonine body at rest behind stretches for 240 feet. The Sphinx, the largest surviving statue from the ancient world, was sculpted out of a large limestone bedrock, a stone soft enough to yield to copper chisels and stone hammers, common Egyptian tools. The distinctive limestone bedrock has bands of yellowish clay—the same kind of distinctive stone that appears in many of the blocks used to form the nearby pyramids. It is generally believed that after the limestone bedrock was quarried for stone used for the pyramids, the remaining block was sculpted into the Sphinx. A sudden, 50-foot drop not far from the Sphinx might indicate an area that was quarried for the pyramids.

It is commonly believed that the Sphinx was sculpted during the same era as the pyramids were built (about 2650 to 2550 B.C.E.). According to a traditional historical view, the Sphinx has been most often associated with the Pharaoh Khafre (2558–2532 B.C.E.), who is represented by—and is presumably buried in—the second largest of the three pyramids at Giza. At least two statues of Khafre have been found that bear a striking resemblance to the face of the Sphinx. Egyptian religion had taken on Sun worship shortly before Khafre's

The Desertion of Roanoke

In 1587, a colony of 113 men, women, and children vanished from Roanoke Island. The English colonists who disappeared had remained on the island, situated off the coast of what is today North Carolina, while their governor, John White, sailed back to England to procure more supplies. When White returned in 1590, he found the settlement abandoned and overgrown.

Coming upon the deserted settlement, they found the letters "CRO" carved on a tree. In a wooden post that was new since White's departure, they found the word "CROATOAN" carved. The governor had allegedly told the settlers to leave that word if they relocated during his absence, and instructed them to carve a Maltese cross should the move have been made under threat.

One theory speculates they decided to settle inland along the Chowan River after navigating Albemarle Sound, located north and west of Roanoke. Still others assert that the colony headed to Croatoan, then intermarried with the tribespeople and eventually moved inland to become the Lumbee tribe. The Lumbee, centered far inland near the border between the Carolinas, is one of the largest Native American groups east of the Mississippi.

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reign, and since pharaohs were viewed as godkings, the association of Khafre and Hamachis is plausible. Tools and pottery discovered around the Sphinx are associated with the Fourth Dynasty, when each of the pyramid builders of Giza ruled. Nevertheless, the dating of the Sphinx remains a source of controversy, and even in ancient times, some sources dated it as preceding the pyramids.

In Greek mythology developed over two thousand years after the Egyptian use of hieroglyphics, a sphinx was a half-woman, half-lion creature that guarded the gates of Thebes, an ancient Egyptian city. A scourge fell upon the land that could only be lifted by solving a riddle posed by the sphinx: What begins life on four legs, lives most of its life on two legs, and ends life on three legs? In *Oedipus the King*, a play by the Greek dramatist Sophocles (c. 496–406 B.C.E.), the title character solves the riddle with the answer "a human," for an infant crawls on four legs before it begins to walk on two legs, then as an aged person, he or she walks with the use of a cane, or a third leg.

Limestone *cannot be dated by modern techniques such as radiocarbon dating.*

In 1967, Herbert Ricke of the Swiss Archaeological Institute uncovered a temple at the foot of the Sphinx. Niches in the temple form sanctuaries dedicated to the rising and setting of the Sun, and a colonnade court in the temple features 24 pillars, which Ricke suggested represents the 24 hours in a day.

In Sedona, Arizona, crystal and coins are offered to spirits. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

The Sphinx, in Ricke's opinion, represents the Sun god that peers into the sanctuaries of the temple.

The temple is situated on an east-west axis that points to the spring and autumn equinoxes. A second temple, constructed more than a thousand years later, is oriented toward the winter solstice. At the time the later temple was built, the Sphinx was buried up to its neck in sand and was called Hor-em-Akhet. The Sphinx itself forms an image of the akhet hieroglyphic when approached directly from Memphis, capital city during the Fourth Dynasty, when the pyramids and the Sphinx are believed to have been built. On the path from Memphis, the Sphinx appeared silhouetted between two pyramids.

The question of the age of the Sphinx was renewed during the end of the twentieth century. An article in *Omni* magazine (August 1992) detailed the work of Robert M. Schoch, a geologist whose research demonstrated that the limestone core of the Sphinx dates from 5000 B.C.E. and indicated that granite facing was added at the conventional time when the Sphinx is dated, around 2500 B.C.E. Schoch attributes the extremely weathered look of the Sphinx to erosion that began with heavy rains from the period between 5000 B.C.E. to 3000 B.C.E. Schoch's dating is based solely on geological evidence, rather than information from hieroglyphics or other histories. E. A. Wallis Budge, R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, and John Anthony West all wrote extensively on the monuments at Giza, and all date the Sphinx before the pyramids.

West promotes a theory that an advanced, pre-Egyptian civilization was responsible for the Sphinx. He believes that much of the weathering took place because of rains and flood. West points to the period around 9000 B.C.E., when the end of the Ice Age may well have affected weather patterns. A great flood, perhaps the one recounted in the biblical story of Noah, affected the Sphinx, and afterward all the structures at Giza show erosion by wind and the slow but steady encroachment of desert.

Schoch, a science professor specializing in geology at Boston University, was hired by West to explore the erosion of the Sphinx from a geological standpoint. During his first trip to Giza, Schoch noticed extreme erosion in two temples located in front of the Sphinx. Where the granite covering of the temples had slipped off, the exposed limestone beneath was extremely weathered. The granite facing suggested to Schoch that the Sphinx was restored, not constructed, during the reign of Khafre.

Subsequent studies led Schoch to conclude that the Sphinx was constructed in stages and that the structure has undergone several restorations. The head and part of the body were originally carved as far back as 5000 B.C.E. The body was completed and the face restored by chiseling away weathered limestone during Khafre's reign. However, pushing the original date of the Sphinx to 5000 B.C.E. and attributing its erosion primarily to water creates problems, for that time period predates the development of mastabas, tombs that were built before the pyramids during the period between 5000 B.C.E. and 3000 B.C.E. and that show no signs of weathering because of water.

Schoch's findings have been widely disputed by other geologists. Since the limestone cannot be dated by modern techniques (radiocarbon dating can only be used to determine

SEDONA'S SECOND CITY

Sedona, Arizona, located about 120 miles north of Phoenix, is hailed as being one of the most mystical places; in recent years it has become a New Age center. Many metaphysicians have maintained that there is a spiritual city that exists in another dimension directly above Sedona. According to these seers, the ethereal city focuses energy down on the area.

Sedona has become a region of spiritual pilgrimage since 1983 when metaphysical leader Richard Sutphen began holding seminars near the vortexes, those mysterious areas of electromagnetic anomalous energy. Many New Age teachers believe that the Sedona area retains powerful energies from the ancient Native Americans or even from pre-Amerindian civilizations and that these forces exert an influence on contemporary psychic-sensitives.

The various vortexes that many sensitive individuals believe to exist in Sedona appear to be areas of some kind of unidentified electromagnetic phenomenon that certain people insist aids them in meditation, inspiration, and revelation. UFOs, ancient Atlantean super science, Indian spirits, and ethereal inhabitants of other dimensions have also been suggested as the origin of the vortexes.

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the age of things that were once animated), the age of the Sphinx continues to be considered in the context of other monuments, and the date of 2500 B.C.E. still holds weight among Egyptologists. Reconstruction is apparent, but evidence shows that a renovation occurred around 1500 B.C.E. as ordered by Thutmose IV, who had the Sphinx rescued from being buried by desert sand.

John Anthony West argues that the Sphinx was created by refugees from Atlantis, the legendary continent that was supposedly destroyed around 9500 B.C.E. Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval, coauthors of *The Orion Mystery* (1994), credit wanderers from an advanced civilization that once thrived on the continent of Antarctica before it was frozen over during a global catastrophe at the end of the last Ice Age. Cataclysmic floods, they say, wiped out the connection of the Sphinx with an ancient, advanced civilization.

Psychic **Edgar Cayce** (1877–1945) prophesied that answers to the mysteries of the Sphinx and ancient civilizations would someday be yielded by the Sphinx. According to Cayce, a secret passageway leads from one of the Sphinx's paws to its right shoulder where there exists a Hall of Records that contains the wisdom of a lost civilization and the history of the world.

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STONEHENGE

"The more we dig, the more the mystery seems to deepen," said William Hawley (1851–1941), the official archaeologist of Stonehenge following World War I (1914–18). He was reporting to the press about his underfunded historical project that seemed to be languishing. Hawley wasn't able to make much progress in understanding Stonehenge by the time he wearily gave up the task around 1925. Since then, many others have tried, and much information has been gained. Still, old legends and theories about Stonehenge seem to carry as much validity as information based on careful tests performed with the best in modern equipment. As Hawley observed, each new discovery seems to broaden the sublime aura of Stonehenge.

Located on Salisbury Plain in England, Stonehenge is a site of concentric rings of stone, an avenue, and paths leading to nearby burial sites. The stone circles are situated on a henge, an area enclosed by a bank and ditch; the surrounding circular ditch is 340 feet in diameter and five feet deep. There are four stone alignments—two are circles and two others are horseshoe-shaped patterns. The outer circle is about 100 feet in diameter and originally consisted of 30 upright stones (17 still stand), weighing an average of 25 tons and linked on top by a ring of stones. The stones, composed of Sarsen, a kind of sandstone, average about 26 feet in height. Pairs of standing stones are topped by a series of lintels—a term that describes an object that rests across two pillars, similar to the top part of a doorway. Such pairs of standing stones with a third horizontal lintel joining them at the top are called trilithons. All the stones were smoothed and shaped. The lintels are locked in place by sculpted, dovetail joints, and the edges were smoothed to maintain a gentle curving appearance.

A second ring consists of bluestones, a smaller-sized stone. Within that circle are five linteled pairs of Sarsen stones in a horseshoe shape. Another horseshoe, consisting of bluestones, is at the center. An avenue outlined with parallel banks and ditches 40 feet apart leads into the henge. A single standing stone, called the Heel Stone, is positioned in the center of the avenue just outside the outer circular ditch.

Several of the upright stones were toppled during the Roman occupation of Britain between 55 B.C.E. and 410 C.E. Two upright stones and a lintel fell in 1797, and two more in 1900. The five stones that fell since 1797 were put back in place in 1958 to restore the look Stonehenge had between 400 and 1797.

Several theories have emerged about when Stonehenge was erected and the purposes it served. Stonehenge begins being mentioned in recorded history during the twelfth century, most notably by Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1100–1154) in his *History of the Kings of Britain*. Geoffrey's history freely mixes documented events with folklore and contains many chronological inaccuracies. Still, his fanciful story of how Stonehenge was erected on Salisbury Plain remained popular for centuries. Geoffrey credited Stonehenge to Merlin, a wizard most often associated with the legendary King Arthur. In Geoffrey's account, Merlin was asked by Ambrosius Aurelianus, brother of Uther Pendragon and uncle of King Arthur, to erect a monument to commemorate the site where several hundred British nobles were murdered by Saxons. Merlin used magic to transport the stones from Ireland, where they had been erected in the form of Stonehenge after having been brought from Africa by giants. The formation of stones was called the Giants Dance.

Later theories emerged to overshadow Geoffrey's tale. Stonehenge was credited as the work of the Mycenae, a civilization that thrived in the Aegean Sea area of the eastern Mediterranean region before the rise of Greece in the first millennium B.C.E. The

Mycenae connection fit together with a theory that prevailed into the twentieth century that ancient megaliths throughout western Europe were designed and erected by members of eastern Mediterranean cultures, from which modern languages, histories, and other forms of culture emerged. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, advanced techniques for dating ancient objects showed that Stonehenge actually preceded the rise of Mycenean cuture.

The most popular modern theory connects Stonehenge with Celtic culture that thrived in Britain before the Romans came. A priestly caste among the Celts called the Druids were believed to have supervised construction of Stonehenge and other stone circles in the region. Druids were keepers of lore and leaders of ceremonial rites among Celts. They have been associated with magic powers, human sacrifice, and various mystical rites, but many of those attributes were bestowed on them by non-Celtic historians and are, therefore, suspect. As Christianity spread through Great Britain by the fourth century, Celtic culture and the Druids were eventually overwhelmed.

Under the supervision of Druids, the theory goes, Stonehenge was a sacred ceremonial site. The famous Slaughter Stone at Stonehenge, which shows traces of red after a rain, was believed to have been an altar where Druids performed human sacrifices. It was subsequently discovered that the redness derives from iron minerals in the Slaughter Stone.

William Stukeley (1687–1765) perpetuated the Druid link to Stonehenge in the 1740s with his book, *Stonehenge: A Temple Restor'd to the British Druids* (1740). Stukeley identified the avenue leading into Stonehenge as a procession route. Back during the 1720s, he had discovered parallel lines of banks and ditches near Stonehenge. He called the phenomenon a cursus, a Latin word for racetrack, since he thought the lines were joined at the ends to form an oval.

Stukeley contributed to a growing trend in Great Britain to recognize ancient Britons, especially Druids, as "bards" (poets) living in communion with nature. Stukeley himself "went Druid" and joined an order that practiced secret Druidic rites, and he assumed the name of Chyndonax after a fabled French Druid priest.

STONEHENGE *is located on Salisbury Plain in England.*

Sir J. Norman Lockyer (1836–1920), who was once director of the Solar Physics Observatory in London and the founder of the journal *Nature*, published *The Dawn of Astronomy* in 1894. The book argued that ancient temples in Egypt were aligned for stellar observations and as calendars—to determine the summer solstice, for instance. His findings were controversial, but they helped spur further studies of the astronomical interests of ancient societies. Lockyer came to the same conclusion about ancient Britons as he had of Egyptians after studying Stonehenge and nearby pre-historic, megalithic structures. Lockyer believed that Stonehenge served as a calendar. It was known that Celts had divided their year into eight parts. According to Lockyer, Stonehenge and other megalithic sites were used to determine key points of the year, such as the coming of warm weather for planting. Lockyer viewed Druids, the keepers of Celtic lore and knowledge, as astronomer priests responsible for devising the megalithic calendars.

The astronomical orientation of Stonehenge, meanwhile, was largely ignored by archaeologists. However, it received a tremendous boost during the 1960s and 1970s when Boston University astronomer Gerald Hawkins studied the site and used a computer to compare historical solar and lunar alignments with vantage points in Stonehenge. He published his findings in 1963 in *Nature*, then in an expanded version in a book, *Stonehenge Decoded* (1965), which offered the most convincing scientific evidence yet that Stonehenge served as an astronomical observatory, specifically as a calendar.

When one stands in the middle of Stonehenge and looks through the entrance of the avenue on the morning of the summer sol-

Cuzco, the ancient capital of the Incan empire in what is now Peru, was fortified by the massive structure of Sacsahuaman on a hill above the city. This walled citadel resides on top of a cone-shaped hill 12,000 feet above sea level. Its vast residential palaces, storehouses, inner forts, paved courtyards, and 50,000-gallon reservoir present a persistent puzzle to architects and engineers. Although the Incas are given credit for having built Sacsahuaman from 1438 to 1500, guidebooks state that the "basic structure" may have been lying in ruins, awaiting new inhabitants, when the Incas claimed the fortress.

Some of the boulders that are part of the fortress have been estimated at more than 20 tons, and the largest is 12 feet thick and 25 feet tall. The quarries that yielded the stone for Sacsahuaman are located about 20 miles from the city. It still puzzles researchers as to how the Incas moved the massive boulders across rivers, down deep ravines, then up to the mountaintop site of Sacsahuaman.

Sacsahuaman and the Skilled Stonecutters

Some archaeologists have stated that the Incas were skilled stonecutters. In Sacsahuaman, the massive stones fit together so precisely that a mechanic's thickness gauge cannot be inserted between the rocks in the walls. Some archaeologists have argued that stones can be worked to fit closely together; that is, stones roughly cut can be shaped to fit by being rubbed together.

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stice, for example, the Sun will rise above the Heel Stone, which is set on the avenue. If one stands in the entrance and looks into the circle at dusk of that day, the Sun will set between a trilithon. According to Hawkins, the use of Stonehenge as a calendar probably evolved from painstaking trial and error experiments with wooden poles to a permanent form with the standing stones. Hawkins's work was greeted with great interest and much skepticism. Nevertheless, along with other studies around the same time, it helped spur a trend for greater scientific research into Stonehenge and confirmed a new discipline, archaeoastronomy, the study of the use of astronomy among ancient societies.

Credit for Stonehenge to the Celts continued until the 1950s, when radiocarbon testing determined that Stonehenge dated from about 3000 B.C.E. and that work was begun on the site even before the Celts migrated into Britain from the European continent. Subsequent studies have revealed that Stonehenge was built in waves of construction spanning several centuries. Smaller stones were brought to the site around 2600 B.C.E. and the largest stones arrived around 2100 B.C.E. The last work on the site dates from around 1800 B.C.E.

Though information has come forth about when Stonehenge was erected, the identity of its builders remains unknown—and where the stones came from and how they were moved into place, are yet other matters to be investigated. The Sarcens likely came from Marlborough Downs, a quarry site about 18 miles northeast of Stonehenge. How the stones could be moved from by a prehistoric people without the aid of the wheel or a pulley system is not known. The most common theory of how prehistoric people moved megaliths has

them creating a track of logs on which the large stones were rolled along.

Another megalith transport theory involves the use of a type of sleigh running on a track greased with animal fat. Such an experiment with a sleigh carrying a 40-ton slab of stone was successful near Stonehenge in 1995. A dedicated team of more than 100 workers managed to push and pull the slab along the 18-mile journey from Marlborough Downs.

To erect the slab, the group dug a hole. The slab was pushed over the hole until it fell in. Then, a team pushed while another pulled by rope to make the slab stand upright. The hole was filled after the process was repeated with a second slab. The lintel stone that forms the top of the trilithon was pushed up a ramp and then maneuvered into place on top of the two pillars. Engineers at the test site believed that levers may have been used to raise the lintel stone, and timber put underneath; the process was repeated until the lintel stone rested on timber at the necessary height to push it in place to complete the trilithon.

Whether such methods were actually used during the construction is not known. Still, human sweat and ingenuity were shown as a legitimate alternative to Merlin's magic and other theories about how Stonehenge was erected.

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TAOS PUEBLO

In 1992, Taos Pueblo in New Mexico was admitted to the World Heritage Society as one of the most significant historical cultural landmarks in the world, thereby joining such sites as the Taj Mahal, the **Great Pyramids,** and the Grand Canyon. For many Native Americans and proponents of New Age mysticism, Taos Pueblo is also one of the primary spiritual structures on the North American continent, and it is a sacred place that does not yield its secrets to anyone other than members of the Pueblo.

Fortress of Sacsayhuman near Cuzco, Peru. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

The main part of the Pueblo looks much as it did when it was built with sun-dried adobe bricks around 900 years ago. The two five-story houses, the *Hlauuma* (North) and the *Hlaukwima* (South), are believed to be the oldest continuously inhabited communities in the United States. Although there are more than 1,900 Taos Indians living on the 99,000 acres belonging to the Pueblo, only about 150 people live within the Pueblo itself on a full-time basis. Because the Pueblo traditions forbid the utilities of running water and electricity, many choose to live in more modern homes outside the old walls. Still others prefer to live near the fields that they work on Pueblo land.

The religion of the Taos Pueblo people is extremely complex, yet as many as 90 percent of them also practice Roman Catholicism, finding no conflict between the two forms of spiritual expression. St. Jerome (Geronimo) has been the patron saint of the Pueblo since the church dedicated to him was first built there in 1619. The original church was destroyed in 1680, rebuilt on the same site, demolished again during the War with Mexico in 1847, and restored again in 1850.

Evidence of the seamless fit between Catholic and traditional Pueblo ceremonies

Taos Indian Pueblo. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

can be seen in the calendar of festivals for the year. For example, dances celebrating the turtle, deer, or buffalo are interspersed with dances honoring St. Anthony, St. Jerome, and the Virgin Mary. All of these events are considered serious religious ceremonies. Cameras are forbidden, and the Tribal Council asks that visitors render the same respect toward the dances and rituals as they would during a solemn service in their home churches.

Each year the Tribal Council, a group of 50 male elders, appoints a tribal governor and a war chief. The tribal governor and his staff are responsible for the civil and business interests of the tribe, and the war chief and his men see to the security of the mountains, the Pueblo, and the land holdings outside of the old city walls.

While some tribal members work in the nearby town of Taos, many of them staff the traditional craft and art concessions at the Pueblo. Pottery, silver jewelry, and paintings by local artists have been world famous, and ever since the beginning of the twentieth century, scores of non-Indian painters, writers, and photographers have visited Taos and made it their home. In the 1960s and 1970s, Taos became a revered scene for the counterculture, the so-called "hippies," and many stayed on to become contributive members of the community.

In 1970, the U.S. Government returned 48,000 acres of mountain land, including the sacred Blue Lake, to the people of Taos Pueblo. The federal government had confiscated the land in 1906, declaring the area to be part of the National Forest lands. Such desecration of holy land had caused great spiritual turmoil among the tribe, for Blue Lake was perhaps the most important of the ritual sites their people visited for ceremonial purposes. When the land was returned to the tribe after years of constant lobbying by the Pueblo leaders, the tribe felt that a good part of their spiritual and cultural well-being had been restored to them. Today, Blue Lake and the nearby mountains are off-limits to all but members of the Taos Pueblo.

Taos Pueblo welcomes visitors except during those times when tribal rituals require privacy; however, there are a number of ceremonies and powwows that are open to the general public.

When visiting the Pueblo, one must keep in mind that the tribal members regard themselves as a sovereign nation within the United States and that their primary objective as a tribe is to preserve their ancient traditions. The Tribal Council has posted a number of rules that must be observed at all times and indicated certain areas that are strictly off-limits to all visitors.

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TIAHUANACO

The Inca civilization of South America, unlike the Mayan, was still at its height when conquistadors arrived. One of the conquistadors, Cieza de Leon (1518–1560), followed trails from the coast of Peru into the foothills of the Andes and learned from natives about the ruins of a once great city high in the mountains. He presumed that it was an old Inca settlement like those the Spanish found elsewhere in what is now Peru. In 1549, heading inland from Lake Titicaca, which separates Peru from the land-locked nation of Bolivia, de Leon found the remains of the fabled city of Tiahuanaco, which were far greater than he had expected.

The site of the ancient city features large artificial mounds and massive, carved stones, including an enormous entrance called the Gateway of the Sun. Carved from a single block of stone weighing 10 tons, the Gateway features intricate decorations, including a god-figure often identified as Viracocha, who figured prominently in the mythology of the region.

THE entrance called the Gateway of the Sun weighs 10 tons.

A terraced monument called Akapana, measuring 650 by 600 feet and rising 50 feet high, has a pyramidal shape that levels off to form a high platform. Within that platform are sunken courtyards. Seen throughout Tiahuanaco are skillful examples of masonry and the brilliant use of metals, including copper clamps that hold massive blocks of stones together.

The Gateway of the Sun stands on the northwest corner of a platform temple called Kalasasaya, which is adjacent to a semi-underground temple; the temples form part of an astronomical observatory. Some standing stones placed on the site weigh up to 100 tons. Among other remarkable feats, the residents of Tiahuanaco devised a drainage and sewer system. At 12,500 feet of elevation, Tiahuanaco was the highest city of the ancient world.

As soon as Cieza de Leon reported the remarkable discovery, Tiahuanaco became one of the world's great mysteries, for the local Aymara Indians insisted that the ruins were there long before the great Inca civilization came to the area and conquered it around 1450. Christian missionaries followed Cieza de Leon to the ruins, and these men of learning soon doubted whether the Aymara people could ever have been capable of the craftsmanship and engineering such massive structures required. Legends began to be spread by the missionaries that the structures had been erected in the distant past by giants.

Scientists date the civilization that occupied Tiahuanaco to 300—when a community first began to settle in the area—to 900, when some kind of disruption occurred and Tiahuanaco was abandoned. Those dates match the claim of the Aymara Indians that Tiahuanaco

The Puma Punka temple at Tiahuanaco, Bolivia. (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

was built and lay in ruins before the Incas came. Other theorists blend scientific finds and local myths, perpetuating the notion that a white race, perhaps Egyptians or Phoenicians, brought civilization to the high plain.

The argument that Tiahuanaco thrived more than 10 thousand years before the dates established by scientific testing was fostered by Arthur Posnansky in his book, *Tiahuanaco: The Cradle of American Man* (1945). Noting that the platform temple Kalasasaya was used as an astronomical observatory, Posnansky determined that it pointed precisely to solstice alignments in 15,000 B.C.E. Taking into account the very gradual shifting of Earth's axis, Posnansky postulated that arid plain was once below water, part of Lake Titicaca, and that Tiahuanaco was once a major port city. The ancient citizens of Tiahuanaco were members of a superior culture who had introduced a golden age to the area. The founders of Tiahuanaco were taller and had distinctive facial characteristics quite apart from the high-cheekboned visages of today's dwellers of the high plateau.

In Posnanksy's view, the most startling tale told by the few artifacts left in the city was of a New World civilization that was amazingly similar to that of ancient Egypt. The Calassasayax (house of worship), he believed, was so similar to the Egyptian temple of Karnak in design and layout that its relative dimensions made it almost a scale model of the Old World structure. The stones used in the temple at Tiahuanaco are fitted and joined with their joints and facing parts polished to make a nearly perfect match. The Incas did not build in such a manner, but the ancient Egyptians did.

And then there were the buildings constructed of massive, polished stones, many tons in weight, that had been placed in such a manner that only a people with advanced engineering methods could have designed and transported them. If this were not enough of an impossible situation, the particular andesite used in much of the Tiahuanacan construction can only be found in a quarry that lies 50 miles away in the mountains.

The surgeons of Tiahuanaco were skilled in trepanning the brain, as were the Egyptian physicians. Posnansky uncovered skulls with well-healed bone grafts, which offered silent testimony to the skill of the ancient doctors and their knowledge of anatomy. Some archaeologists receptive to Posnansky's theories argue that the credibility of cultural coincidence is stretched considerably when related to brain operations. It is possible to accept the fact that two widely separated cultures, such as the Egyptians and the unknown people of Tiahuanaco, may have developed a form of brain operation, but that both cultures used identical instruments and methods, seems unusual to say the least. The instruments are of high-grade copper and include drills and chisels. In themselves they indicate an advanced degree of metallurgy, knowledge of simple machinery, and development of surgi-

cal practices far more detailed than can be expected in primitive societies.

Posnansky's theories won a popular readership, but were not widely accepted among scientists. At sunrise on dates of the equinox, for example, the Sun appears on the staircase of Kakassasaya. There is no need to believe that it was built at a precise time to point to a precise astronomical alignment. The port city idea was also quickly disputed. Areas that would have been submerged included neighborhoods of dwellings that share similar dates with the larger structures, and the surrounding countryside where farms were located also would have been underwater.

Radiocarbon dating suggests instead that Tiahuanaco was founded around 400, and after three centuries of gradual settlement, the city was abandoned around 1000. In the interim, the settlement had grown from a ceremonial center to a major city inhabited by 40,000 to 80,000 people.

Regular archaeological excavations have been underway in Tiahuanaco since 1877. The semi-subterranean temple next to the Akapana yielded a 24-foot tall monolith in 1932. That find and the generally arid climate helped sustain the idea that Tiahuanaco served primarily as a ceremonial center. Later finds, however, showed that it had been a thriving city, and dates for the time settlement and abandonment were established. Why the place was abandoned, however, remains a mystery to conventional archaeologists.

However, according to Posnansky, it was the climactic changes at the end of the Ice Age that contributed to flooding and the destruction of Tiahuanaco, wiping out its inhabitants and leaving the great structures in ruins. Posnansky died in 1946, convinced that he had traced the influence of Tiahuanaco on the native culture as far north as the coastal deserts of Peru and as far south as Argentina.

Most other archaeologists take much more conservative views. As with the Mayans, they argue, the ancient Indians of Tiahuanaco might have had too much of a good thing. There is evidence that they were victims of a natural catastrophe, but it was a prolonged drought, rather than Posnansky's great flood, that probably overwhelmed them. Drought conditions set in for an extended period, and the Aymara could no longer support a massive population and large-scale construction projects. People began abandoning the city around 1000. The Incas conquered communities remaining in the area around 1450. Then the Spanish came to Tiahuanaco about one hundred years after the Incas had moved in.

Still the questions remain: just who were the natives that thrived at Tiahuanaco and how did they construct such elaborate structures?

The Aymara, meanwhile, still live in the region. They outlasted the early Spanish settlers around Tiahuanaco, who never quite mastered the area's harsh conditions. The plain became a desert again after the Spanish farmed it, for they never learned to use a technique of the ancient dwellers of Tiahuanaco. The mysterious unknown people farmed on raised fields, which were filled and built up with soil from surrounding areas. Canals between the fields kept them watered, and by farming on raised fields the crops were kept safe from the danger of frost and erosion by water.

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MAKING THE CONNECTION

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.

bitumen Any of a variety of natural substances, such as tar or asphalt, containing hydrocarbons derived from petroleum and used as a cement or mortar for surfacing roads.

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.

druid Someone who worships the forces of nature as in the ancient Celtic religion. Can also refer to a priest in the Celtic religion.

frieze From the Latin *phrygium (opus)*, meaning work or craftmanship. 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.

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.

hieroglyphics A system of writing that uses pictures or symbols such as that in ancient Egypt.

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.

megalith A very large stone that is usually a part of a monument or prehistoric architecture.

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 *abussos*, 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.

apothacary 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 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.

cryptomensia 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 *carn*, 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.

enchantments 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 craftmanship. 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 paranormal 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 *neophutos* 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 that 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.

retrocognition 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 *sarkophogos*, 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.

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.

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 *zolion*, 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.

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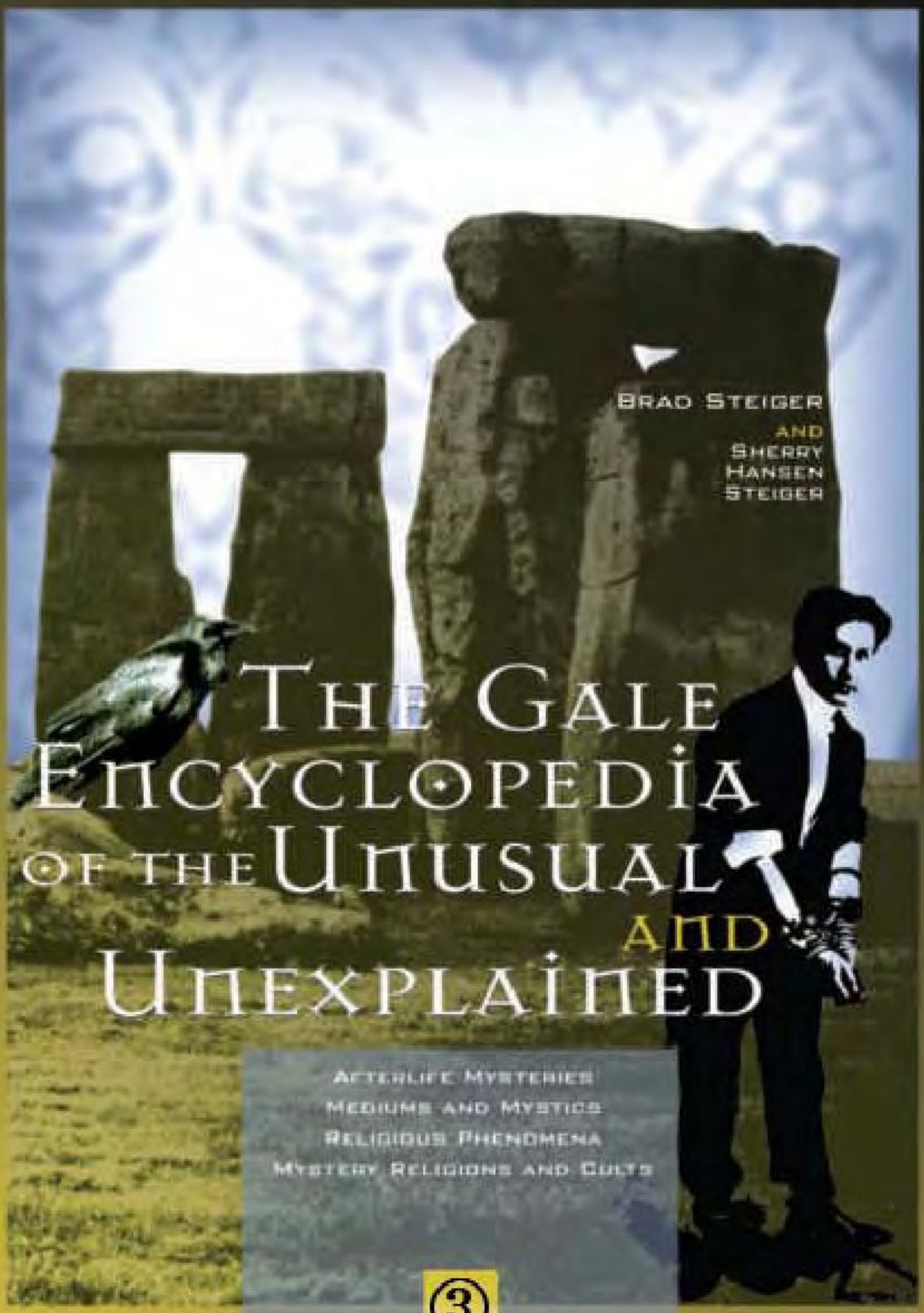
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Preface

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.

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.

Introduction

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.

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 werecreatures 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 Oxia 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 ecclesiaticis 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 *Corrrector* 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.

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—Brad E. Steiger

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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.

"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 nonfiction—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.

DELVING DEEPER

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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.

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

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 exercises 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 relevant 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.

A poltergeist is a projection of psychic energy.

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?

ORTHODOX teachings deny spirituality to animals.

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.

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.

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

"Ghostbusters" movie. (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

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 Psychical 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 seriously 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 Bande-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

GHOST SHIPS

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.

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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.

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

Such weird phenomena are termed "autoscopic 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 fiancee, 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 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

Electronic Voice Phenomena—Recording Ghosts on Tape

Thomas 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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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.

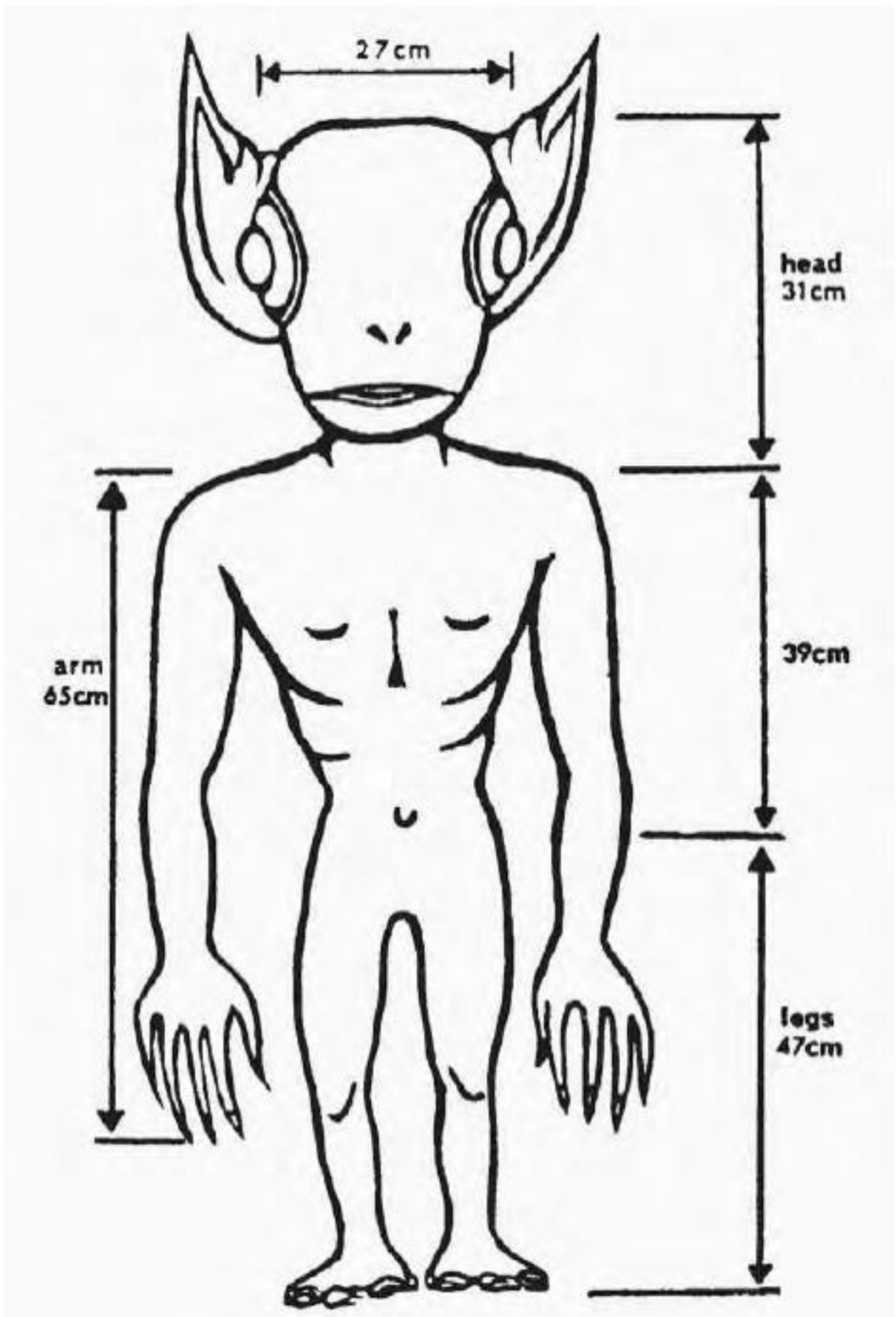
Whatever the reasons may be, it cannot be denied that some locales definitely have built up their own "atmospheres" over the years and that such auras often give sensitive people feelings of uneasiness—and often sensations of fear and discomfort. Whether this may be caused by surviving minds, a psychic 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.

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

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 Englishwomen 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 investigators 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 carefree 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 "pelting or throwing 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 psychical 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? Psychical 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 psychical 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 speaking 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."

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

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 supernormal 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

Haunted Hollywood

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.
- 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.

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

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 people 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.

BORLEY *Rectory presents a combination of a "haunting" and the phenomenon of poltergeistic activity*

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 assistant 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, peeking 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.

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

It was during a violent November rainstorm 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 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 manuevers. For the first time, the rappings seemed to direct themselves to the door of

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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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 hoofed 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 beaus and suitors, and their father's

Epworth Rectory.
(FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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!"

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.

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

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 during 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.

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

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 Jervis, was named Baron Jervis 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.

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

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 wearing 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.

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

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 Gretenham. 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-

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

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

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 Mompessons' 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.

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

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.

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

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 emotions 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 psychical 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 ghastly 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 similiar 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.

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

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 variety 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 *novern*, 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 nightfall 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, were-lions, 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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Apelike Monsters

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

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 apelike 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 Eurka, 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.

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

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 makeup 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.

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

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

THE REAL MANIMAL?

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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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.

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

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 Tadzhik 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.

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

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 Zuoguian, 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.

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

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.

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

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 fleshly 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 groused 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 disturbances 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.

Who Was the Inspiration for Dr. Frankenstein?

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.

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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.

THE *most famous Golem is "Yossele," that was allegedly created by Judah Loew Ben Bezalel (1525–1609) to help protect the Jews of Prague.*

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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 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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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.

The Top Ten Movie Monsters

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).
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.

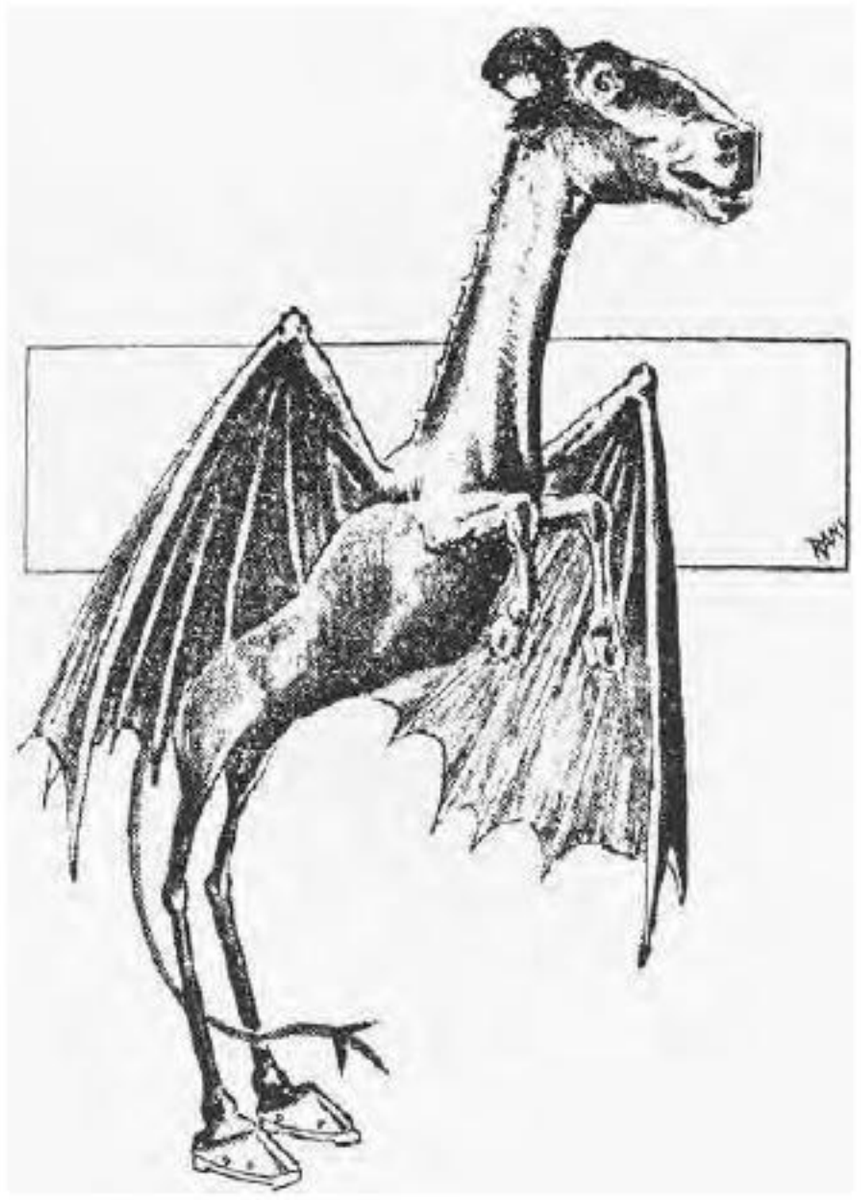
Whatever the Jersey Devil is, people have been sighting it in the rural area in South Jersey since 1735, which, according to local legend, is the year that it was born. Rather than some monstrous animal that was somehow spawned in the one million acres of pines that still remain some distance from the 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).



Jersey Devil, 1901 illustration. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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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.

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.

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

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.

COUNT DRACULA THEME PARK

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, *upyr*; 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, 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.

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

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

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 as*loup garou;* in Spanish, *hombre lobo;* Italian, *lupo manaro;* Portuguese, *lobizon* or *lobo home;* Polish, *wilkolak;* Russian, *olkolka* or *volkulaku;* and in Greek, *brukolakas*.

Stories of women who gave birth to werecreatures are common among the North American tribal myths.

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 werecreatures 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 countrysides 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 *ulfhedhnar* ("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 "gyspy 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 Zeuglodons. 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, Zeuglodons 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 existed in the Scottish lake where it had been sighted since the fifteenth century. With that brief filmstrip, 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.

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

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-degrees 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 Macolm 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.

Nessie on Film

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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 took, 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 seabeast 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.

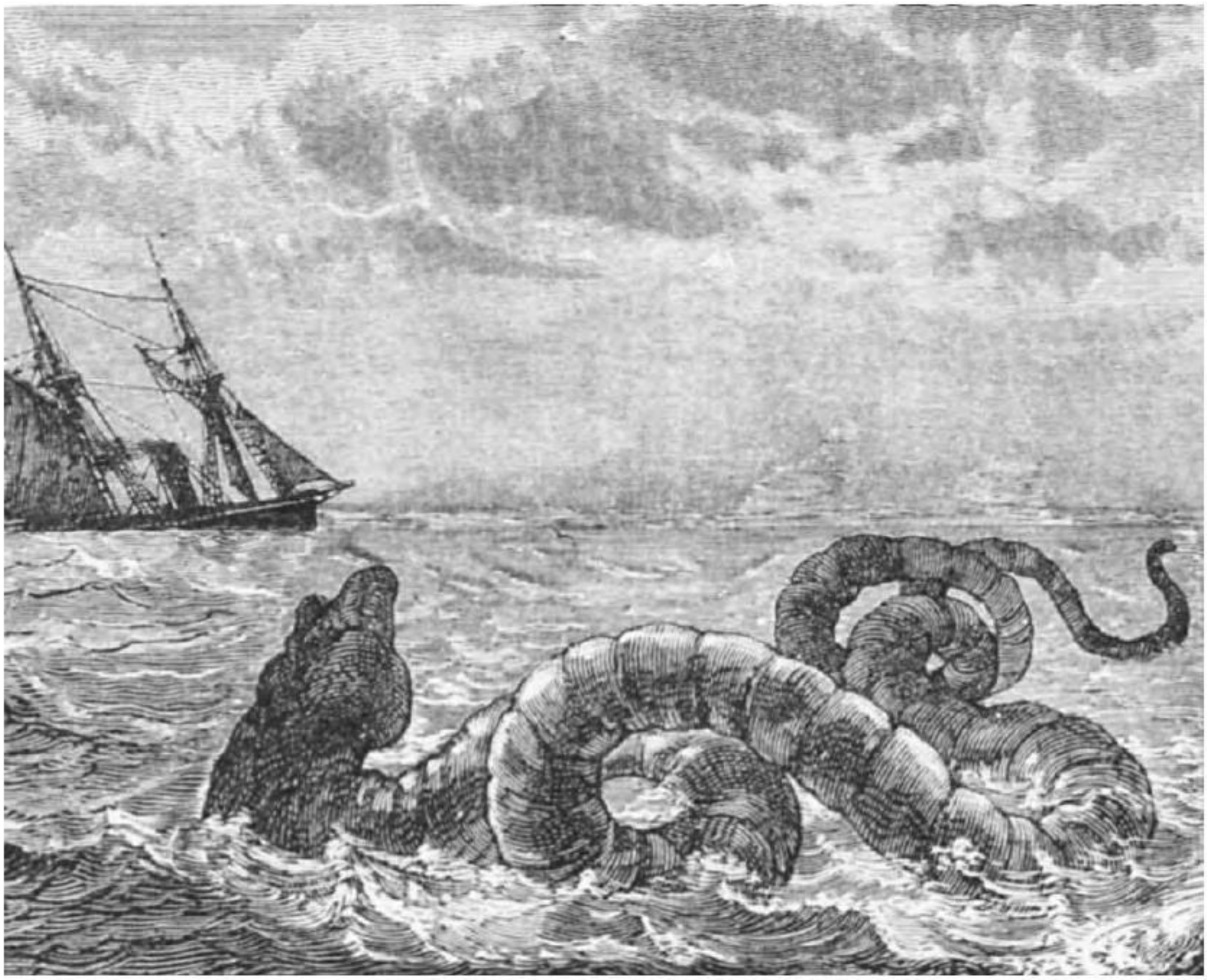
When the crew of the yacht *Valhalla* sighted a sea monster off Parahiba, Brazil, on December 7, 1905, it was fortunate to have among its passengers E. G. B. Meade-Waldo and Michael J. Nicoll, two expert naturalists, Fellows of the Zoological Society of Britain, who were taking part in a scientific expedition 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 serpent, 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 serpentlike 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.

Are Giant Squids the True Sea Monsters?

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.

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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 Earthl'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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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.

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

THE Thunderbird is an embodiment of the Great Mystery, the Supreme Being, which created all things on Earth.

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-

sissippi, 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 ramphorhyneus, 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 ramphorhyneus. 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 supernormal 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 entites—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 cowlike 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.

Fairies—magical winged beings. (CORBIS CORPORATION)

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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 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 paraphysical 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 tricorn 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 stills hears on occasion a pilot cussing a mechanical failure in his aircraft as having been caused by a gremlin attack.

Model from the film "Gremlin." (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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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 disturb 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

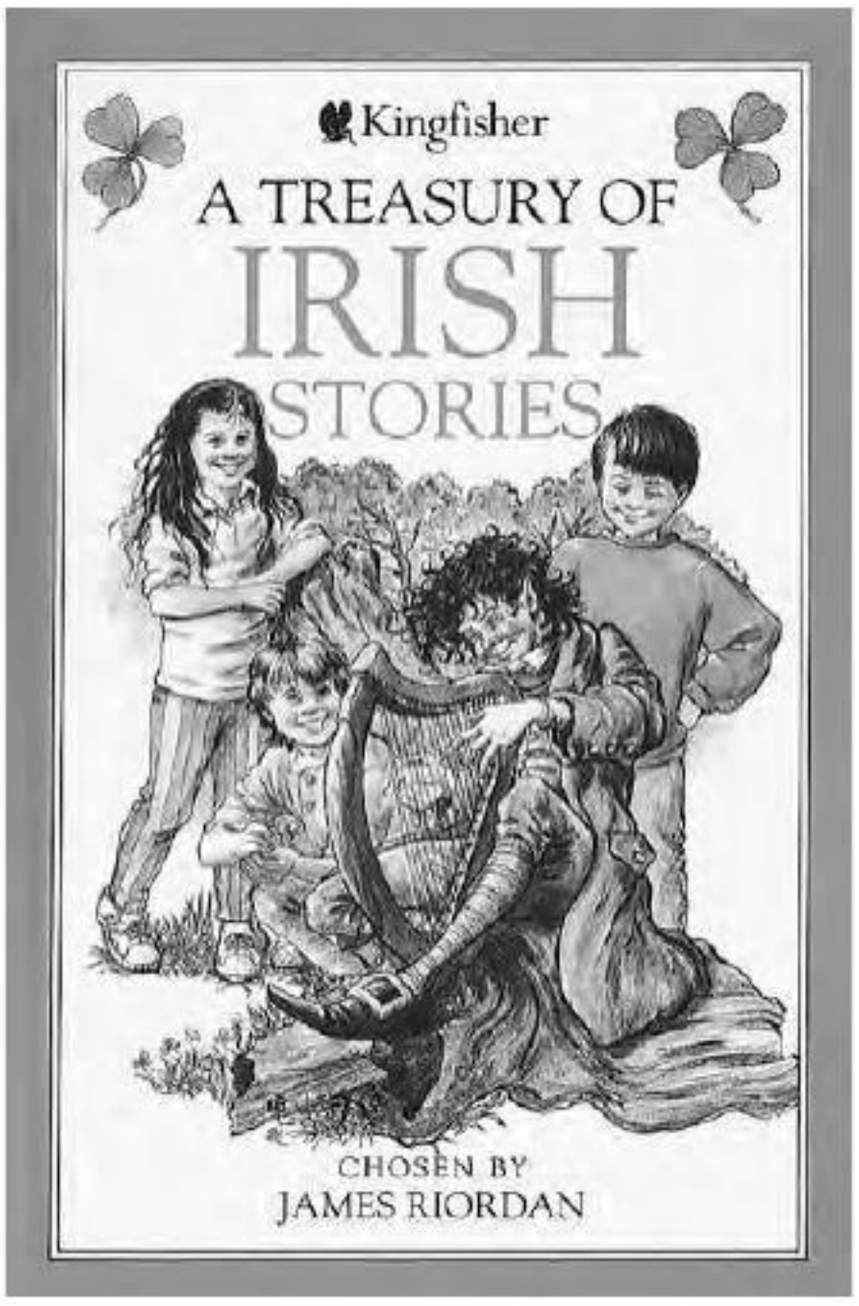

Illustration of a leprechaun from *A Treasury of Irish Stories.* (ELSIE LENNOX)

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 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-

tle 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 huldrefolk, 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 proprieters 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 unrelenting 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*

Two characters from the film "How to Make a Monster." (DEL VALLE GALLERY)

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

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 that 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 *zolion*, or life form.

Chapter Exploration

Dreams
Creative and Lucid Dreaming
Nightmares
Sleep Paralysis
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The Mechanics of Memory
False Memories

Phobias

Altered States of Consciousness
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ESP Researchers
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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.

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, Artemidorous 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).

SIGMUND *Freud brought dreams into the realm of the scientific community with his publication* The Interpretation of Dreams.

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 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."

The god Hermes pours sleep into the eyes of mortals. (GETTY IMAGES)

MANY authorities consider Dr. Nathaniel Kleitman (1895–1999) to be the father of modern scientific dream research.

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-

The Unused Brain

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.

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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.

SOLVING *problems via the dream state is as old as humankind itself.*

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 computer. 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.

Nightmares might be the price that some otherwise healthy and untroubled people pay for their sensitivity and creativity.

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."

DELVING DEEPER

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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.

RESEARCHERS links sleep paralysis with rapid eye movement (REM), the dream state.

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.

DELVING DEEPER

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Dr. Carl Jung (1875–1961). (THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

SYMBOLOGY 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.

In order to learn from dreams, it is not essential to work out the entire dream structure.

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.

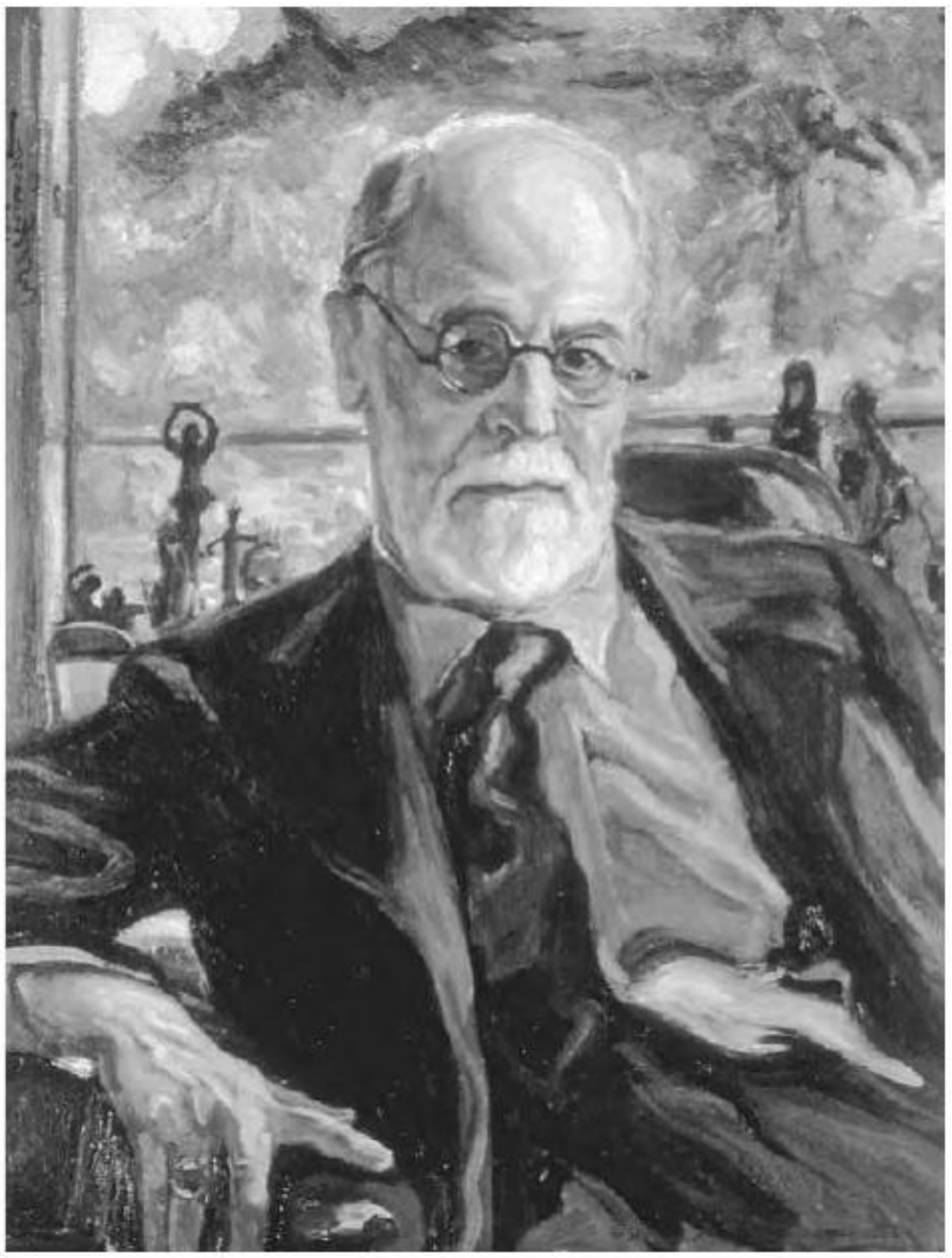
Krippner points out, however, that certain dreams do occur with great frequency among peoples all over the world. Dr. Carl G. Jung

(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 superconsciousness. 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.

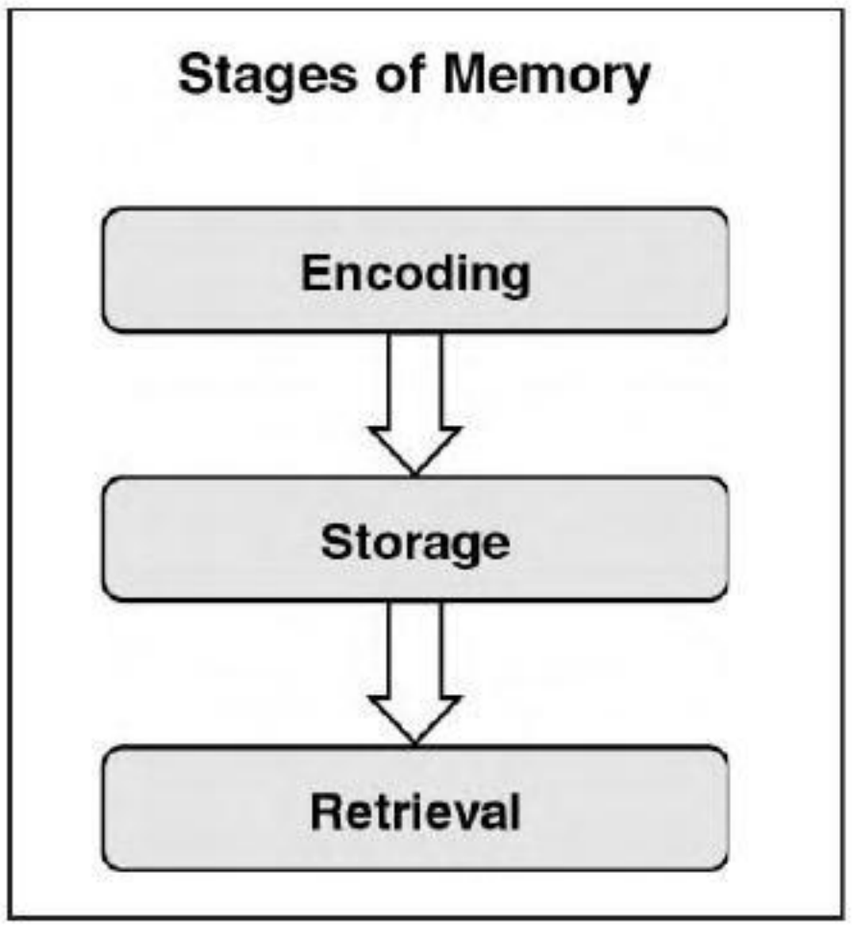
Although scientists have yet to understand how memory really works, a survey of psychologists conducted in 1996 revealed that 84 percent of them believed that every experience a person undergoes throughout his or her life is stored in the mind. However, a great many current studies suggest that such 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.

MEMORY is the ability to retain and to recall personal experiences, information, and various skills and habits.

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.

KEEPING A DREAM DIARY

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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 information 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,

Living without a Brain

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 Disneyland 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 travel 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.

A phobia is a persistent irrational fear that causes a person to feel extreme anxiety.

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 *claustro*, 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, *glosso*, 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.

Hemaphobia, 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

Mind Over Matter with Placebos

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 cingular 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.

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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.

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.
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.

A person may enter an altered state of consciousness through such things as sensory deprivation or overload, neurochemical imbalance, fever, or trauma.

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,

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.

SKEPTICAL *psychological researchers label claims of revelation and transcendence through altered states of consciousness as delusional and self-deceptive.*

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 geometric 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.

HALLUCINATIONS *result when certain situations have altered one's brain metabolism from its normal level.*

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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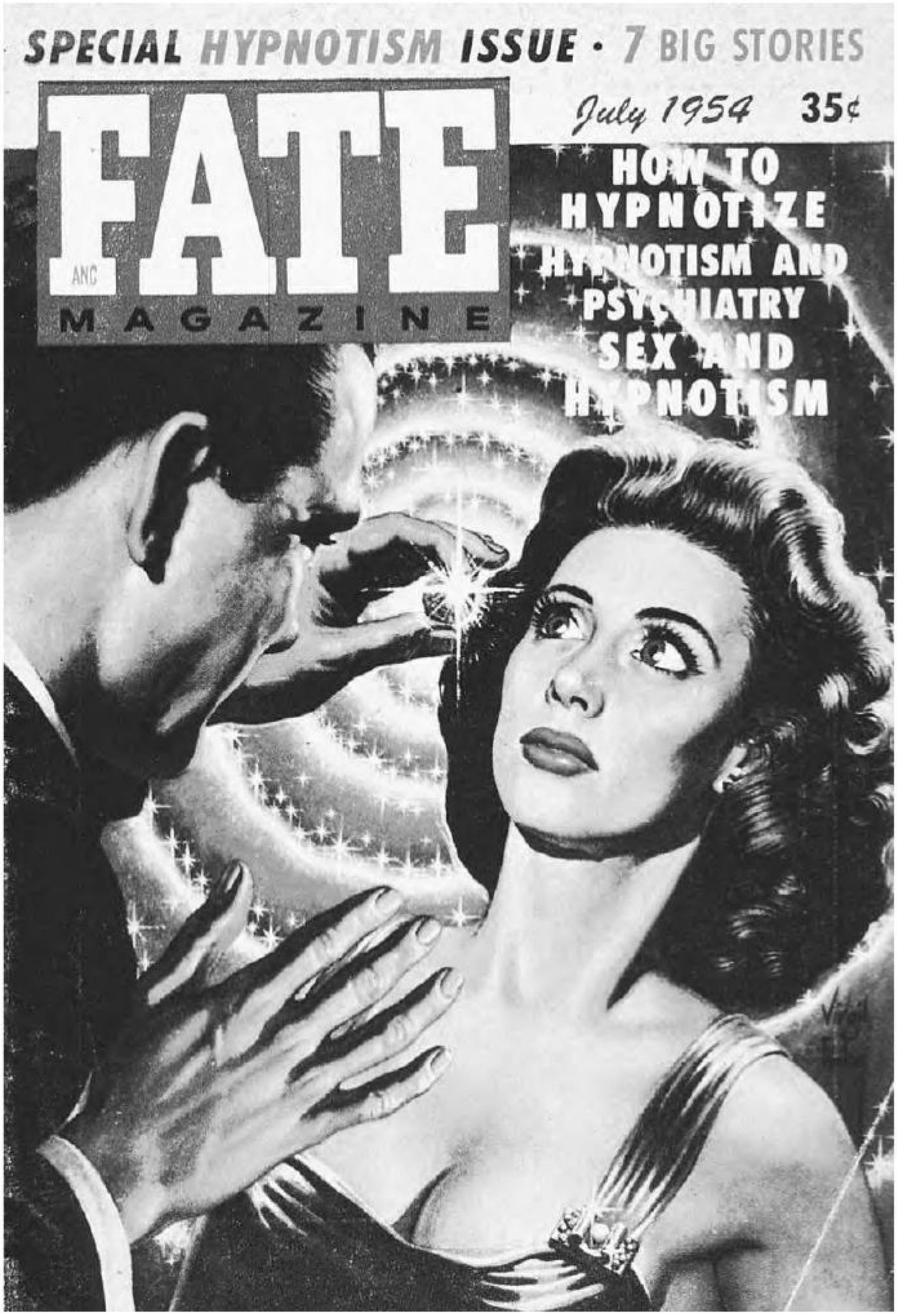
HYPNOSIS

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/alchemist 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.

HYPNOTHERAPY *permits psychologists to help clients uncover hidden or repressed memories of fears or abuse.*

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-

A patient is hypnotized into a state of rigidity. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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

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.

EGYPTIAN soothsayers and medical practitioners used hypnotic procedures over 3,000 years ago.

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 ordinary" 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.

Meditation. (FIELD MARK PUBLICATIONS)

THE *two main categories of meditation are mystical and secular.*

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.

THE *Upanishads says meditation is the prelude to attaining God consciousness.*

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 Ria 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 Quiescence, 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.

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.

DR. Humphrey Osmond coined the word "psychedelic" to describe the effects of the mind-altering drugs.

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 Sabbat** 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 Sabbat 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."

LYSERGIC *acid is found naturally in ergot, a fungus that grows on rye and other grains.*

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

Tim Leary portrayed in a piece of computerized hallucinations artwork. (AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS)

"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

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.

FDA research noted that extended use of LSD could lead to mood swings, including depression, which could in turn lead to suicide.

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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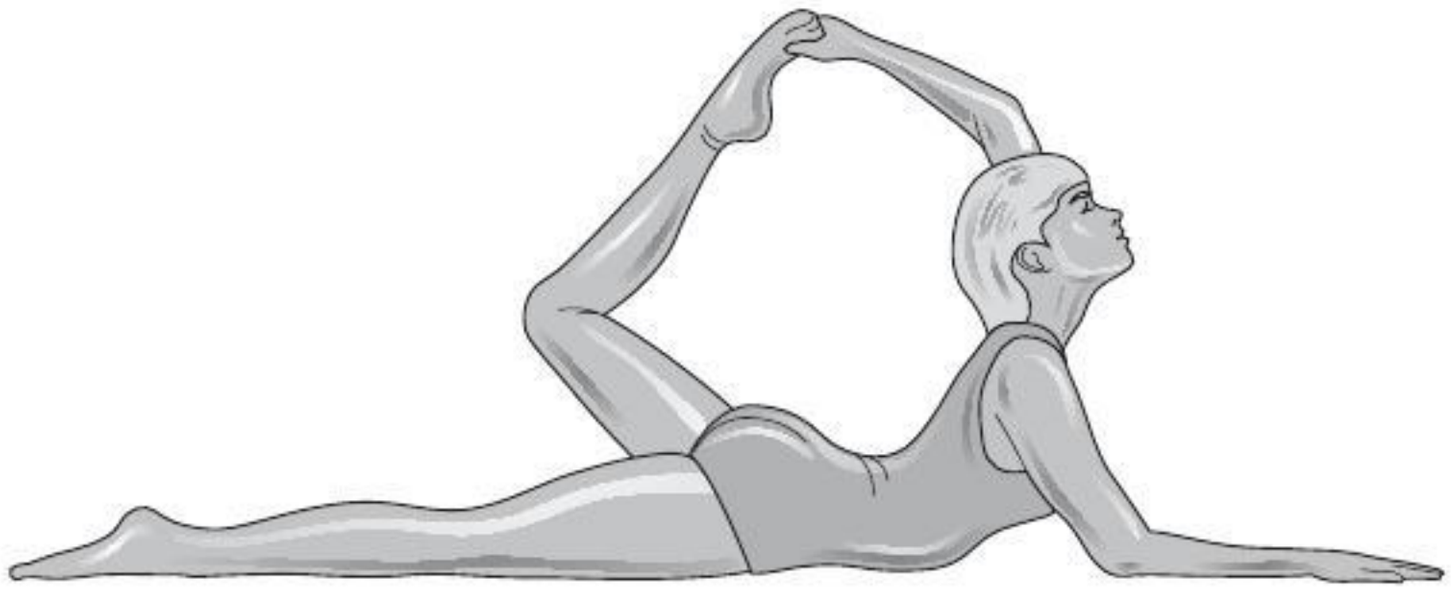
RELAXATION

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.

EXTRASENSORY *perception is defined the acquisition by a human or animal mind of information it could not have received by normal, sensory means.*

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

Paranormal Beliefs and Brain Chemistry

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.

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.

TELEPATHY may have been the original archaic method by which individuals understood one another.

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 Association 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.

J. B. and Louisa Rhine. (DR. SUSAN BLACKMORE/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Certain psychic-sensitives might have the ability to direct random energy at subatomic levels.

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 philosophic 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 teenaged 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 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.

Dr. Stanley Krippner. (DENNIS STACY/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

DRS. *J. B. and Louisa Rhine expanded their investigations of ESP and established the first scientific laboratory dedicated to research of psychic phenomena.*

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.

ESP *research remains a source of constant controversy.*

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.

CLAIRVOYANTS *have been cooperating with law enforcement agencies for years, but usually in an unofficial capacity.*

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.

Experiments combining clairvoyance and hypnosis go back for centuries.

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?

To primitive humans, a dream was an actual experience enacted by the soul.

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 Vogi 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.

STUDENTS *of astral projection, bilocation, and OBE have commented on the phenomenon of dual consciousness.*

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 nonsuccessive 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.

PRECOGNITIONS *are visions of future events.*

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.

IN 1922, Freud publicly admitted the possibility of telepathic phenomena.

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 telepathic functioning is a state of inadequacy or deficiency such as loss or clouding of consciousness (sleep, hypnosis, trance, fever, brain defects)."

Twins being tested for telepathy capabilities. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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.

Delving Deeper

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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 a 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 *hupothesis* 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.

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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.

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.

An amulet or talisman was a charm intended to exert a magical influence upon evil spirits.

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.

Superstitions *are a kind of white magic.*

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.

THROUGHOUT *history, cats have been worshipped as gods by certain cultures.*

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 reverenced 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 universal 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 considered 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.

THE *custom of marking unlucky days with charcoal started the phrase "black-letter day."*

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 Execrable 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.

CANINES and humans formed a common bond more than 140,000 years ago.

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.

AMBER *is one of the oldest of all gem amulets.*

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.

THE *last letter in the Greek alphabet, Omega, is shaped like a horseshoe.*

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 percipient is about to achieve a transition to a higher state of awareness.

LADDERS are among humankind's earliest tools.

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 "quartrozieme," 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.

A professional guest, "quartrozieme," can be called on short notice so a host can avoid having only 13 people at dinner party.

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 sneezing 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.

PEOPLE believe a sneeze is a sign that the soul was giving them an omen.

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.

SINCE ancient times, one's spittle has been valued as a charm against all evil.

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.

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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
- Sir William Garstin
- A. Lucas
- Arthur E. P. Weigal
- The Honorable Mervyn Herbert
- Richard Bethel

The Curse of King Tut

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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.

HINDU religious doctrines order both man and woman involved in infidelity, humiliated, mutilated or killed, depending upon their caste.

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.

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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 peoples 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.

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.

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.

THE *screams, tears, and struggles of the bride shows her bashfulness and modesty.*

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" hearkens 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.

IT was an ancient custom of gaining a wife by working for her father for a certain period of time.

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.

THE *dowry was a way of compensating the husband as the newlyweds began their life together.*

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 hearkens 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 become 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.

AMONG *Semitic people, a kiss on the cheek has been considered a traditional form of blessing or greeting for centuries.*

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.

FLOWERS *have been the quintessential gift between lovers in many cultures.*

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.

THE *custom of the bridal shower grew out of earlier times when a woman's family might not have the money for a dowry.*

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.

IN the Middle Ages, most people married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and were still smelling good.

The question, "Who gives this woman to this man?" asked by the officiating clergyperson 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 clergyperson, "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 ceremony. 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, hearkening 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 clergyperson 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 clergyperson 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 clergyperson 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 clergyperson reads them aloud. The clergyperson 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.

JEWISH weddings are usually performed on Sundays.

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.

MOST traditional Muslim weddings are arranged by the parents.

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 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-

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.

ANCIENT *Egyptians were the first to use the wedding ring.*

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.

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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."

In Homer's Iliad, the Greeks are portrayed as hosts of magnificent banquets.

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.

IT was the custom for the host to take the first bite to prove the food was free from poison.

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.

HUMANKIND'S *first eating utensil was some form of the spoon or the ladle.*

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.

EGYPTIANS *servants anointed the guest's head with oil and washed their hands.*

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.

EARLY peoples offered a prayer as an exorcism before eating to distract any negative spirits that might have infested the food.

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 blessing 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.

THE Nootka conceived of the soul as a tiny person who lived within a person's head and was set free when its host body succumbed to death.

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.

In Africa, many native people smoke their corpses to preserve them.

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 performed 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 gummed 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.

FOR *Buddhists, funerals are happy occasions, for they believe in reincarnation.*

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.

A Muslim's body is buried facing Mecca.

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.

BLACK *is considered the universal color of mourning.*

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 Hallow's Eve, Halloween, rather than a night of trick-or-treat, is traditionally a time to pray for those loved ones who are deceased.

DELVING DEEPER

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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."

MANY urban legends are recycled stories and continually updated.

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 parents were advised to write their congressperson 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 unpleased 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

ASIAN MEN KILLED BY FAT MAN

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 miocardial 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.

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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 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.

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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 *pesa*, 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 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

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.

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.

KATHLEEN *May described the alien being that she and seven other residents saw as looking more frightening than the Frankenstein monster.*

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.

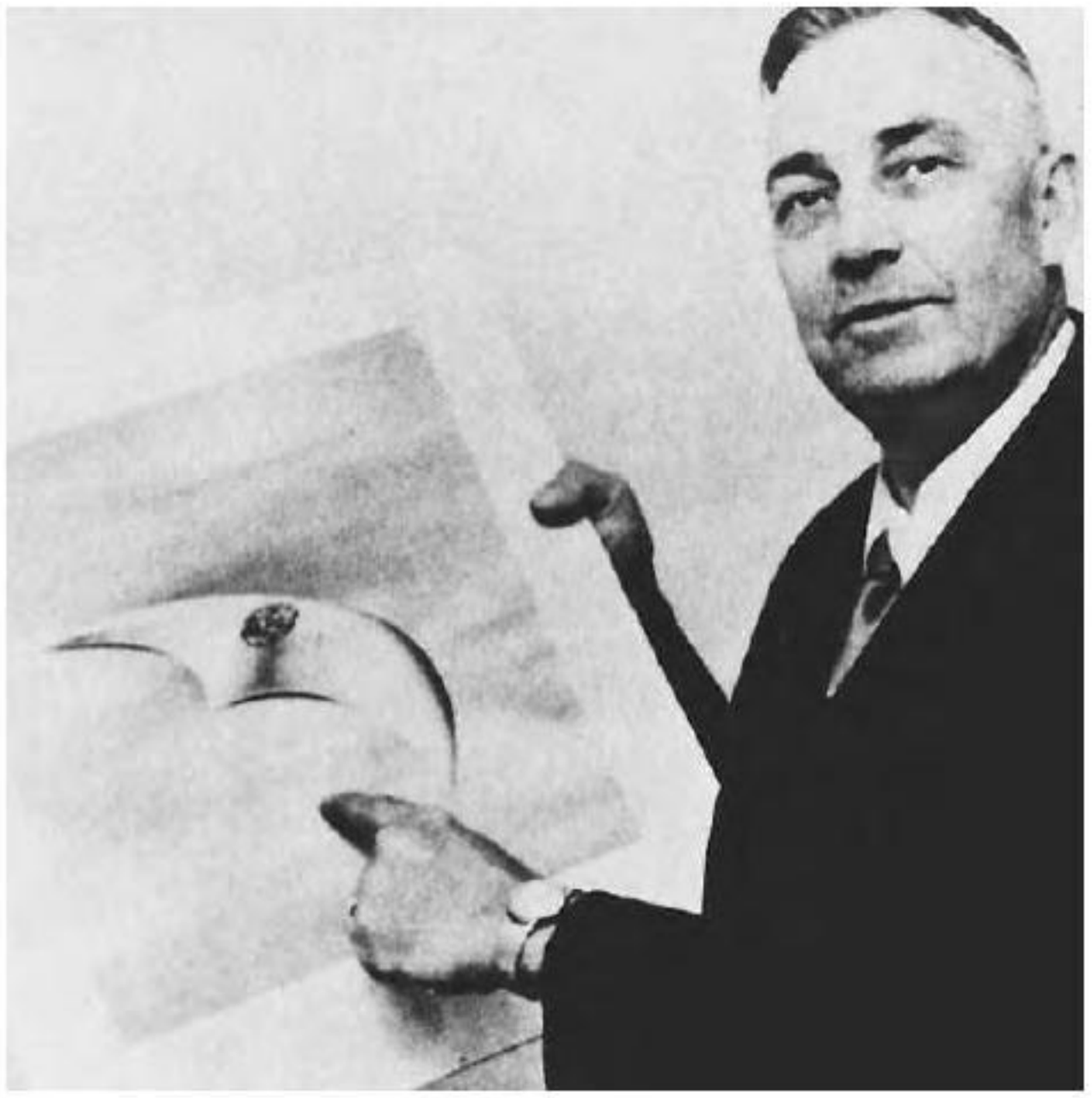
In many ways, the year 1947 provided the ideal time for such theories to grow. It had been almost exactly two years since the Japanese had surrendered and the days of World War II (1939–45) had at last come to a close amid the fiery destruction of the nuclear bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. 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, country, 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.

A CNN/Time poll found that 27 percent of all Americans believe that aliens have already visited Earth.

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

Alien footprint. (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

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 construction of this last resting place for the pharoah 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.

Petroglyph allegedly identified as an "astronaut." (KLAUS AARSLEFF/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

Would supplying tombs for dead pharoahs 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.

SOME UFOlogists believed humankind's gods, angels, devils, and demons were nothing more than alien visitors.

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 deathblaze 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-worshiping 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 UFOnauts 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, extraterrestrials 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.

MANY 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 transporation—"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…"

THE *Hebrew word to describe demigods, or men of great renown, is* Nephilim.

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 UFOnauts 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.

THE Rig-Veda constitutes some of the oldest known religious documents.

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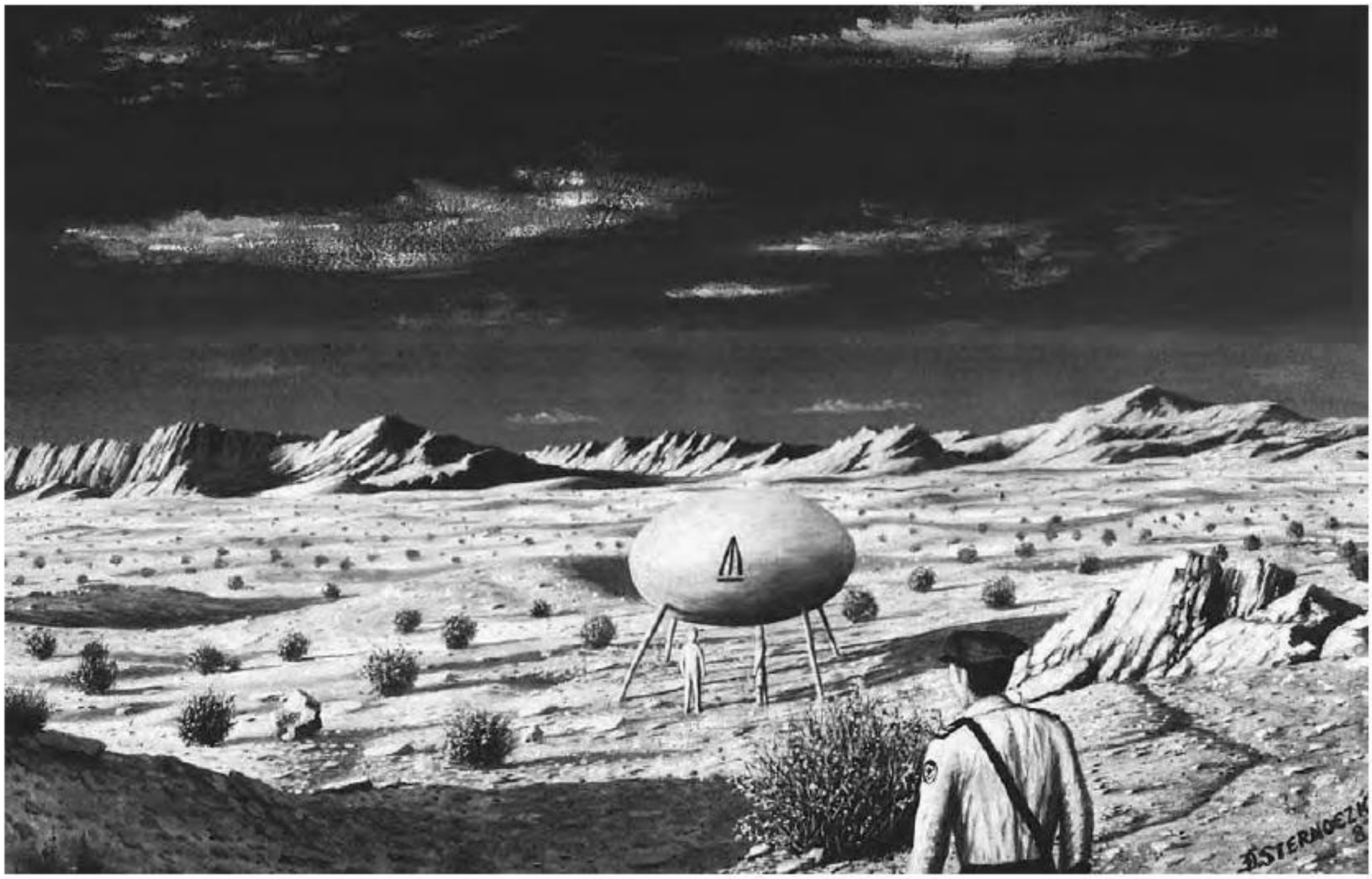
The Modern UFO Era Begins

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.

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-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.

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

"Star Trek: The Motion Picture." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

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.

OTHERS tried to explain the unidentified flying objects as being meteors.

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."

THE *U.S. Air Force maintained a policy of officially debunking saucer stories for the press.*

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 threefold: "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.

Staff of Project Blue Book. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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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, "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.

DURING *the early 1950s that the national interest in reported sightings increased tremendously.*

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.

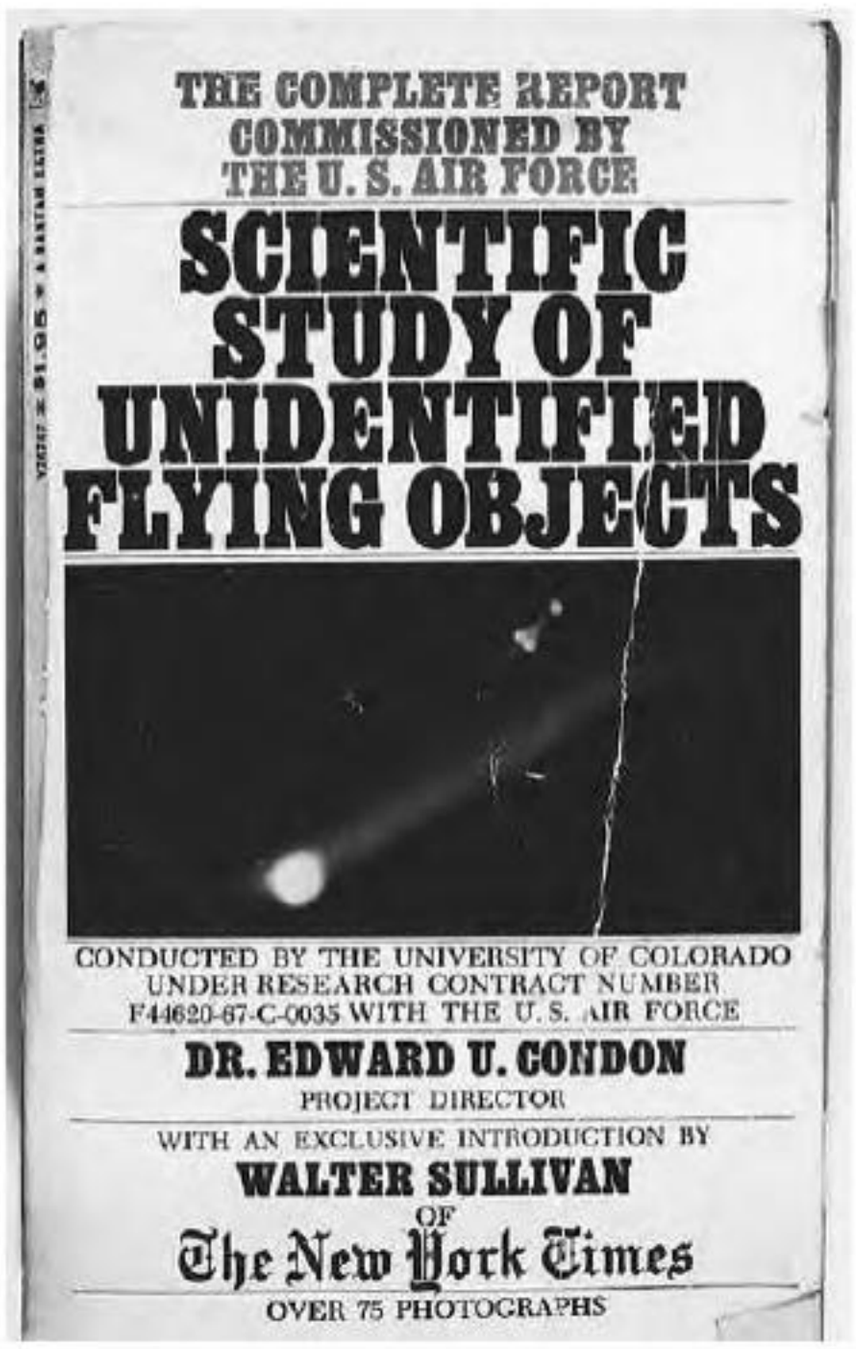
Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who for more than two decades served as an astronomical consultant to Project Sign and Project Blue Book, had been teaching astronomy at Ohio State University in Columbus, which is not far from Dayton, where Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the home of Project Blue Book, was located. 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 time, Hynek said, he became aware that "the tide was slowly turning."

J. Allen Hynek. (J. ALLAN HYNEK CENTER FOR UFO STUDIES)

DR. J. Allen Hynek had been teaching astronomy at Ohio State University.

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.

FIVE alien bodies were allegedly found at the impact site north of Roswell.

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."

One of the first civilian who claimed to arrive on the crash scene was Barney Barnett.

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-

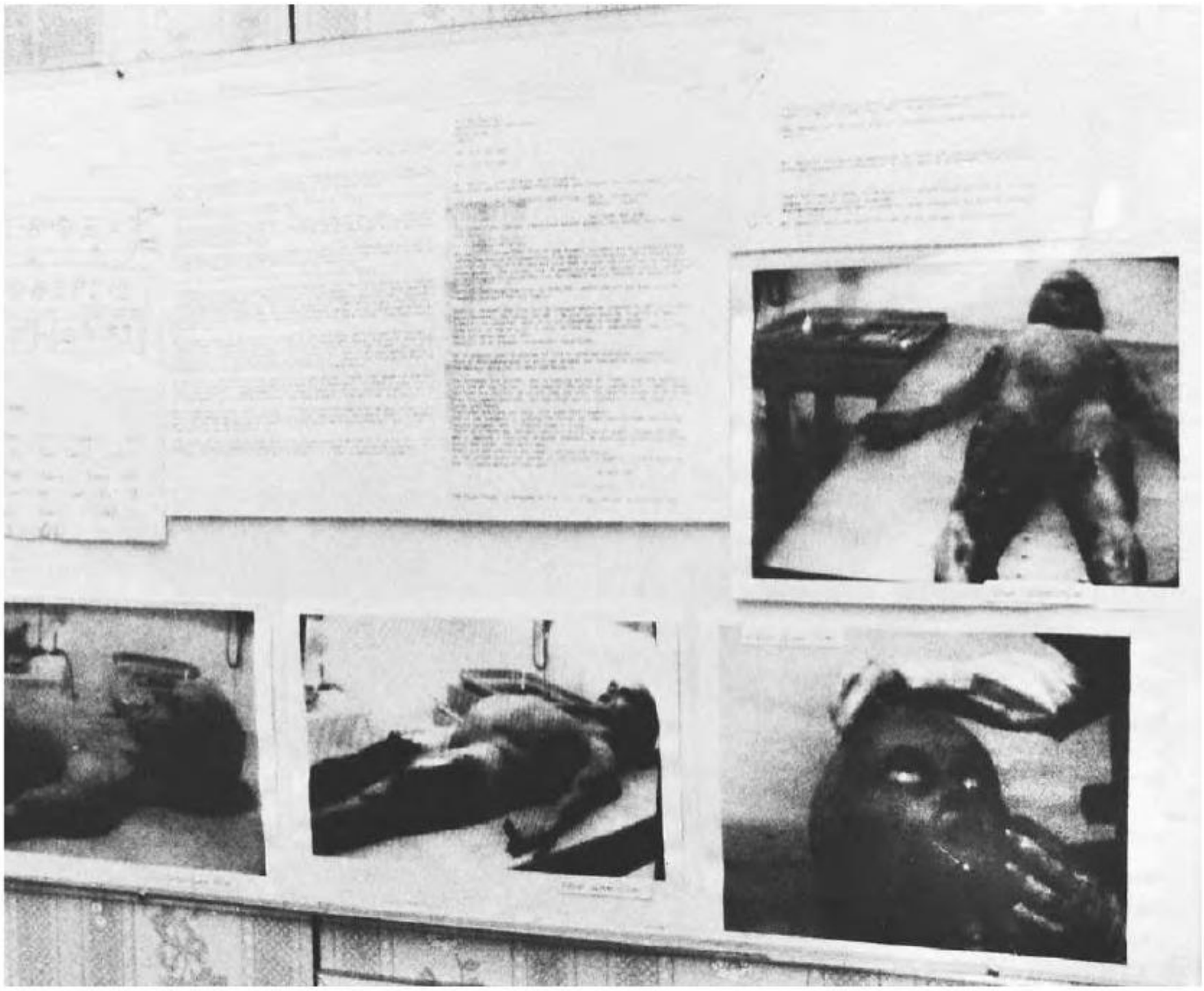
Site of the Roswell, New Mexico UFO crash.
(ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

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,



Alleged alien autopsy performed in Roswell, New Mexico. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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

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.

ACCORDING *to the air force report, the alleged alien bodies were artifacts from a project begun in 1953.*

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 first-hand 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).

Delving Deeper

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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 gulley.

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 propellent....

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 and UFO Research

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.

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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.

UFO contactees are instilled with an almost religious fervor to spread messages given to them by space beings.

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 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 bumbling, 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

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.

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.

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.

UNEXPLAINABLE *recoveries from ailments often occur among people who claim to have been examined by alien beings.*

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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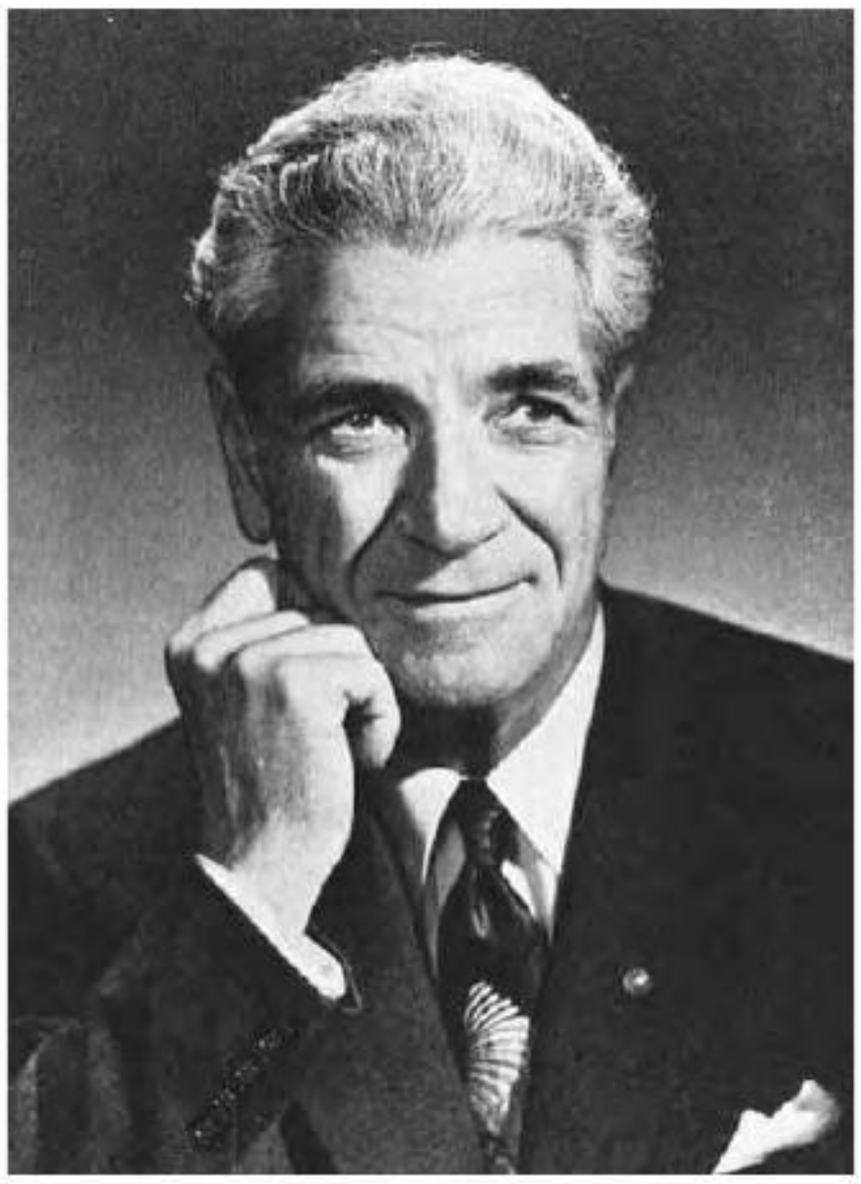
George Adamski (1891–1965)

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.

GEORGE Adamski was the first of the New Age UFO prophets.

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.

THE space people, according to Fry, were descendents of the lost continent of Lemuria.

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 UFOnauts. 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 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.

Betty and Barney Hill claimed they were abducted by UFOs. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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.

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.

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

Actors Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones in the sci-fi movie "Men in Black." (THE KOBAL COLLECTION)

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 brain-washing 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

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.

THE *legend of the three Men in Black, the MIB, began in September 1953.*

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. (DENNIS STACY/FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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 from this perspective, were "a very complicated presence among us" and that not all of them were to be "trusted or accepted."

ACCORDING to Strieber, on December 26, 1985, he underwent the first of a series of close encounter experiences with alien beings.

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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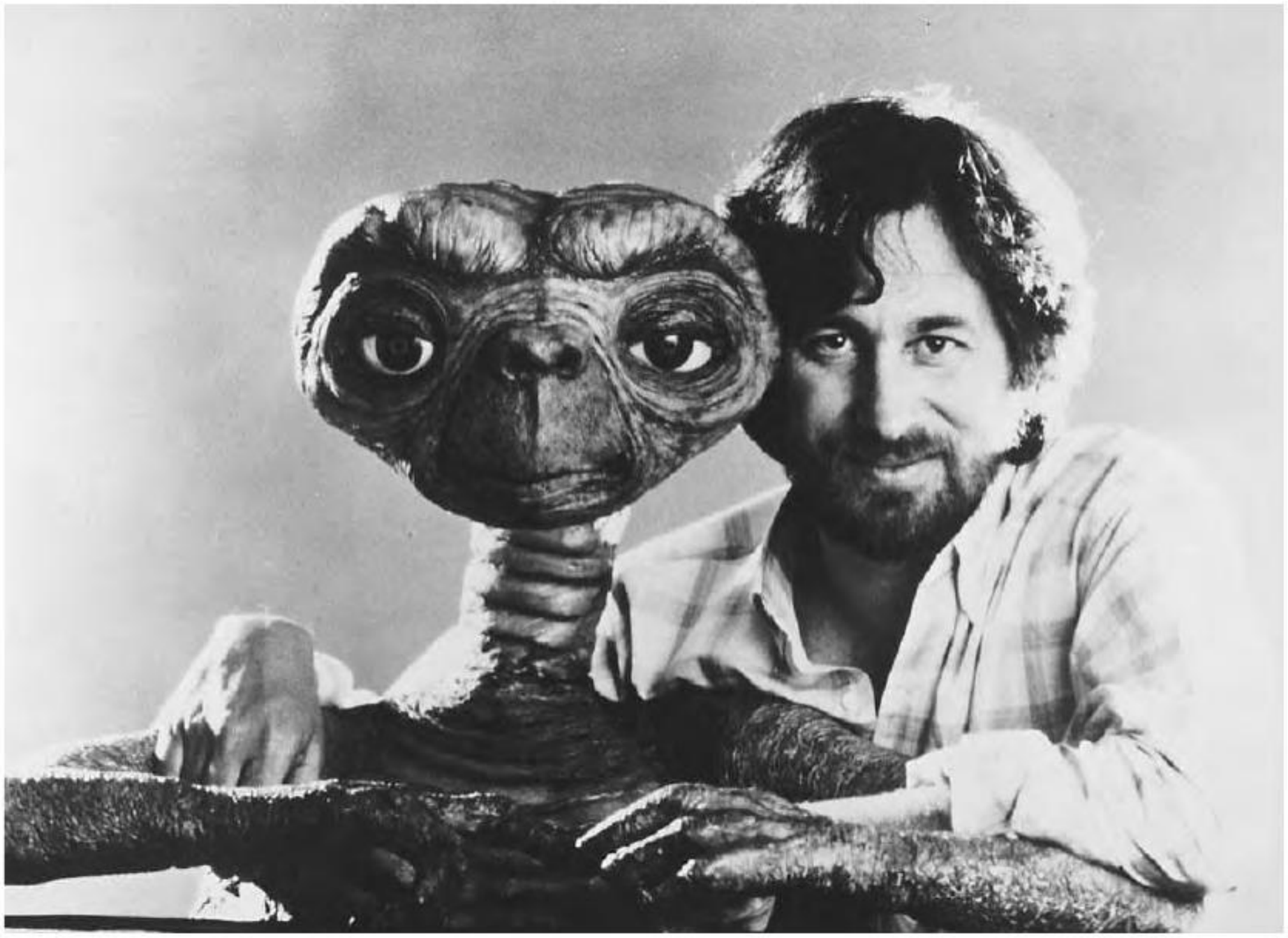


Steven Spielberg and ET. (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

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

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 expe-riences 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 abduct-ed 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-**

UFO hovering over a group of people in the film "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." (ARCHIVE PHOTOS, INC.)

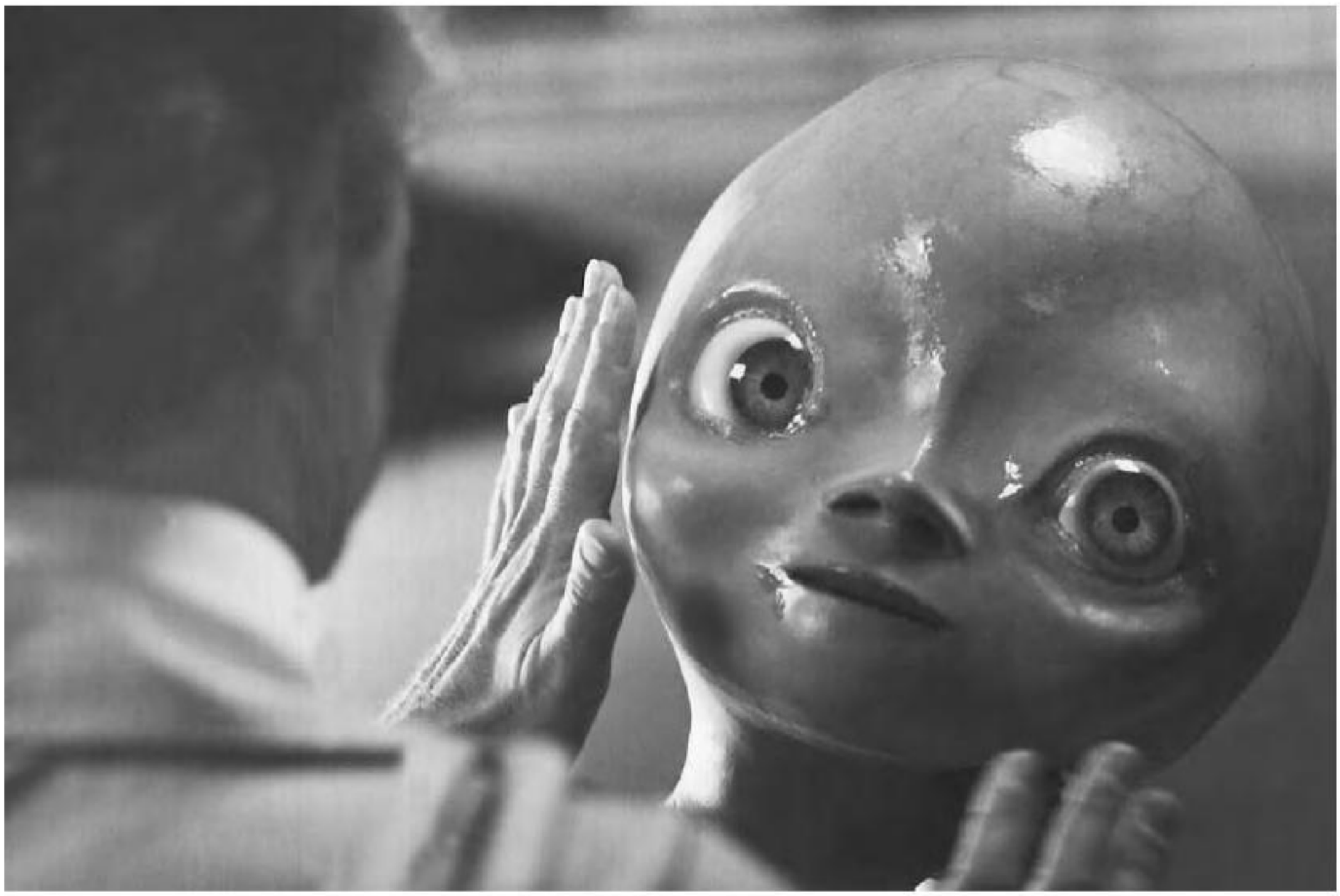
ject Blue Book. Hynek was even given a cameo in the film, and he can be seen among the scientists gathered to welcome the aliens when the massive mothership sets down on Devil's Tower. In numerous interviews, Spielberg said that he had always been fascinated by the subject of flying saucers and alien 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 lifeforms 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.

"*Close Encounters" explores the range of emotions and inner stresses faced by a UFO contactee.*

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.

War of the Worlds was broadcasted live by CBS's "Mercury Theatre" on October 30, 1938.

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.

X-Files *attracted an estimated 20 million viewers per episode.*

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 prehistoric 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 "thrillogy," 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 has all memory of the experience wiped out by a special brainwashing device.

Roy Thinnes was in the "Invaders" television series, as well as the "The X-Files." (ARCHIVES OF BRAD STEIGER)

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.

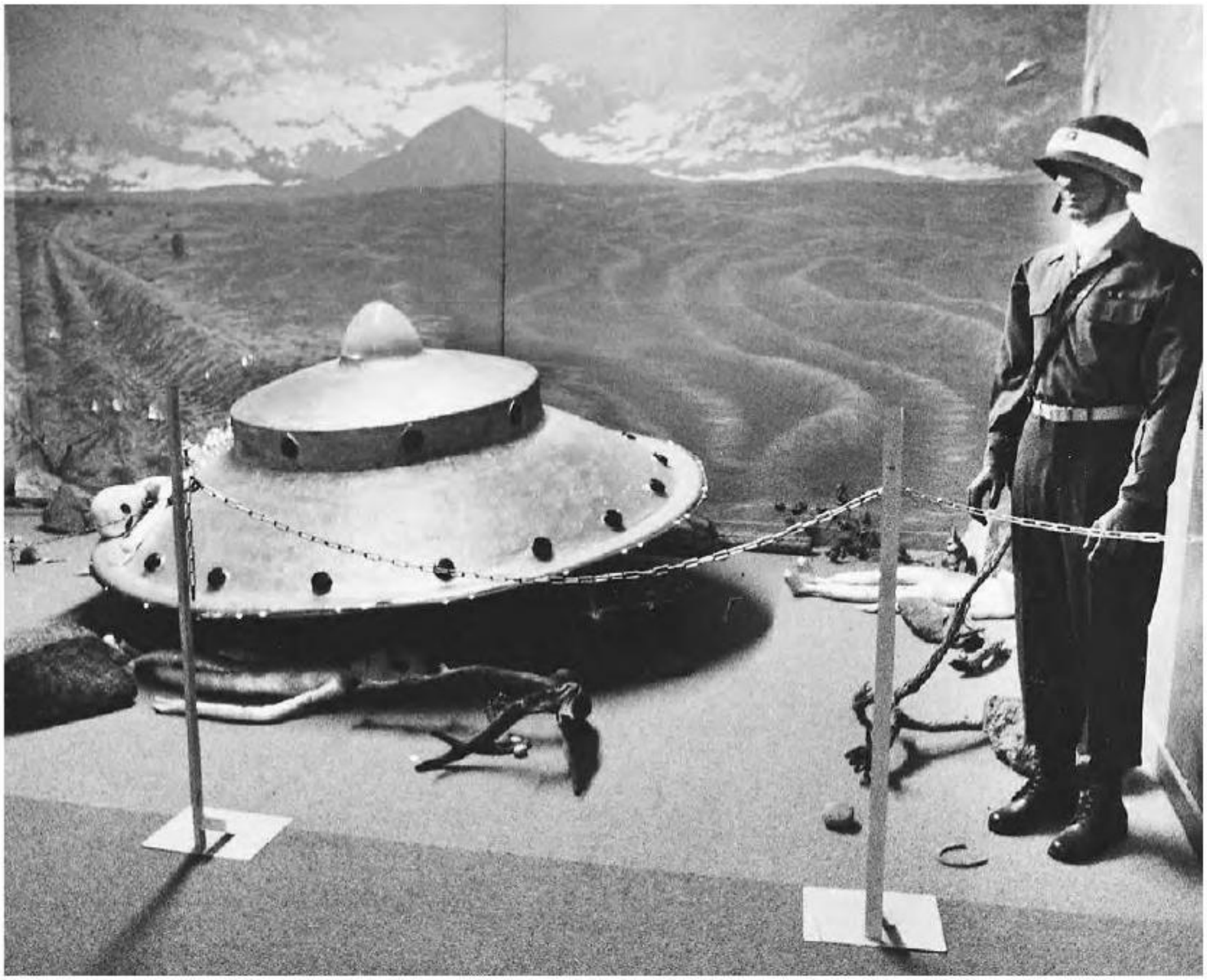
EIGHTY percent of Americans believed that the U.S. government is conducting a cover-up of the alien presence.

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-



UFO Enigma Museum in Roswell, New Mexico. (FORTEAN PICTURE LIBRARY)

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-

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.

In the United Kingdom 47 percent of its citizens believed in visitations from extraterrestrials.

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 postcard 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.

ALIENS, *satanic cultists, and crews of unmarked black helicopters are named as the suspects in cattle mutilations.*

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.

Unexplained geometric designs occurred in the fields of wheat and corn in Scotland in 1678.

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 superconsciousness, 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 electronics, 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.

THE authenticity of the MJ-12 documents remains highly controversial.

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 semicomatose 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.

THE legend of the Philadelphia Experiment began on January 13, 1956.

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, homeship, 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.

Delving Deeper

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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 *abussos*, 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.

apothacary 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 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.

cryptomensia 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 *carn*, 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.

enchantments 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 craftmanship. 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 paranormal 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 *neophutos* 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 that 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.

retrocognition 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 *sarkophogos*, 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.

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.

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 *zolion*, 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.

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