

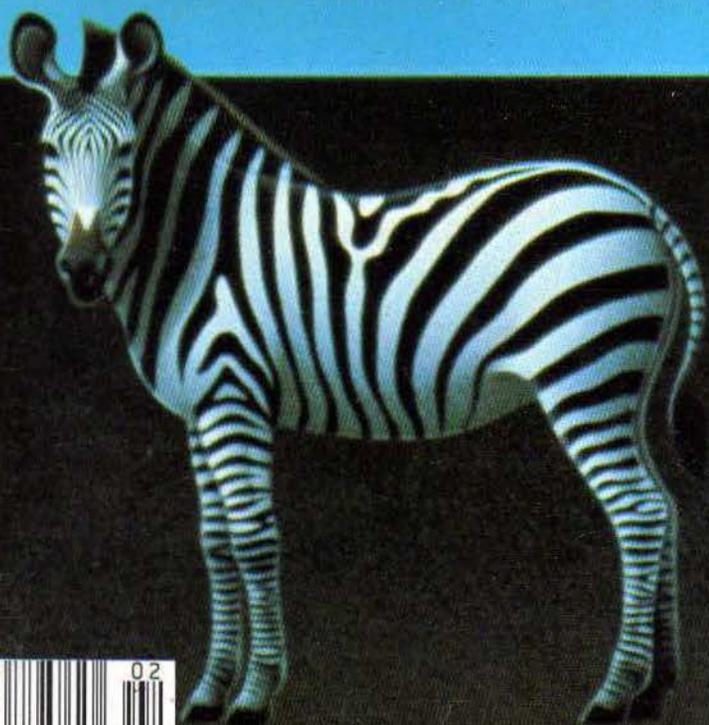
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EXCLUSIVE: NEW DIMENSIONS IN DEATH

A CLINICAL VIEW OF
WHAT IT'S REALLY LIKE
TO DIE...AND COME BACK



OMNI

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editor & publisher

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OMNI PUBLICATIONS INTERNATIONAL LTD

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FEBRUARY

LETTERS

COMMUNICATIONS

Open Mind

Thanks for publishing "Religion in the Twenty-first Century," by James Reston, Jr. [December 1981]. It was a well-written, well-balanced series of interviews, almost a symposium, that managed to present very clearly a great many different — and yet not all that different — points of view.

Perhaps most important, however, Mr. Reston and *Omni* conveyed the idea that there are those of us "out there" who find little contradiction between science and religion. We can always find one point of view or the other in the media, but seldom both. I, for one, appreciate your magazine's open-mindedness.

William J. Reynolds

Senior editor

TWA Ambassador magazine

St. Paul, Minn.

Viva Tesla!

In your article "Project Tesla" [August 1981], you erred in stating that Nikola Tesla was Croatian. To set the record straight, Tesla was the son of the Reverend Milutin Tesla, a Serbian Orthodox priest, and Djouka (née Mandich) Tesla, whose male family members for generations were also Serbian Orthodox priests. Therefore, I must conclude that Tesla was *Serbian*.

As an American of Serbian descent, I am proud of my heritage and angry that this brilliant scientist has been overlooked for so long. He was never afforded the credit and prestige his discoveries and inventions warranted.

Michael Milanovich

Chicago, Ill.

We'll take your word for it, but our source, The New Columbia Encyclopedia (1975), says that Nikola Tesla was born in Croatia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. We deduced that he was a Croatian. Today he would have been a Yugoslav. — Ed.

UFO Elaboration

I would like to clear up a problem that was introduced in my article on the Betty Hill UFO star map [UFO Update, November 1981]. I never said that the Hill case has

been revealed as "what could be the most elaborate UFO hoax ever perpetrated." I do not agree that this conclusion can follow from the Marjorie Fish interpretation of the Hill alien-star map. The new astronomical information reported in my article returns this famous abduction claim to unsupported anecdotal testimony, but it's hardly a deliberate hoax.

Allan Hendry

Stone Mountain, Ga.

Poets' Corner

Your variety of articles gives me a feeling I'm keeping up-to-date on the most recent experiments and theories in every field from quarks to quasars. *Omni's* third-anniversary issue [October 1981] and every issue that preceded it have inspired me to create the following lyrical appreciation for your effort and success in making science interesting entertainment.

For many scientific things

That I have read and seen,

I credit three years' learning from

Your *Omni* magazine.

Robert Patrick Hussey

Wall, Pa.

Tears and Taxes

As I watched the *Columbia* blast off, I realized that tears of joy were streaming down my face from the awe, joy, and excitement of it all. I also realized that I was an intricate part of this liftoff because my tax dollar helped pay for it, and that pleased me thoroughly.

I was born in 1942, and the space program is a constant source of delight and wonder to me. I remember, as a child, running out of the house at the sound of a sonic boom, shattering my disbelief in man's ability to break the sound barrier. As I grew to womanhood, I watched man's first steps on the moon; I found myself overwhelmed by the magnitude of this adventure.

Omni is a monthly reminder that we are making positive advances into the future. My daily newspaper, alas, makes me feel there is no future.

Lyn Marquardt
Sacramento, Calif.

*“She was bone-thin,
most of her reddish hair was
gone, and her face
had erupted in large blisters.”*

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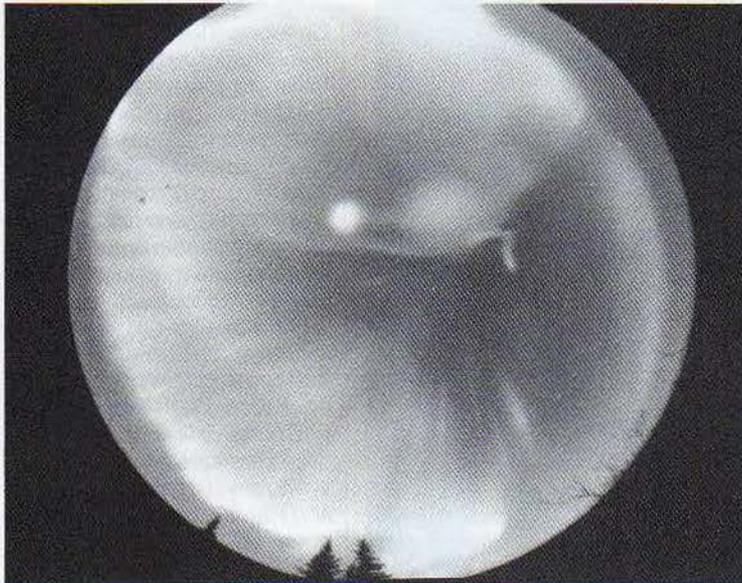
The dense Piney Woods were frigid and still on the evening of December 29, 1980, save for the sound of the car carrying store owner Betty Cash, her assistant, Vickie Landrum, and Vickie's grandson, Colby. The three had just finished dinner and were returning to their hometown of Dayton, Texas, when a diamond-shaped object the size of a hot-air balloon dipped between the pines and began spitting bright yellow flames.

“We'll be burned to death if we go under that thing!” Vickie screamed. Betty slammed on the brakes. Seven-year-old Colby began to sob, and Vickie clutched him, saying, “Don't be afraid, honey. Jesus'll come out of that burnin' cloud and take care of you. We'll see your [dead] grandpa, too.”

After several minutes the object rose, sweeping bright cones of light over the looming pines. The trio sped off in a panic. They were nearing home when they saw the object again, this time surrounded by 23 roaring helicopters.

Back in Dayton, Cash and the Landrums grew deathly ill, with symptoms ranging from nausea to diarrhea. Colby's diarrhea was so bad he had to put on diapers. Guessing that the diamond-shaped craft was the cause of their trouble, Betty eventually contacted NASA, which referred her to McDonnell Douglas space shuttle engineer John Schuessler. Shaking with agitation during their first phone conversation, she told him her story.

“I thought she was a kook,” says Schuessler, a member of the Mutual UFO Network, a group that investigates UFO



UFO UPDATE

sightings. “But I went to see her.”

The woman he met was bone-thin. Most of her reddish hair was gone, and large blisters had erupted on her face. She had just been released from the hospital. Schuessler then met Vickie and Colby. After talking to them for a few minutes, he was “convinced that something serious had happened.”

Schuessler soon became “a sort of rabbi” for the three friends. He obtained their medical records and, with the help of a dozen physicians, learned that the symptoms could have been caused by radiation.

He began to suspect that the fire-spewing craft was an experimental vehicle developed by the U.S. military. It had probably malfunctioned, he speculated, and begun to emit huge amounts of radiation. The helicopters may have been there to cart the craft off quickly if it crashed.

If only the military would admit the truth, Schuessler thought, doctors could learn what type of radiation was disfiguring Cash and the Landrums. Then they could administer the correct treatment. Schuessler frantically called every government official and military base in the area. Finally he found a pilot who admitted flying one of the helicopters; however, the pilot refused to identify the brilliant object, calling it classified. “Since then,” Schuessler says, “it's been mum's the word from everybody.”

As this story goes to press, all three victims continue to deteriorate. Vickie has become blind in one eye, and both she and Colby must enter the hospital for additional tests. — JACK THORNTON AND PAMELA WEINTRAUB