

Volume 9 Number 1

The Skeptic



*Ritual Satanic abuse:
reality or illusion?*

Also in this issue:

How NOT to win the National Lottery!

Nikola Tesla: eccentric scientist or neglected genius?

Psychic surgery in Britain: an alarming report

£1.85

Hilary Evans' *Paranormal Picture Gallery*



Washerwomen of the night

A FASCINATION WITH THE OCCULT is a sign that the civilisation concerned is on its last legs, says historian Jean Gimpel in *The Medieval Machine*, and skeptics do a lot of moaning and gnashing of teeth about the New Age and a perceived escalation of obsession with the paranormal.

But any folklorist will tell you this is poppycock: there never was a time when people weren't fascinated by such things. Novelist George Sand proved this in her *Legendes Rustiques* which is filled with wondrous folk-traditions she found on her own doorstep in Berry, central France.

This 1851 wood engraving by her artist son Maurice shows the 'washerwomen of the night' who take naughty children and cleanse them of their naughtiness by laundering them on the riverbank. And we think *we* invented child abuse...

Hilary Evans is co-proprietor of the Mary Evans Picture Library, 59 Tranquil Vale, London SE3 0BS

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Sorry if we've missed anyone out—please keep the clippings coming!

The front cover illustration is 'The Rider from the Tower' (Augsburg, 1498). At the agreed hour the Devil comes to take away the child that has been sold to him.

Hits and Misses

Steve Donnelly

Negative energy

Amazing new discoveries in physics are generally announced to the world in the pages of scientific journals although, occasionally—such as in the case of so-called ‘cold fusion’—an announcement is made to the media prior to publication of a scientific paper. However, a recent apparently paradigm-breaking discovery, that of ‘negative calories’, has recently been published in a full-colour advertisement in a colour supplement. In the *Sunday Times* magazine on 12 February, Isabelle Martin explained that she has discovered that some foods contain negative calories—presumably a hitherto unknown form of antimatter that does not spontaneously annihilate matter when it comes into contact with it. This amazing substance is present in some foodstuffs which, as you digest them, ‘burn off more calories than they put on. As a result, the more you eat of these foods the more weight you can lose!’ The advertisement doesn’t say how the negative calories are prevented from annihilating the food in which they occur or indeed whether the intense burst of energy that is expected when matter and antimatter meet (and which can be calculated from Einstein’s famous $E=mc^2$ equation) poses a particular hazard for the user and the inhabitants of the city in which he or she lives. The book explaining where negative calories are to be found and how they can be used for weight loss costs only £14.95 and, once in possession of it, you can eat your way through boxes of chocolates and drink your way through barrels of beer and still lose weight by including some negative calorie foodstuffs in your diet.

All joking aside, this kind of nonsensical claim seems to me to be increasingly common in books, newspapers and women’s magazines—a disturbing trend in a society in which the incidence of various severe types of eating disorder is also on the increase. Trading standards officers occasionally react to these types of claims—for instance the *Daily Telegraph* on 4 March reported that a man selling pills that he claimed could speed up the body’s fat burning processes no matter how much the slimmer ate, was recently fined £2000. But these kinds of actions are just a drop in the ocean faced with the barrage of faddy ‘weight-loss’ diets that are available. It is in this context that the efforts of Halifax MP Alice Mahon to reintroduce her private members’ bill to regulate the weight-loss industry should be applauded. According to the *Sunday Telegraph* on 8 January, she is convinced that dieting undermines a woman’s emotional and physical well-being and can be a step towards eating disorders and illnesses. If Alice Mahon’s bill were to become law, all weight-loss pills, potions and patches would be brought under the control of the Medicines Act, making them available only on prescription.



Tim Pearce

Well, you did order from the ‘Negative Calorie’ menu!

Meanwhile, readers might like to avail themselves of the *Skeptic Miracle Weight Loss Programme* for which there is no charge. When you drink a cold liquid, your body must expend energy in bringing it up to normal body temperature. Provided that the liquid in question is calorie-free this can form the basis of your weight-loss programme. Simply drink ice-cold water as an accompaniment to your Mars bar. Only about 10 litres of ice-cold water are required to ‘annihilate’ the calories of one chocolate bar.

School for exorcists

Britain’s first school for exorcism and healing is being set up in a former independent school in Surrey. According to the *Sunday Telegraph* on 15 January a controversial Christian group, Ellel Ministries is purchasing the school complete with its 35 acre site for £2.15 million. The nine-year-old organisation is a member of the Evangelical Alliance and has mainstream Anglican connections but owns a number of other centres in which it carries out the casting out of demons and spiritual healing. Although promotional leaflets refer to the proposed new centre as an ‘International Training and Residential Healing Centre’ and do not mention possession or exorcism, the director of Ellel, Peter Horrobin, asserts that virtually all the psychiatric conditions he has come across with clients have involved ‘wrestling with demons’. Even more worryingly, individuals can apparently be possessed by demons as a result of a road accident, being sexually abused, touching a dead body or

masturbating. Mr Horrobin claims to have 'delivered' a man from a demon that had made him addicted to peppermints.

Hidden talents

If Tony Blair is to become Britain's next Prime Minister, the country may be in greater danger than even ardent Conservatives would have us believe. According to an article in the *Big Issue* on 20 February, Tony Blair is not at all what he appears to be. We may all think of him as a smooth, reasonable, pleasant, decent fellow but his horoscope tells another story entirely. Astrologically speaking, he has the most dreaded sign of any star alignment, Taurus or the Grand Cross. Even worse (horror of horrors), Pluto was opposite the Moon when he was born. All this apparently means that he is obsessive and manipulative but not for any noble purpose, only to his own advantage. His chart shows him to be (astrologically) without water—an element that represents sensitivity and flexibility—and the only other major political figure who has such a bleak horoscope is Jacques Delors. Tony is a dominant bull but is hiding his true personality and 'the nation may soon be led by a psychological pervert'. It is hard to disagree with the statement in the article that 'either astrology is codswallop or Tony Blair has very successfully hidden his personality from the nation'.

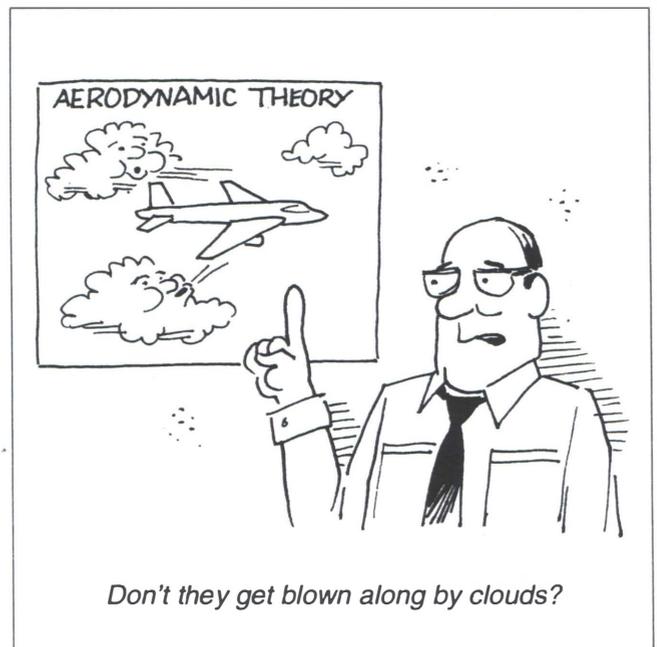
Cold spots

An article in *Nature* (almost certainly written, tongue in cheek) by columnist David Jones has apparently provoked serious academic discussion about the nature of ghosts and the spirit world. According to an article in *Scotland on Sunday* on 22 January, Jones proposed the hypothesis that ghosts exist in a parallel spirit world that is much colder than ours—270° Celsius below zero, to be exact. Ghosts arrive in our world when a break comes about between the two universes and the cold comes with them, giving rise to the frequently-reported phenomenon of cold spots. According to Jones, when we die our spirits usually escape using the heat remaining in the cooling body but some spirits become trapped in our world. Needing heat energy to escape, they then desperately attempt to steal a living person's body heat. The best type of funeral is thus cremation as enough heat is provided to enable trapped spirits to flee to their own world. Otherwise, although traditional exorcism with a candle may help to free a trapped spirit (by means of the heat of the flame), Jones considers that a microwave oven would do a better job; the fact that the microwave must have its door closed to work posing no problems for entities that can pass through walls. All of this is not at all to the liking of Professor Trevor Stone of Glasgow University, however, who believes that ghosts are really the nucleic acids of deceased persons in the form of viral particles that can be inhaled and trapped in the brains of living people. They then lie dormant until something triggers the release of their protein-encoded memories giving rise to an apparition or memories of previous lives.

Those magnificent men . . .

According to a story well known to students of aeronautical engineering, when the flight of the bumble bee is scientifically analysed it is revealed that the poor insect cannot, in fact, fly at all. Happily, the bumble bee, blissfully unaware of this analysis, keeps on flying regardless. It will be no comfort to those of us who travel frequently by air to learn that a similar story also applies to aeroplane flight. An article in the *Sunday Telegraph* on 8 January reported the claims of a leading American technologist, Jef Raskin, that the usual textbook explanations of powered flight are incorrect—a point that has also been made for a number of years by British skeptic Dr David Fisher.

The conventional explanation of aircraft flight is that the wings force air to travel faster over the top surface than the bottom. But the key to the controversy is the explanation of why the air travels faster over the top of the wing. The conventional explanation (Bernoulli's theorem) is that the air travelling over the top of the wing travels further and thus faster than the air passing along the bottom surface. This is a result of the air following the (longer) curved contour of the top of the wing. This difference in air velocity gives rise to a pressure difference, with the pressure being lower on the top of the wing and this generates lift. Unfortunately, when calculations are performed using this theorem the resulting pressure difference is too small to keep the craft aloft. And it certainly doesn't provide an explanation of how stunt pilots manage to fly their aeroplanes upside down. The *Telegraph* contacted a number of experts on both the theory and practice of aerodynamics and in response to the question 'why do aircraft fly?', received almost as many explanations as there were experts. Perhaps Orville was Wright, after all when he said in



Tim Pearce

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How Not To Win The Lottery

Chris Willis

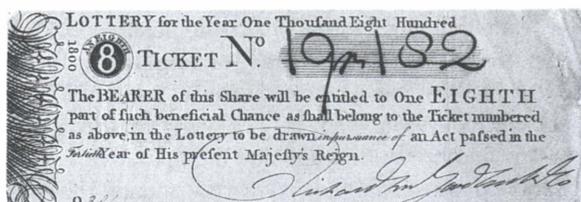
Saturday evening balls

AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS working in a bookshop, I've come to the conclusion that the best way to make money out of the National Lottery is to write a book about it. Books on how to win the lottery are selling in their thousands to the credulous public. We all know that the lottery numbers are chosen totally at random, and there is no way to forecast or influence the result, but people eagerly buy books which claim to show them how to predict the winning numbers through a variety of strange methods ranging from numerology to dream analysis. To paraphrase Mencken, nobody ever lost money by underestimating the gullibility of the public.

One best-seller is the optimistically-titled *Win the Lottery!* by Ellin Dodge (Moeller/Lyric, £3.99). Dodge, who is described as 'America's leading numerologist' offers 'simple logical instructions based on the ancient science of numerology', using the reader's first name and birthdate to pick a 'lucky number'. Funny—I never knew numerology was a science. And what has your name or birthdate got to do with a load of balls picked by a random number generator?

Then there's *How to Win the Lottery: The Professional Way to Win* by Herb and Dot Hendler (Signet, £2.99). The authors claim that this book is 'based on sound mathematical theory'. I have my doubts. Most of the system has to do with the so-called law of averages, a mis-application of probability theory which has never been accepted as valid. The first section of the book is full of charts to help the reader 'use the law of averages to discover which numbers are due to come up'. It also tells you 'How to use previous results to predict the future' by keeping a record of previous winning numbers.

It's almost worth buying the book for its second section. Entitled 'The Fun Zone', it offers a humorous guide to 'Mystic ways to supercharge your lottery plays'. These include includes ways of choosing numbers by using dice, newspaper headlines or the serial numbers on banknotes. The authors assure the reader that none of these are particularly likely to work. (Neither is the law of averages.) I particularly liked the section on 'Dowsing for lottery winners' (pages



English state lottery ticket from 1800

Mary Evans

178–9), in which the punter is advised to write numbers on a 'magic square' of eight numbers by eight and dowse over it! The book also gives 'magic squares' for each day of the week, with their 'associated planets'. The authors sensibly tell you that 'numerology can't help you pick winning lottery numbers' (page 189), but tell you how to try it anyway. With tongue firmly in cheek, they go on to suggest ways of choosing a 'lucky number' from your horoscope (page 196–7), then follow this with a section on picking your winning number from your dreams.

Your Guide to Winning the National Lottery by Dennis Jones (Foulsham £2.99), gets off to a bad start. On the cover of this book, we are told that 'this game will be creating A MILLIONAIRE EVERY WEEK', which it certainly does not. The back cover carries the proud boast, 'It's a fact! This system gives you a better chance of winning the National Lottery than you have of winning the



Drawing a lottery in the Guildhall, 1739

Mary Evans

Football Pools'. The author scrupulously points out that odds against becoming a millionaire on the Lottery are 13,983,816 to 1. (I'll take his word for it). These odds don't seem to put people off buying a ticket, and probably won't put people off buying the book either.

The book is a thin 64 pages, of which only pages 34–49 actually explain the author's 'system'. He suggests that the best way to play is to use several different combinations of numbers and to form a syndicate so that you can buy several tickets and spread the cost. The rest of the book consists of a history of the lottery, descriptions of lotteries in other countries and a discussion of the football pools. The author explains that his system works for football pools (page 52–61), but complains that pools promoters keep altering the rules, thus reducing the chances of a big win. Interestingly, he predicts that the 'National Lottery will sound the death knell of the football pools' (page 53), but this has not prevented him or his publishers from bringing out a book outlining his system for winning the pools.

I have to confess that I nearly bought *Dream Ticket: How to Win the National Lottery. The Clues May Be Found in Your Dreams* (Bloomsbury, £3.99). For sheer entertainment value, this book is wonderful! Supposedly based on an early nineteenth century Italian book, *La Smorfia*, this book claims to show the gullible reader how to 'decode the secret predictions of your sleeping mind'. Anything you see in a dream has a number. To give a few random examples, a plumber is 47, a 'serpent in love' is 45, a disinterred corpse is 43 or 47, and a dog can be any one of a dozen or more different numbers according to such facts as whether it's a mastiff or a thoroughbred, and whether it's standing, sitting or lying down. The mind boggles!

In case your dreams don't yield enough numbers to fill a lottery ticket, the book helpfully assigns numbers to the months, and to names. Apparently my 'lucky numbers' are 20 and 48. Quite what use this information will ever be to me I don't know. In case you dream too many numbers, the book gives methods of picking the 'right' numbers from them. I found myself amused but baffled by instructions such as 'subtract the calends, which as everyone knows is the first day of the month, from the date of the draw, and then the age of the moon' (page 88). There is also a somewhat bizarre section on dream interpretation. For example, we learn that to dream of 'eating cabbages is a sign of boredom' (page 32).

What with dream analysis, numerology and dodgy mathematical theories, predicting a 'winning' number could become a full time occupation for anyone foolish enough to take these books seriously. I'll close by passing on the only good piece of advice I've found in any of these publications. Among such dubious gems as 'How your computer can help you to win the lottery' the first issue of *National Lottery Magazine* sensibly advises its readers not to forget where they've put their tickets!

Chris Willis is a research student currently subsidising her PhD by a bizarre combination of professional research work, freelance journalism and office work.

The Bat Call

Teller

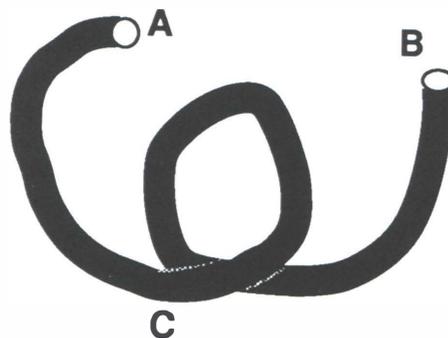


WHILE I WAS IN LOS ANGELES shooting a movie ('The Fantasticks'—the 'Mouse Trap' of Off-Broadway musicals, starring Jonathan Morris), I saw a bit of science in action.

One day the special effects guys, Eric and Cliff, were not very busy and were killing time by tinkering. Each time I went past their truck, I noticed Eric working with a piece of copper tubing, shaping it, filing little holes in it. So I asked him what it was.

'It's a bat call. Puts out a really high squeal that bats respond to. The high eaves of the studio are full of bats. I'll show you later.'

As I passed later in the day, I saw Eric shaping the tube into a sort of twisty French-horn shape, like this:



He was putting a mouthpiece on the end labelled B, and had a whole series of holes along the bottom at C.

By late afternoon, there was hanging from the trailer, the completed instrument, with a little tag on it:

A.C.M.E.
BAT CALL

When I came up, a background actor was looking it over. Eric was saying, 'See those vents up there? Even in the middle of the day, I think it's pretty certain you'll get at least a few bats out of those.' I was skeptical, but the background actor jumped at the chance to rouse some bats.

He picked up the bat call and blew into it. A huge puff of talcum powder came out of end A, carefully aimed so as to cover the blower with white. The call-blower was in make-up and wearing glasses, which made it especially satisfying. Beware of special effects departments bearing inventions.

Teller is (approximately) 50% of conjuring twosome, Penn and Teller

The Tesla Museum

Jeff Johnson

A trip to a museum of 'Extraordinary Science'

NIKOLA TESLA, a brilliant but eccentric genius, worked for Thomas Edison in the 1880s. The relationship ended after they quarrelled, apparently over the relative merits of two kinds of electric current—direct (DC) and alternating (AC). Tesla advocated AC, and in 1891 built in Telluride, Colorado, the world's first power plant that used AC motors for generating and transmitting electricity. Today most commercial power plants in this country have AC generators.

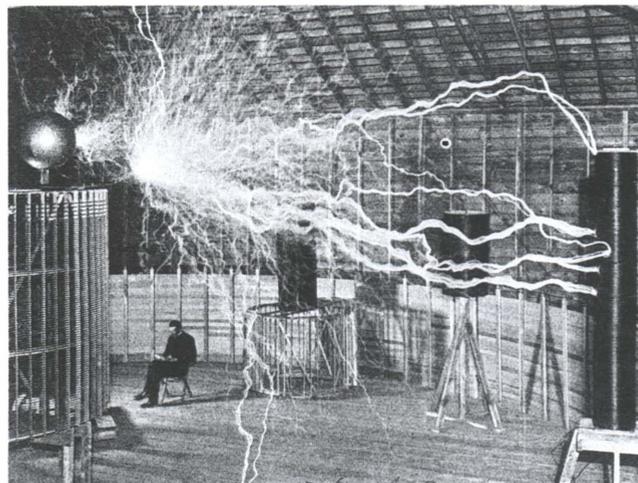
Tesla's later life was devoted to ever increasingly bizarre notions, some of which he experimented with when he lived in Colorado Springs. This colourful, zany genius continues to intrigue followers who have established the International Tesla Society that sponsors the Extraordinary Science Conference every summer in Colorado Springs.

In pursuit of their goal of making the life and achievements of Nikola Tesla better known, the International Tesla Society is working to establish the nascent Nikola Tesla Museum of Science and Industry in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

There is another, apparently much better established, Tesla Museum in Belgrade, in former Yugoslavia, from which the society hopes to obtain some genuine Tesla memorabilia for their own museum, but at the moment their exhibit space is rather bare. The main room is almost empty except for wall hangings that illustrate some of Tesla's major achievements—and some persistent myths—and a bronze bust of Tesla. A small room at the rear is used as a video theatre in which visitors view a biographical tape. In another room at the entrance is the museum bookstore—well worth browsing by the bemused skeptic.

If this were all, the museum would probably not merit a detour, but there is another room, 'The Lab', which makes the trip worthwhile. Demonstrations of 'Extraordinary Science' are performed in The Lab, which is open to conducted tours only. Completely by chance I arrived just as a tour, comprising about six people, was beginning.

After watching the video on Tesla's life, we were admitted to The Lab, a large, untidy room with demonstration apparatus on tables around the walls. At each table, our host operated the equipment and explained what we were seeing. The demonstrations were impressive, but for the most part conventional. Many high school students have seen similar demonstrations conducted by their own science teachers. What was not at all conventional, and what made the tour memorable, were the explanations given for



Mary Evans

Tesla in his laboratory at Colorado Springs, 1899/1900

the phenomena. These were indeed moderately 'extraordinary science.'

For example, there is a famous electrical experiment called the Jumping Ring. A steel post, usually about an inch in diameter and less than a foot long, is positioned vertically with an electric coil at its base. An aluminium ring or washer, large enough to slip easily over the post, is placed on top of the coil. When the coil is plugged in, the ring jumps into the air. Conventional science teachers use this gadget to demonstrate something called Lenz's law: the ring jumps because an electric current is induced in it which momentarily makes the ring a magnet oriented to push itself away from the coil.

The same demonstration is done at the Tesla Museum but the explanation offered for the ring's behaviour is definitely extraordinary: it seems the aluminium ring jumps because it is a 'monopole'—a lone magnetic pole. All known magnets are 'dipoles—pairs of opposite poles: one called north, the other south. If I understood our host correctly, the jumping ring is an example of a lone magnetic pole—a north without a south, if memory serves—something which conventional physicists have been seeking for decades.

Our host also told us that we should never accept any statement from a scientist which implies any kind of limitation on what human beings can achieve. Specifically, the idea of conservation of energy, which prohibits the construction of perpetual motion machines, is nonsense. The speed of light is another example: 'Don't ever let anyone

tell you that electromagnetic waves can't travel faster than the speed of light. We've demonstrated it.'

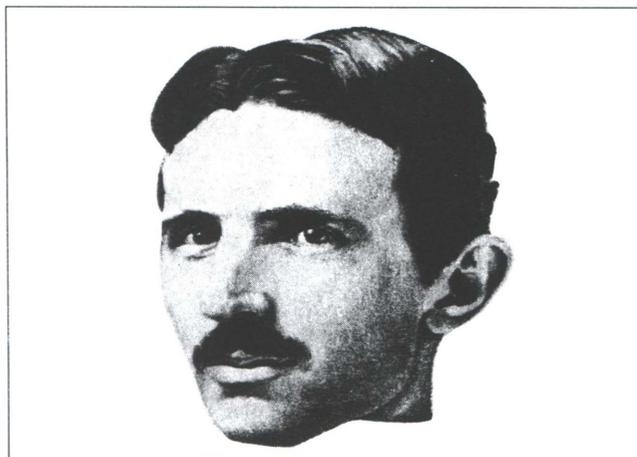
Next we were introduced to a wonderful 'magnetic brake.' An electric motor was used to spin a metal disk up to about 3000 RPM. Then a large U-shaped magnet was pushed toward the disk so that its edge was now between the magnet's poles. The spinning stopped almost instantly, even though nothing ever touched the disk. Since no parts rub together in this kind of brake it won't wear out the way a conventional brake does. Our host used this as an object lesson on the difficulties facing private inventors trying to market their ideas. Car manufacturers aren't interested in buying into new devices until their patents have expired. Also, a brake that never wore out would make repair shops very unhappy. So a good idea has been balked by greed.

Well, perhaps. But the principle of the magnetic brake has been known for a very long time, and it does have its problems. Its force varies with speed: it might be very effective on highways but have little effect in school zones, and no effect at all for stopping, parking and hill-holding. A car equipped with magnetic brakes would probably need a set of conventional brakes as well, so perhaps there is a bit more to car makers' lack of enthusiasm for the magnetic brake than just corporate selfishness. (I couldn't help noticing that in the museum's model the act of moving the magnet to activate the brake also shut off power to the motor, which is why the disk came to a full stop. Our host didn't think this important enough to point out.)

Next we were shown a 'bladeless pump', a technological descendant of a 'bladeless steam turbine' which Tesla invented but was unable to market. It really is a very fine pump although for most uses much cheaper pumps do just as well.

Next, our host used a Tesla coil to make some large sealed glass bottles of the office water-cooler variety glow eerily. Another Tesla coil, this one an antique used in the 1920s to test radio tubes and small enough to be held in the hand, lighted a fluorescent lamp which was several feet away and had no connection to any other source of power. We were told that similar Tesla coils might soon be used to test the next generation of microchips: 'It's just incredible how far ahead of its time this device was.' (Every microelectronics production facility I've ever been in trains its employees to observe special precautions to keep static electricity away from these components, some of which can be damaged by just a few stray volts. Just to carry a thousand-volt Tesla coil into one of these places would probably be grounds for dismissal.)

This introduced a short discourse on Tesla's great unrealised dream: the worldwide wireless distribution of electric power. In 1899-1900 Tesla had been in Colorado Springs experimenting with ever-larger coils in an attempt to transmit electric power without wires. According to our host, at one point Tesla had been able to light a bank of two hundred light bulbs, each fifty watts, at a distance of about twenty-five miles from his laboratory. Tesla fans are firmly convinced that his wireless power efforts failed, not because the idea was impracticable, but because there was no way to meter the electricity people would use: it would



have to be provided free.

Several other famous electrical displays included Jacob's Ladder, in which arcs travel up two closely-spaced diverging wires, and Lightning in a Jar, which looks just like what the name implies. There was also a tiny motor with solar cells on its armature, which I thought was clever. It spun rapidly when a strong light was aimed at it.

During the Jacob's Ladder bit our host took the opportunity to warn us of the dangers of low-level electromagnetic fields. It seems that such fields are responsible for a large percentage of cancer cases. Most electric appliances produce these fields but the most unhealthy are those which are in operation close to our bodies for long periods. The worst offender by far is the electric blanket. But even the tiny magnet in a telephone earpiece is harmful if oriented wrong (I forget whether it's dangerous if the north or south pole is toward your ear). In fairness to our host, he did mention that some scientists feel these effects are not conclusively proven, to which a woman in our party harrumphed: 'the operative word there is conclusive!' Others in our party could only shake their heads in disbelief, appalled by such closed-mindedness.

Gaston Naessens, whose work had been prominently featured at the recent Extraordinary Science Conference, was then praised as the man 'who has cured more cancer than anyone' and the discourse turned to the particular cancers to which men and women are susceptible. Our host explained that cancer tends to occur in soft tissues, which is why women get breast cancer and men get 'internal' cancers such as prostate: 'Men are hard on the outside and soft inside while women are soft outside and hard inside.'

Antique batteries, developed by Thomas Edison to power lamps for coal miners, and now over one hundred years old, were shown to be still producing current. Whether these batteries are really appropriate for use on the first manned expedition to Mars, as our host suggested, remains to be seen.

By this time my head was spinning. I discovered there is a limit to the amount of extraordinary science I can absorb in one day. It's fascinating to listen to, but for anyone who knows even a little of how mundane, conventional science is conducted this stuff will seem somewhat trivial: Extraordinary Science is extraordinary only to peo-

Tesla's Fabulous Mechanical Oscillator

Stories about Tesla and his inventions abound. It is often impossible to know if a particular story has any basis in fact. One of the most persistent and problematic of these concerns a vibrator he supposedly invented which was capable of destroying skyscrapers. The story has many versions but typically goes something like this:

One fine day Tesla was walking past a building under construction, when he had an idea for an experiment. From his pocket he took a tiny device which he attached to an exposed girder and stepped back to see what would happen. After several minutes the steel frame began to vibrate. The intensity of the shaking grew, until alarmed workmen began hurriedly climbing down from its upper stories. Still the shaking increased and now people from neighbouring buildings began to run into the street, convinced an earthquake was in progress. Horses took fright and bolted. But just as the structure was about to topple, Tesla pocketed his device and continued on his insouciant way as the tremors subsided.

All of Tesla's fawning biographers repeat this story uncritically in one form or another, never giving it a date or identifying the mistreated edifice—although in one wild(er) variation Tesla attaches his gadget to a tower of the Brooklyn Bridge, with terrifying consequences. In still another variation, Tesla is experimenting with the thing in one of his laboratories when it gets out of control. The swaying building frightens the other tenants, who call for the police, who burst into Tesla's room just in time to see Tesla smashing his invention with a hammer: he hadn't been able to switch it off. One can see in these stories a desire to romanticize Tesla as the brilliant inventor who was never quite under control: so obsessed with discovery that he never thought about his own safety or others'. Perhaps there is a grain of truth in this.

The mechanical oscillator is almost always described as the size of a pack of cigarettes. Stories imply it was driven by clockwork or perhaps a small battery. Conventional physicists will point out that the energy needed to shake whole buildings to pieces is vastly greater than the energy that could be stored in a clock spring or battery, but this doesn't faze Tesla enthusiasts, who have never cared much for conservation of energy anyway.

As if these stories weren't implausible enough, visitors to the Tesla Museum are told that the device produced 500 million million vibrations per second! (500 THz!) Unfortunately, this marvel isn't available for examination: it was one of a number of things seized by government agents after Tesla's death. Wouldn't you know...

Tesla offers plenty of opportunities for urban mythologists.

ple who don't know what science is.

Finally, we were shown a giant economy size Tesla coil, This one capable of producing over one million volts. Occasionally, coils like this are still used in 'death-defying' demonstrations in which someone stands on an insulated platform with lightning shooting from his fingers. Tesla loved to do this and today's Tesla coil builders (who have at least one national society of their own) keep the tradition alive. The big coil happened not to be working the day I visited (it had overheated during a prolonged demonstration for the Discovery Channel). I can't say I was too disappointed. If you've never seen one of these shows you will find it dramatic, but there's no second act.

I don't know whether any local elementary schools ever take field trips to the Tesla Museum. Almost everything to be seen there is perfectly suited to delight children, and I doubt there are many teachers and administrators with enough understanding of science to separate the fantasy from fact. This is not to disparage the teachers: our host was an extremely plausible gentleman and most of his demonstrations involved some fairly arcane physics. It is unrealistic to expect more than a few teachers to have the specialised knowledge needed to criticise the performance constructively. For teachers looking for new places to take field trips, the Tesla Museum is obviously attractive.

According to our host, the International Tesla Society sponsors occasional lecture trips by members to schools around the country. This is disturbing.

The museum owners seem to suffer from the same obsession that so limited Tesla's own lifetime achievement: they are inordinately fond of anything that arcs, sparks or glows. They also tend to see themselves as champions of lost causes—bravely standing against conventional science for ideas which conventional scientists have rejected or ignored. Finally, any museum that devotes most of its resources to uncritical worship of Tesla is going to promote a very unbalanced picture of science and technology—both their current state and their history. Tesla was one of several important figures in the development of electrical technology who deserve to be better known, but whose life's work is now of historical interest only. As matters stand, the museum has about as much to do with real electrical technology as a roadside concrete-and-plaster dinosaur park has to do with real palaeontology.

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Desperately Seeking Satan

Roger Sandell

Is Satanic abuse fact or fiction?

Among several recent books on the subject of Satanism, Lawrence Wright's *Remembering Satan* fills a notable gap by giving a detailed account of one particular Satanism case, the Olympia, Washington State, case of 1988–89.

Even by the standards of such cases the story he has to tell is bizarre and grotesque. The two teenage daughters of Sheriff Paul Ingram, an evangelical Christian, attend a church summer-camp where a speaker 'prophesies' that someone in the audience has been a victim of child sex abuse. The daughters respond by having flashback memories of abuse by their father. When arrested, Ingram has his own flashbacks where he sees himself sexually abusing his children, and immediately confesses.

The charges escalate until Ingram is no longer merely a sexual pervert but the leader of a gang of Satanists carrying out human sacrifices. Two other police officers are arrested as cult members, but protest their innocence.

Throughout all of this Ingram continues to supply flashback memories of any suggestion put to him, including deliberately false ones put by a sceptical psychologist to test the validity of his confessions. The bottomless credulity of the investigating officers survives this revelation, as it does a claim by one of his daughters to have been raped by police dogs, and the discovery that she has forged a letter to herself purporting to be a threat from Satanists. Finally Ingram, now repudiating his confessions, is sentenced to life imprisonment while his co-accused are acquitted [1].

Lawrence Wright tells this story with the help of transcripts of police interviews which reveal a series of abuses that make it extremely surprising that they were ever accepted as evidence. Leading questions are asked; Ingram is told that if he does not make a full confession his daughters may kill themselves, and a potential witness is told he will be able to take out a profitable claim for compensation.

Interestingly there are hints at some points of tales that might have been interpreted in a completely different way. Ingram's son when first interviewed by police remembers no abuse, but when pressed further to recall odd happenings in his childhood tells of a dream of little men floating through his bedroom window and standing round his bed. This story, which would have immediately been seized on by UFO abduction believers, is interpreted by police as a cover memory disguising child abuse.

The problems of 'flashback memories', 'cover memories' and 'false memories' which Wright also explores, have in the last few months been the subject of a number of reports in the British press and television. The False Memory



Society, a US group of parents who claim to be the victims of false memories of abuse planted in adult offspring by dubious therapists, now has a British branch. Although none of the British cases has yet ended up in court, some of them also involve tales of Satanism and human sacrifices. Another British group recently founded is Accuracy About Abuse, which champions the validity of work done by therapists to recover memories of abuse. However, Marjorie Orr, the founder of this organisation, is scarcely likely to dispel doubts about therapists since, although described as one, she is better known as the writer of the *Daily Express*'s horoscope column and the voice on a recorded message fortune-telling by phone service—activities which the evangelical Christian promoters of the Satanism scare would regard as 'Satanic' themselves.

Wright shows that both sides in the memory controversy can point to evidence in their favour. Loftus and Ganaway, two sceptical psychologists, have conducted experiments claiming to show that children will endorse and elaborate on totally imaginary events which they are told happened to them in the past. A survey conducted at an American school where a deranged gunman had fired on children showed that several months later children who were absent on that day gave accounts of allegedly seeing the gunman [2].

On the other hand a recent survey of adults who were child victims of sex offenders allegedly showed that up to 38% had no memory of the incident. However, this survey has come under attack for including former victims who were very young at the time of the assault. One wonders also whether in some cases 'don't remember' actually means 'don't want to discuss with a complete stranger after twenty years'. And did the survey make any distinction between former victims of systematic, long-term abuse and those where the abuse had been a single incident? The distinction is a vital one since there is a very big difference between repressing the memory of a brief trauma—which is known to happen after involvement in accidents or



disasters—and the alleged repression of memories of long passages of one's life.

There are wider questions, too, than can easily be settled by surveys and experiments. Is the model of the human memory propounded by the therapists who gradually uncover memories of Satanism one that is simply based on the not uncommon film plot device in which the audience is initially shown a brief unexplained flashback to a character's memory, which is gradually expanded on as the narrative progress? (A recent well-known example is *The Singing Detective*, recently shown on BBC-TV) [3].

Another aspect of the controversy which deserves more sceptical scrutiny than it has received is the use, by both sides, of the term 'brainwashing', which is variously depicted as a means whereby evil Satanists force victims to forget their abuse or commit crimes, or as a means whereby evil therapists force sinister memories on unsuspecting patients.

In each case the model for explanation is a dubious one. The term first appeared during the Korean War, when it was used to explain why large numbers of US prisoners of the Chinese and North Koreans were prepared to collaborate and publicly denounce US policy. According to the brainwashing model of explanation they had been the victims of a combination of advanced and sinister mind-control techniques devised by Soviet psychologists, and fiendish Oriental tortures. This belief was partly responsible for setting off a mind-control arms race between Soviet and US intelligence services in which innocent people suffered as unknowing guinea-pigs, and—like the rather similar ESP race—exaggerated reports of each side's capabilities led the other to make frantic attempts to catch up. The film *The Manchurian Candidate* depicted some of the alleged capabilities of brainwashing to plant memories of imaginary events, and transform people into robot assassins, to be activated at a given signal [4].

Little of this stands up to scrutiny. The mysterious and sinister techniques allegedly used somehow failed to resurface in Vietnam. The lower rate of collaboration amongst British POWs in Korea and its total absence amongst the Turks (the next largest UN contingent) suggests that low US army morale and motivation had more of an influence

on the behaviour of American troops in captivity. However the belief in the existence of sinister techniques to control directly the human mind has been an enduring one.

Equally suspect is the idea implied by some sceptics that it might be possible to isolate some kind of 'False Memory Syndrome' as a specific medical condition that might explain claimed memories of bizarre and highly improbable events. This would indeed be a convenient portmanteau explanation but it is probably more accurate to see these tales emerging as part of a wider interaction involving both social and psychological factors as well as group dynamics, and no more have one single explanation than all false confessions to the police or all false claims to be the victims of crimes. Individual Satanist cases probably have a variety of roots, including family tensions (which can be glimpsed in Wright's account of the Ingram case), the very existence of 'survivor' groups that foster a climate of self-reinforcing fantasy, and the subconscious desire of those who have paid large amounts of money to therapists to come up with recovered memories sensational enough to justify the expense.

The fact remains, however, that the ranks of American therapists include many bizarre and sinister practitioners. Just how bizarre can be seen by reading Daniel Ryder's *Breaking the Circle of Satanic Abuse*, a book so eccentric that one might dismiss it as a product of the lunatic fringe were it not for the fact that its author is a licensed social worker, and the cover contains endorsements from police officers, psychologists and child welfare groups. It appears to be a product of the so-called 'Christian Counselling' movement, a synthesis that makes clear the similarities between evangelical Christianity and 'recovery therapy': notably, their common emphasis on confession and rebirth, and emphasis on individual evil rather than social factors as an explanation for people's problems. Thus Ryder's accounts of work with alleged ritual abuse victims alternates between exhortations to remember that Jesus has been victorious over Satan, and passages of psychobabble that defy parody:

Tim, who's a 31-year-old computer programmer guesses that his inner child is six. Tim's next task was to do some activities appropriate for a six year old. He got some colouring books for his inner child. He was also doing daily affirmations holding a teddy-bear and talking into a mirror. Bianca, a 40-year-old manager was doing some experimental inner-child work. She was skeptical until she found herself too late for a corporate conference because she had found herself engrossed with a dolls house she was playing with.

If these methods fail to produce memories of Satanic abuse, apparently the therapist should go on a fishing expedition through any memories that are the slightest bit out of the ordinary:

If the client is ready there are other ways to jog memories. One is to go back to the neighbourhood one grew up in. Walk around if possible, remembering the adults, remembering the children. What were their personalities like? Did anything ever seem odd? Do you remember any adults who seemed especially sadistic or overtly sexual? What's happened to some of the children who lived in the

neighbourhood? Did some develop psychiatric disorders?

Ryder's therapy produces Satanic cult tales that one might think would test the credulity of the most gullible believers (but to judge by the book's endorsements have not done so). His Satanists have paranormal powers and, it seems, that they may use these to make evidence vanish — thus neatly explaining why no-one ever finds any. Demons and non-human monsters are present at ceremonies, according to Ryder.

Tales like this underline another problem that the Satanic cult memories share with memories of alien abductions and past lives. Not only do different therapists not only keep on finding lots of whichever of the above is their speciality but never anything else, but also each finds particular sub-types of their speciality unique to themselves. Thus Budd Hopkins' alien abductors are rather different from John Mack's, and reincarnation researchers tell tales about the process which completely contradict each other. Similarly, Ryder's cult stories are very different from those found by more secular investigators. But Ryder also reports a new type of abuse which he claims to find emerging:

A certified therapist who requested anonymity for safety reasons said that some clients had memories of being abused in laboratory-type settings. This laboratory abuse is seen as experimental. This therapist said survivors have remembered being hooked on to electrodes. [Another therapist] said survivors report having memories of surgical procedures. [She] also reported more than one of these survivors claim they remember being programmed to assassinate powerful people if cued.

Such stories seem to be becoming more common, and Ryder's version of them is not the most bizarre. Cary Hammond is the producer of a video on Satanic abuse used by various American police departments who, according to Lawrence Wright, claims:

Cults were developed by Satanic Nazi scientists who were captured by the CIA after the war and brought to the US. The main figure was a Hassidic Jew, Dr Greenbaum, who saved himself from the gas chambers by assisting his Nazi captors and instructing them in the secrets of the Cabala.

Dr Hammond is quoted as saying:

People say what's the purpose of it? My best guess is they want an army of Manchurian Candidates, tens of thousands of mental robots who will smuggle drugs, engage in arms smuggling, very lucrative things, and eventually, the megalomaniacs at the top believe, create a Satanic order that will rule the world.

For writers like Bill Cooper and John Lear, UFO retrieval tales have linked with themes such as drug barons and 'treason in high places'; now the Satanic cult stories are linking up with abductee-type medical experiments, political assassinations, Nazis-in-America conspiracy theories and Jewish ritual murder tales.

Two new collections of essays on Satanist abuse, mostly by health professionals, are *Out of Darkness* (OOD) from the USA, and *Treating Survivors of Satanic Abuse* (TSSA) from Britain. Since their formats are similar, it is easiest to deal with them together, using their initials to locate indi-

vidual essays. Most of the contributors to both books work in the public sector and so avoid some of the more extreme claims that come from therapists in private practice. However each book contains one essay indicating clearly that impressive qualifications and prestige jobs are no guarantee against writing total absurdities.

Catherine Gould of the Los Angeles Ritual Abuse Task Force writes on 'Diagnosis and Treatment of Ritually Abused Children' (OOD), a large part of which consists of a quite ludicrous checklist of symptoms of Satanic abuse which includes items such as 'child refuses to worship God', 'child resists authority' and 'child is extremely controlling with other children, constantly playing chase games'. A notable feature of this catalogue is that it includes a large number of contradictory items, which cause practically any type of behaviour to become evidence of Satanic abuse, including both 'child is afraid to separate from parents, cannot be alone and clings', as well as 'child seems distant from parents avoiding close physical contact'.

'Satanic Cult Practices' (TSSA) by Dr Joan Coleman, a psychiatrist, relates uncritically the most extreme claims. Satanists include 'police, politicians, ambassadors and aristocrats'. They carry out human sacrifices, burying bodies on the country estates of wealthy cultists. Their leaders hold regular meetings at a national level to plan activities such as gun-running and drug dealing. They are divided into local groups of eighty or so members which are run by a group of officials whose titles include Scribe, High Priestess and Thane. (In fact the word 'thane' has no connection with any form of magic or supernatural belief but was simply the title of a village headman in Anglo-Saxon England. Has Dr Coleman become confused by Macbeth which has both thanes and witches?) One authority which she cites for all of this is *Satan's Underground* by Laurel Stratford, a US 'survivor' story which has been proved to be a hoax. Apart from this she cites alleged testimonies from her own patients. The first patient to describe apparent Satanic abuse told of witnessing the sacrifice of three Vietnamese children around 1976 'brought to Southampton from the USA, among the first Boat People'. Readers may remember that Boat People were initially housed in centres such as disused army camps and were closely



supervised by the social services. That the disappearance of three such children could have gone unnoticed by the authorities seems very unlikely. Did the parents report it, or were they Satanists too?

Dr Coleman is impressed, like many abduction researchers, with the apparent unanimity of the witnesses. One example is that apparently witnesses agree that the altar used in ceremonies will have a sword, a skull, a chalice or a book on it. Given that one would expect an altar to have something sinister and suitably archaic on it, one would hardly expect claims that the altar was decorated with a mobile phone or a pop-up toaster!

Equally credulous is a piece by a member of the team responsible for the 1992 Channel 4 programme *Blasphemous Rumour* (TSSA). This programme featured irrelevant, manipulative images such as shots of an empty children's playground filmed in polarised light and accompanied by discordant music. It gave credence to manifestly absurd claims, such as one interviewee who recounted being present at a ceremony in a specially constructed underground chamber where hundreds of people were present. The documentary makers made no attempt to check out matters which could have been investigated, such as a claim to have been in a Satanic temple that was a windowless building in London's Docklands.

It is enlightening to compare this programme with one broadcast on Channel 4 in 1994 in which a woman claimed that she and her children had been sexually abused while members of the Children of God group. While flawed in some respects—notably its use of the dubious 'brainwashing cult' model of explanation—it centred on witnesses who told their stories directly to camera, showed photographs of themselves with other cult members, and produced old letters and internal documentation: the kinds of details which are conspicuously absent from the Satanism cases.

The producers of the Satanism documentary seemed impressed by the nearly two hundred calls Channel 4's switchboard received after transmission, telling tales of Satanist abuse. One wonders what they would have made of the several hundred calls received after the recent British radio appearance of UFO abduction writer John Mack.

Both books attempt to take some kind of historical perspective. Brett Kahr, a psychotherapy lecturer, contributes an essay entitled 'The Historical Foundation of Ritual Abuse' (TSSA) which argues that modern Satanism cases are a continuation of child sacrifice which he contends was widespread in ancient times. He can point to the Tophet cult in the ancient Middle East as a genuine example of such practices. Beyond this he shows how little historical understanding he has. He cites the Biblical story of Abraham and Isaac, and the Greek legend of Medea as evidence for widespread child sacrifices. In each case the story was set about a thousand years before it was written down, at an era which even the original audience would consider remote and barbarous. Moreover, the tone of each tale is evidence, not for the popularity of human sacrifice, but for the universal abhorrence it inspired.

Martin Katchen's 'History of Satanic Religions' (OOD) is no better. Most of his historical 'evidence' relates to tales



told about medieval heretics by their enemies, and allegations made by the clerical anti-Masonic movement in the nineteenth century. Both these essays share certain characteristics with most historical writings on Satanism by believers: there is no reference to works on witchcraft by mainstream historians such as Hugh Trevor-Roper, Keith Thomas and most particularly Norman Cohn. Cohn has discussed in detail how medieval heretics became associated with tales of orgies and human sacrifice. There is no attempt to analyse the main legend of human sacrifice, that even the writers here would presumably agree to be baseless, that of Jewish ritual murder (the US book devotes one throwaway sentence to this point in its introduction, while the British one's silence is surprising since its editor, Valerie Sinason, is Jewish).

Moreover, one wonders exactly what point these essays are supposed to be making. By exactly what process were grim ancient rituals transmitted to proprietors of Californian day-care centres and semi-literate families on British council estates? Did they exist underground for centuries, unsuspected by contemporary social commentators or later historians? Ryder claims that 'various forms of occult practices, including Satanism' were brought to America from 'European countries, Africa and Australia' (Australia?) but beyond this there is no explanation.

A second essay by Katchen, 'Satanic Belief and Practices' (OOD) attempts to make sense of Satanic cults in terms of sociology, anthropology and comparative religion. He sees the brutalities allegedly inflicted by such groups as analogous to US Marine Corps training in which abuse and harshness is used to form group loyalties. This attempt is unconvincing. There are certainly cultures, both amongst tribal peoples and in advanced societies, in which initiation into the group is a brutal process, but in all of these the brutality leads up to a final initiation—like a coming-of-age or a passing-out ceremony—when it stops, and the newcomer is recognised as a member of the group. At what point does this happen with the Satanists? No survivor tale gives us any clue. Once again, there are many cultures and subcultures that practice and reward extreme brutality against outsiders. What is inexplicable about the Satanic cult stories is the way cults that are alleged to be trans-generational supposedly practice, on those who are to be the carriers of the tradition, grotesque and meaningless brutalities that could hardly be endured without total trau-

matisation that would make normal functioning, even within the cult, very difficult.

Any attempt to apply any sociological analysis to these groups also breaks down in the total failure of those telling the stories to give any account of their day-to-day functioning—something which might be comprehensible in the case of children but not with adults. Do different groups choose their own leaders, or are they imposed from Satanist National Headquarters? Are there ever any internal disagreements or schisms?

What impact has AIDS had on Satanism? Have the cults been devastated as one would expect from groups whose rituals involve sex orgies and drinking blood? Have they changed any rituals as a result? On all of these points there is silence, and in fact on any description of the minutiae of day to day life there is silence. Lawrence Wright's book illustrates this very well. At one point Sheriff Ingram is providing his interrogators with a detailed description of a horrific Satanist rite. However a sceptical psychologist intervenes to ask what sort of things the cultists talked about when the ritual was over. This reduces Ingram to incoherence, totally unable to provide a reply to this sort of mundane query.

The contents of the two books under consideration are not wholly credulous. There is a contribution by Kenneth Lanning, an FBI specialist in child abuse cases (OOD) that makes an impressive and informed sceptical case, not denying the possibility of satanic abuse, but pointing out the many problems involved in the evidence so far presented. (18th century magistrates' manuals recommended a similar strategy, saying that magistrates faced with accusations of witchcraft should not deny the existence of witches, but point out the problems involved in proving an allegation). Lanning points out the complete discontinuity of Satanism cases with other cases of child sex rings, where features such as the involvement of women and allegations of the victimisation of adults as well as children, are practically unknown.

An interesting comparison which Lanning does not explore is with the other wave of child sex allegations currently rife in the US—those against Roman Catholic priests, some of which, like the day care cases, involve allegations of whole institutions incorporating cultures of child sex abuse. However the similarity stops here. The cases involving priests have resulted in many guilty pleas and supporting evidence in the form of long histories of allegations against individuals before action was taken. There are no tales of the involvement of women (in spite of

many institutions where nuns look after children) or of murder, or of paraphernalia that is never found in searches. Recovered memories rarely form the basis for such allegations and there are certainly no 'experts' alleging these cases validate anti-Catholic tales of past centuries [5].

Another writer, George B Greaves, a forensic psychologist, contributes an essay 'Alternative Hypotheses Regarding Claims of Satanic Cult Activity' (OOD). While faulting believers for their methodology, he ultimately argues for the reality of Satanic cults, rejecting folklore-based explanations on grounds very similar to those advanced by Eddie Bullard for rejecting folklore explanations of UFO abduction tales. He argues that Satanic cult stories are not like urban legends—structured narratives leading to a climax in the same manner as jokes.

This is however to take an over-restrictive view of the nature of urban legends. To illustrate urban legends to his readers he gives the example of a cat killed by being placed in a microwave cooker. In fact, just such tales of babies being killed in microwaves have appeared in Satanism allegations!

Valerie Sinason, the editor of the British book, seems to take a rather ambiguous position. In spite of accepting the reality of Satanist abuse she contributes an introduction to the Lawrence Wright book, accepting, somewhat grudgingly, that a miscarriage of justice occurred. Her introduction thanks for her suggestions Dr Sherrill Mulhearn, the anthropologist and leading Satanism sceptic, although any input by Dr Mulhearn into the book is not evident.

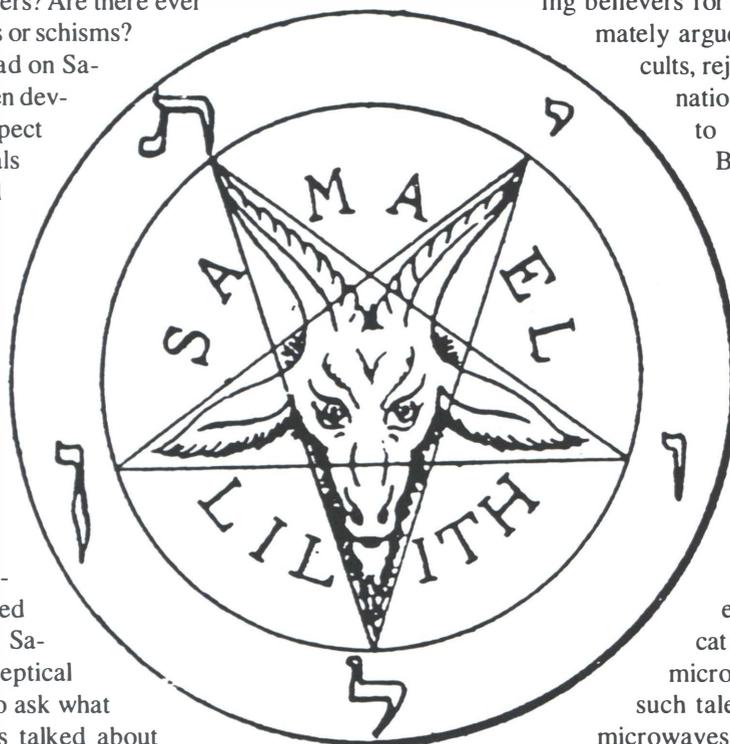
Her own essay, 'Internal and External Evidence' at least has the merit of being frank about the fantastic content of some survivor stories:

Malcolm, aged 27, a lawyer, could clearly describe the expensive furnishings in the place where he was ritually abused. However, whilst in a trance state he spoke about being in a huge palace where everyone, including some famous people, could fly.

However, she concludes that the Satanist may use drugs to implant false memories in their victims, and, bizarrely, that these stories are the fault of investigators who do not believe everything they are told. [6]

Where patients correctly experience another's response as irrational disbelief they can then unconsciously fabricate to a point where everything is disbelieved: this makes them angrily in control of further rejection. By the same action they have also protected their allegiance to the cult.

The one first-hand survivor account she includes in her



book is hard to assess. The author claims to have been abused in a residential centre, a setting which is easily exploited for sexual abuse. He claims to have been the victim of a child sex ring whose members were Freemasons, who chose him as their boy god, and made him the centre of their rituals: a procedure which bears no relation to other survivor tales. There is a reference to human sacrifice, but the claimant states that his abusers gave him drugs, and as a result he is uncertain about what was and was not real. A puzzling and inconclusive story made even more so by the absence of any information about whether any attempt has been made to report it to the police or other authorities.

It is a relief to turn from these books to the official report *The Extent and Nature of Ritual Abuses* by Professor Jean La Fontaine. The version currently available is merely a 35-page summary of main findings, with a more detailed report to follow. Even so its summing up of some eighty British allegations, few of which were reported in the press, is full of interest. First of all the claim made by many believers that there are a large number of separate cases with similar details supporting each other is shown to be false. Many allegations are unique to individual cases. Even basic features of the image of ritual abuse, such as the use of robes or costumes only feature in about a third of the allegations. A particularly significant section of the report is 'The Class Context of Allegations of Ritual Abuse', which looks at the people who face these charges.

There were 203 adults (11 men and 92 women) reported. Of the men only 35 were reported as being in work, six had casual labouring jobs, eight had more skilled manual jobs, and three had middle-class jobs. The work of the other 18 employed men was not specified in the files but there were indications that they were low paid. Few women were working, all but one in manual work. In 12 out of 38 cases the poverty of the children's parents was referred to. Only one man owned the house he lived in. Run-down urban estates were mentioned in twelve cases.

A similar picture is given in an essay in the Sinason book: 'A Systematic Approach', by Aaron Bentovim and Marianne Tranter, which gives the case history of a family accused of taking their children to a 'Satanic church' to be abused by robed figures:

The details of the case reports indicated the children had always been subject to poor standards of hygiene and the results of poor financial management. Clothing was poor and inappropriate to prevailing climatic conditions. Diet was adequate but of poor quality... It was extremely difficult for the social worker to describe the chaos within the household. Children as they grew older became more unruly, left to fend for themselves beyond the mother's control. The mother yelled rather than talked, school attendance became poorer, social isolation became marked... Dental and personal hygiene was non-existent. The children were left unsupervised on the estate and there was regular concern and complaints from other families... acts of vandalism, bullying, stoning elderly people, begging and burglary, although always unproven. [Note the way the writers solemnly record allegations of vandalism as unproven while accepting allegations of Satanic abuse.]

Here we are clearly a world away from Joan Coleman's

fantasies of wealthy Satanists burying their victims on private estates, or from the US cases featuring expensive therapists or middle-class day care centres. What seems to be happening in Britain is that allegations of Satanism have become part of a wider social image, that of the 'underclass'. As employment has collapsed in many communities there are arguments amongst policy-makers as to whether or not the poor are a violent, threatening rabble, responding only to authoritarian measures. Images of the underclass move from such discussions to mass audience images including TV characters such as the Jackson family on *EastEnders*, Rab C Nesbitt, and Harry Enfield's Wayne Slob. Now it seems housing estates are seen as a 1990s equivalent of a 'Dark Continent' awash with idolatry and witchcraft.

Writers such as Tim Tate have attacked the Fontaine Report for allegedly making light of the eight or so cases of ritual abuse that have resulted in convictions. Fontaine argues that these have all involved either an individual or a group of at the most four, and that they have not involved any of the bizarre features such as human sacrifice. However it seems to me that she is on less secure ground in arguing that the rituals were only incidental to the abuse, as a means to intimidate the children.

Motives are not always easy to assess, and to see how the cases she mentions fit in it is useful to adopt the typology of the believers in satanic abuse. Several of them divide types of Satanists as follows:

1. **Public Satanists:** these are followers of groups such as Anton LaVey's Church of Satan, who, as even the anti-Satanists concede, are rarely involved in criminal offences.
2. **Teenage Dabblers:** young people with an interest in the occult derived from such sources as heavy-metal music and horror films. In Britain few of these have been involved in any crimes more serious than minor church vandalism, but in the US, anti-satanists can point to dabblers involved in more serious crimes including murder. However when these cases are examined drugs and the wide availability of firearms seem to be more significant causes than occultism. Ironically some of those involved in such cases have been from evangelical Christian households, and have adopted satanist symbols as a sign of rebellion [7].
3. **Psychopathic Satanists:** unbalanced individuals obsessed with the idea of Satan, either acting alone or with a small number of accomplices. Here again there is a well-authenticated history of such cases, the most famous being the Manson gang.
4. **Transgenerational Satanists/Satanic cults:** this is the category on which the controversy centres: the existence of large, highly organised and well-equipped groups, including groups carrying out elaborate ceremonies involving crimes such as murder, and involved in a variety of criminal conspiracies to support their activities.

When these categories are adopted it becomes clear that all of the authenticated cases discussed by Fontaine fall into the third category. By contrast, Valerie Sinason, who has also responded critically to the Fontaine Report, cites as examples of Satanism, cases that have little to do with any of the categories. Thus her book includes a case of a girl

Two recent British cases

In spite of endorsing Professor Fontaine's report, few of the press covered in any detail the Pembrokeshire sex ring case that ended shortly after the Report was published. After verdicts had been delivered, one of those found guilty of sex acts with children was revealed to have earlier incest convictions. However, many aspects of the case were disturbing. The prosecution dropped charges against several of the defendants as the trial proceeded, and others were acquitted by the jury. Some prosecution witnesses retracted earlier statements in court, claiming that they had been pressurised by social workers who had threatened to take their children into care. None of the robes and videos mentioned in the evidence were uncovered by police searches. The medical evidence offered in support of the allegations was no better than ambiguous and unsupported by testimony from teachers or other carers who had been in contact with the children. The judge, when passing sentence, explicitly rejected the ritual allegations. Most disturbing of all, the allegations included stories of children thrown into the sea from a boat and only rescued when they promised to stay silent, a detail similar to some of the American day care cases. An appeal is now pending, and future developments will be awaited with interest.

Meanwhile, another potentially significant British case has recently collapsed. This involved a group of neighbours in Sunderland who faced allegations of child abuse in which they are stated to have dressed up as devils and held children down while rats bit them. The social status of the accused, a lecturer, a primary school teacher, a health visitor and their partners, is more reminiscent of the American cases than most earlier British ones, and reports that the house of the accused have been attacked by a mob led by a clergyman suggests a Christian fundamentalist input into the case.

sexually abused by an elder brother who claimed to be possessed by spirits, and a case where an abused child states 'Daddy eats poo', a very different matter from allegations that children are being forced to eat excrement as part of ceremonies where they are tortured.

It may well be wise to bear this typology in mind while considering both recent press coverage of Satanism allegations, and possible coverage in the near future. When these allegations first surfaced in Britain in 1989–1990 they were for a time treated uncritically by the press, a position which soon moved to general disbelief, unaccompanied by detailed investigations (except in the cases of the *Independent on Sunday* and *Mail on Sunday*) and this attitude was reflected in coverage of the Fontaine report. However some tabloid coverage of the extraordinary Gloucestershire 'House of Horror' mass murder case had hinted at some occult motivation, and if this claim had been vindicated by a trial it would no doubt have been taken as vindicating the Satanic cult tales, in spite of fitting, on the worst interpretation, into the category of Psychopathic Satanist.

In spite of the increasing number of studies into the Satanism panic, credulous and sceptical, there still seems to be no single overall historical account of its growth. I was therefore interested to see Michael Newton's *Raising Hell: The A-Z of Satanic Crime*. Unfortunately the book is flawed in many ways, including its author's credulousness, and its use of an alphabetical case-by-case format which makes it hard to refer to unless one is already familiar with the cases. The accounts of the British cases, and the history of witchcraft, are extremely inaccurate, making it hard to rely on the book's accounts of other cases I am not familiar with. However it does cover a wide range of US cases and so provides some overall perspectives. Apart from summarising a number of the most prominent day care centre and Teenage Dabblers cases, it gives some indication of other components of the myth. It looks at some of the magical practices that are current among some Latin and Caribbean migrants to the USA which, although they have perhaps contributed to the wider fear of Satanism, have little over-

lap with any of the major anti-Satanist allegations, in which an interesting but little remarked feature is the almost complete absence of black people as either accused or accusers.

It also looks at various occult groups which formed part of the sixties underground, such as the Process Church of the Final Judgement. Such groups were certainly involved in some nasty activities, as sections of the underground declined into a drug-laced morass of squalor, irrationality, violence and sexual exploitation, just as fringe political groups such as the Symbionese Liberation Army did. However the claim that they gave birth to Satanist cults now stalking America is unconvincing.

What this book does suggest is that rumours and urban legends concerning sinister occultists were a part of the underground culture and later spread to the wider American scare. Another example of the same process is the way sixties tales about great secrets hidden in the music or designs of Beatles albums have been transmuted into tales of sinister Satanic messages in rock songs. One interesting feature of Newton's book is that it makes clear the origins of the anti-Satanist panic in the cattle mutilation scare of the early seventies. Sixties films such as *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Devil Rides Out* had established the image of Satanism. As a result of the US release of the latter film, the original novel appeared as a US paperback, the first Dennis Wheatley title ever to be published in America, giving the image further visibility. Consequently Satanism was seen as one frame of reference for the cattle mutilation reports. Tales were told, similar to UFO occupant stories, of mysterious hooded figures seen by night-time motorists in the South Western states (like aliens, Satanists, with a whole desert to choose from, seem always to stand where they will be seen). Kenneth Bankston, a Kansas convict, told a widely reported hoax tale of his membership of a cult of Satanic cattle mutilators.

The film *Race With the Devil*, recently shown on BBC-TV, demonstrates that the main components of the Satanism scare were already in place in 1975. In this film the heroes, played by Peter Fonda and Warren Oates, stumble

on robed figures carrying out open-air nocturnal rituals. As the cultists pursue them, apparently respectable individuals turn out to be secret Satanists. Thus a piece of fiction anticipated many of the details that were to reappear in subsequent, allegedly factual, stories, just as many elements from UFO abduction accounts appear in earlier fictions [8].

The cattle mutilation panic did not merely provide the origins of the Satanism myth; attempts to link the mutilations with UFOs were a major factor in the dominance of US ufology by abduction and conspiracy theories—a process which has now gone so far that actual unidentified flying objects seem hardly to figure in most American UFO publications at all. The mutilation panic also coincided with the Watergate scandal and a new interest in the JFK assassination on its tenth anniversary. This coincidence influenced theories of the mutilations as being the result of sinister government experiments, setting the pattern for many subsequent government conspiracy tales.

Seen in isolation the Satanism panic is one of the most extraordinary events in late twentieth century US social history. In a wider context it forms part of a more prevalent and alarming abandonment of rationality

Notes

1. A historical equivalent of Sheriff Ingram might be Major Weir, the former Cromwellian officer who in 1670 made an unprompted confession to a lifetime of witchcraft and bizarre sex crimes.
2. A recent case involving demonstrably false memories of child abuse is that of Roald Dahl, who in his autobiography claimed to have been beaten by Dr Geoffrey Fisher, the future Archbishop of Canterbury, whilst attending Repton School. In fact, Dr Fisher was not a Repton master at the time Dahl was there.
3. Similarly, the current image of ghosts as transparent figures seems to rest not on witness account, but early cinema trick photography.
4. Tim Tate, the leading British journalistic proponent of Satanic abuse, also scripted the 1994 Channel 4 documentary claiming that Sirhan Sirhan had been brainwashed by the CIA.
5. One exception is the allegations of child abuse against Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago, a cleric who has been active in ending the church cover-up on these matters. These allegations were made by a complainant undergoing regression therapy and who later withdrew them. The therapist involved had no qualifications, except one awarded by 'John-Roger', the New Age guru who has been accused by the American press of influencing Arianna Stassinopulos-Huffington, wife of Michael Huffington, the Californian right-wing Republican candidate in the recent US elections.
6. Although administration of drugs as part of sex abuse is not improbable, mystery drinks feature both in Satanic abuse and abduction stories. Peter Rogerson has reminded me that in some reincarnation accounts the claimants state that between lives they were given a 'drink of forgetting' by a supernatural figure, but somehow avoided drinking it.
7. The use of Satanic imagery by heavy metal bands seems to have increased following the evangelical anti-heavy metal campaign. A new development has been the appearance in Scandinavia of 'Death Metal', a sub-genre linked with skinhead-style racism. Britain's first Death Metal fanzine has recently appeared—*Harsh Reality*—an ugly publication combining music reviews with occultism and Holocaust revisionism.

8. Logically, one should consider the possibility that by now a real cult might have emerged deliberately aping the feature of the stereotype that had become established, just as groups like Anton LaVey's 'Church of Satan' were influenced by films like *Rosemary's Baby* and *The Devil Rides Out*. However, this would explain little, since many of the survivor stories relate to Satanic activities allegedly occurring in the 1960s, 1950s and even 1940s.

Books reviewed in the text

La Fontaine, Jean, *The Extent and Nature of Ritual Abuse: Research findings* (HMSO, 1994, £3.50).

Newton, Michael, *Raising Hell: The A-Z of Satanic Crime* (Warner, 1994, £5.99).

Sakheim, David and Devine, Susan (Eds.) *Out of Darkness: Exploring Satanism and Ritual Abuse* (Lexington Books, 1992, \$24.95).

Sinason, Valerie (Ed.), *Treating Survivors of Satanic Abuse* (Routledge, 1994, £14.99).

Wright, Lawrence, *Remembering Satan* (Serpents Tail, 1994, £9.99).

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This article first appeared in Magonia, from which it is reprinted with kind permission.

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The Trouble with Psychics

Richard Wiseman

Why belief in psychic powers can be dangerous

A FEW WEEKS AGO I was invited to see a demonstration of psychic surgery. I didn't expect to see anything new or exciting. I thought perhaps the surgeon would pretend to make some cuts on the patient's stomach, pretend to remove some diseased tissue and then cause the wound to 'miraculously' recover. I was totally unprepared for the scenes that I encountered.

I arrived a few moments before the scheduled start of the demonstration and met up with Tim Haigh (Editor of *Psychic News*). Tim was covering the event for his newspaper and we both sat at the back of the crowded room. The surgeon's helpers asked individuals who wished to be treated to make themselves known. About thirty people raised their hands. They were given small slips of paper and noted down details of their illness. Then the service began. A preacher sat at the front of the room and started to talk about his spiritual philosophy. After a few moments the surgeon's helpers selected the first 'patient' and led them into a back room. Tim and I were eager to know exactly what was happening there and so told one of the helpers that we were covering the story for *Psychic News* and were allowed into the room.

The surgeon was a young man in his mid-thirties, dressed in a white shirt and jeans. He was standing by a large couch holding a tray of surgical instruments (including scalpels, syringes, needles and scissors). A patient was shown into the room and asked to sit on a chair next to the couch. The surgeon picked up the syringe and started to prod its needle into the back of the patient's neck. A few moments later spots of blood started to appear. The surgeon placed a piece of cotton wool over the wounds, secured it with surgical tape and asked the patient to lay on the couch. He picked up a scalpel and made an incision into her abdomen. It was a shallow but real cut. The surgeon picked up some scissors and rammed them into the wound. Blood emerged from the cut. The scissors were removed and the surgeon pushed the two sides of the cut tightly together, secured some cotton wool over it and sent the patient to the post-operation area—a duvet spread out in one corner of the room.

I saw about five of these 'operations' and they all followed roughly the same pattern. More importantly, I saw no evidence of the surgeon washing his hands or instruments between patients and I was horrified at the obvious risk of the surgeon transmitting blood disorders from one patient to another. That night the surgeon operated on approximately fifteen people. The following night Tim returned and saw him carry out more operations—only this time the medical dangers were greatly increased because several of the patients were HIV positive.

All of this may sound as if it is yet another story of

psychic surgery from the Far East or South America. It isn't. These events took place in a function room of a London public library. Worse still, this is not the only negative report to emerge from the British psychic world in the last few months.

A few weeks ago a young man went to a medium for a reading. The medium stated that the man would be dead before he was 28. The young man returned home and hanged himself. The coroner's report noted that the man had left notes describing how he saw his death as inevitable and thought there was little point in waiting for it to happen.

Recently, a Scottish newspaper exposed two psychics who were conning hundreds of pounds out of their clients using a classic mediumistic scam. The mediums told their client that 'bad spirits' were following them and that they would have no luck in business or their personnel lives. In return for a large amount of money the psychics offered to make these spirits leave the person's life.

Only a couple of days ago I was contacted by a young woman who had been desperate to get her boyfriend back after he had finished their relationship. She went to a local psychic who told her that the spirits could bring them back together, but it would cost her £400. The woman paid most of her savings to the medium. The spirits failed to get her boyfriend to come back and the medium suggested that she pay another £400 for a second attempt.

It is difficult to know the extent of the problem, in part, because many people may not go to the police after being the victim of a psychic scam because they feel ashamed and stupid. What is more certain is whilst some psychics represent a harmless form of entertainment or act as benign counsellors, others knowingly hurt and con vulnerable clients.

Perhaps most worrying of all, there are no official bodies that deal specifically with these problems and it often falls to individuals to pick up the pieces and try to prevent further incidents. The psychic surgeon had operated on about 40 patients before the alarm was raised. The library was contacted and told about the operations. They quickly cancelled the remainder of the scheduled meetings. The police also received an anonymous phone call from one of the patients who claimed that the surgeon had operated without her consent. Unfortunately, the surgeon had left the country before legal proceedings could be instigated against him.

Richard Wiseman is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire, and an Associate of the Inner Magic Circle.

Psychic Diary

Toby Howard

A tentative step into the world of zines

IN THE LAST ISSUE, I looked at the phenomenon of the 'zine', and rather rashly promised to look at some examples of the genre, relating to the paranormal, occult, New Age, and all that. Wise after the event, I now sit before a four feet-high pile of the things, wondering where to start. For your edification, I have scanned each publication with my zine-o-meter, which indicates a 'possible interest to *Skeptic* readers' on a scale of 0 to 5 stars. 0 means 'use for loft insulation'; 5 means 'essential reading'.

My current favourite zine is *Hoax*, a wild mish-mash of articles, reviews, clippings, and photographs, rather like an undisciplined *Fortean Times*. Rating: ***.

Magonia is an excellent magazine, covering what they call 'anomalous phenomena', taking in UFOs, superstition, urban legends, crop circles, earth mysteries, big cats etc. The approach has much in common with our own, and *Skeptic* contributors pop up there too. *Magonia* definitely needs to be better known. Rating: *****.

Ghostwatch is all about ghosts, and appears to have been typeset by a poltergeist running amok with the DTP software. Underneath all the wild design are some interesting items on electronic voice phenomena, and many anecdotal stories of ghost sightings, but which don't add up to much. Rating: **.

Annals of the Enquiring is a cute collection of Fortean crammed into 25 A5 pages. Fun. Rating: ***.

The Wild Places; 'The Journal of Strange and Dangerous Beliefs', comes from Kevin McClure, an unstoppable zine publisher who also produces *Alien Scripture* and *Promises and Disappointments*. All are A5-format zines, covering UFOs, conspiracies, alien encounters, and so on. Rating: ***.

ing: ***.

Factsheet Five is the closest anyone has ever got to producing a directory of zines worldwide. The things people publish never cease to amaze. Rating: ****. A British counterpart is *Bypass*, which concentrates on the UK scene.

The New Ufologist is, as it implies, new. Issue 2 has coverage of 'The Stonehenge UFO Event', a 'Sightings Update' by Jenny Randles, and articles on a contact case, UFO cover-ups and the Roswell Incident. Rating: **.

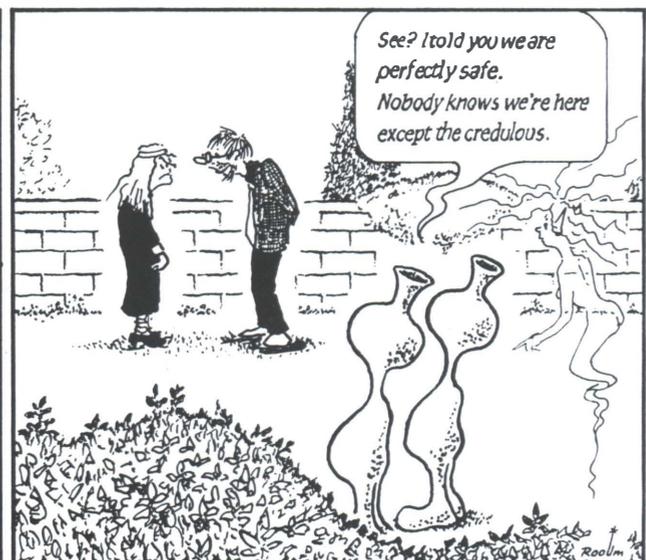
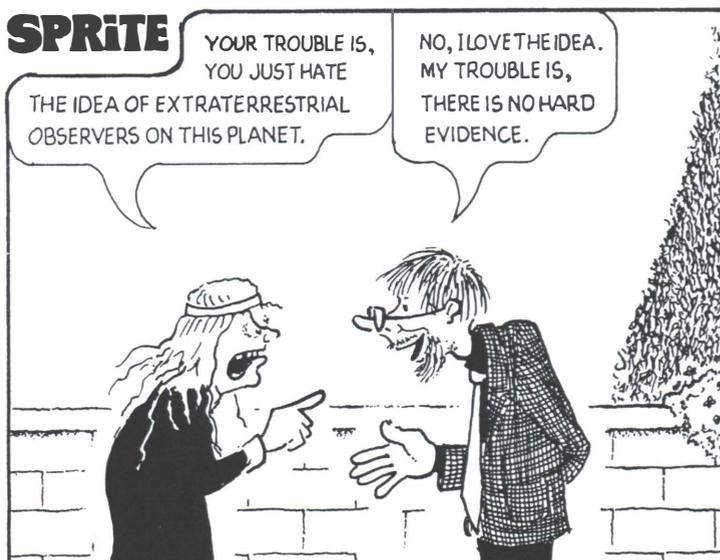
Skeptics UFO Newsletter is an amazing labour of love by arch UFO debunker Philip Klass. Incredibly detailed analyses and responses to current and past UFOlogical goings on. Klass knows his stuff. Rating: ***.

Lobster is something slightly different, concentrating on covert activities ('spooks, agents, plots and conspiracies'). Disturbingly believable. Rating: ***.

The zine pile is still three feet ten inches high, and I must close. If you have an empty garage waiting to be filled, why not start a zine collection yourself? But beware: the content of some zines can get rather—how shall I put it?—*outré*, so, as always, caveat emptor!

Hoax, 64 Beechgrove, Aberhonddu, Powys, LD3 9ET. *Magonia*, John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London, SW14 8HB. *Ghostwatch*, PO Box 54, Birkenhead, L43 7FD. *Annals of the Enquiring*, 8 St. John Street, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1SW. *Factsheet Five*, PO Box 170099, San Francisco, CA 97117-0099, USA. *Bypass*, Box B, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4. *The New Ufologist*, 71 Knight Avenue, Canterbury, Kent, CT2 8PY. *Skeptics UFO Newsletter*, 404 'N' St. SW., Washington DC 20024, USA. *Lobster*, 214 Westbourne Avenue, Hull, HU5 3JB.

Toby Howard is a lecturer in computer graphics at the University of Manchester.



Skeptic at Large

Wendy M Grossman

Double standards

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, we had a long, unpleasant exchange of diatribes between wet and dry skeptics. You need to know this to understand when I say I think I may be getting a bit damp.

The story goes like this: one of the people I've met in the last couple of months is a guy named Colin, who was very impressed with the medium Betty Shine (her name only came out later, so at the time all I knew was 'a medium'). So I said all the normal stuff about cold reading, and subjects telling 'psychic claimants' (as Richard Wiseman calls them in his new book about testing such folks) more than they realise. And he replied with the normal thing about how he knew he hadn't done this and how she'd known things she couldn't possibly know about his sons. I will skip the long, involved story about the Royal Albert Hall and a golden ball that followed because I didn't get the details properly. I said something about how it's difficult to know without having been there.

I didn't, as I could have, point out that he'd been recommended to his medium by a friend, and had himself recommended her to another friend (who was involved in the golden ball story). I also didn't point out the many opportunities the medium would have had to research his case, which, I found out in the course of conversation, was very famous although I, not being based in Britain at the time, had never heard of it. Why? Because Colin was a man whose wife and two sons had all been murdered in what was at the time the biggest mass shooting in British history (it was before Hungerford). If it helps you, he was the bereaved man in the Bamber case.

He was on this program to plug his new book, which is not about mediums at all, but about surviving the situation in which he found himself. He's involved, he said, in an organisation to help others in similar situations. The belief in the medium he'd seen was merely a passing comment. But if this man, who was bereaved on a level which few people ever experience, found a small amount of comfort in the notion that some part of his children lived happily on, is it appropriate to try to take that away from him? He didn't commit suicide; that seems to me a pretty major triumph.

Now, you can argue this one. I've told a couple of friends about this incident, and met with drastically opposed reactions. One said, yes, you should have challenged him: it's not true. End of story. Another said, absolutely not; it would be inhumane and cruel.

There were, of course, some practical considerations. Colin's segment—in which he plugged his book—was before the one on mediums. So by the time I got on to argue



with a guy promoting courses in mediumship (wonderful stuff, by the way; they even teach you public speaking) the audience had already been shocked into awed silence by Colin's story and anyone who attacked him even on a trivial point like the colour of his socks would have been an object of hatred. The producer might have liked that, but it wouldn't have done the cause of skepticism any good—if they don't like you, most people will discount everything you say.

Now, if it were a question of telling a kid its dead mother or grandfather were looking down from heaven and would whop anyone who tried to hurt it, I'd be furious at the lie. I can only suppose the difference is that in this case Colin made the decision to seek out this particular type of comfort, whereas the kid is stuck with whatever its adults decide it should be told. Certainly, the potential for the kid's feeling betrayed later is great. In Colin's case, I found it easy to imagine that over time he might come to regard his acquaintance with a medium as just another one of those things he did in the interests of survival.

The same sort of question arose again last Saturday night when I was watching *Beyond Belief*, the David Frost/Uri Geller/Matthew Manning/*et al* extravaganza on ITV. Yes, it offends me if people come away believing, for example, that firewalking is some kind of magical feat when we know that anyone can do it (as the professor from the Max Planck Institute tried to say between interruptions by Frost and the firewalking promoter). Yes, it offends me if people come away believing that the opening display—a group of people lifting a man in a chair—is 'levitation', bearing in mind that we had that simple party trick in the US, too. And yes, it offends me that I had to explain, to my cable salesman of all people, that the reason his watch stopped again was not because it was a battery-operated quartz watch instead of a mechanical watch but because that's what stopped watches do—start for a little while and then stop again. But how much harm do these beliefs actually do to their holders? I'm not sure... The Pope, with his campaign against birth control, has a lot more to answer for.

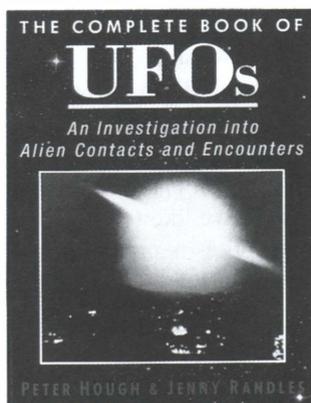
Wendy Grossman is the founder of *The Skeptic*, and a writer and folksinger.

Reviews



UFO case-book

Peter Hough and Jenny Randles, *The Complete Book of UFOs* (Piatkus, 1995, hardback, 304 pages, £17.99)



The word 'complete' has a different meaning for publishers than it has for the rest of us. The skeptical reader, faced with a title which contains it, will at once be on his guard, wondering only how far short of completeness the book falls.

In the present case, a very long way. There are only 300 pages, and one-quarter of each is a wide

margin for catchy highlights such as 'Men in Black are common in Britain and America but almost unknown in the UFO records anywhere else' (page 158): further space is occupied by the 40+ illustrations, frequently full-page. So right away we know we are not being offered a work to rival Jerome Clark's masterly 'encyclopedia' or Loren Gross's on-going history, two fine works to which the word 'complete' could less unrealistically be applied.

Quantity is not everything, though. Bullard's brilliant 'Folkloric dimensions of the UFO phenomenon' in *Journal of UFO Studies* compressed a wealth of UFO wisdom into less than 60 pages. However, Hough and Randles have not opted for distillation any more than they have for comprehensiveness. Instead, they sweep us on a rapid and superficial chronological survey of the highlights of their subject, like a tour package which promises the traveller to show him Europe by taking him to ten capital cities in as many days.

This of course involves selection. Despite their wide knowledge of the UFO case-log, Hough and Randles have chosen to stick for the most part to consensus notions of what constitutes a 'classic' case, with the result that we are treated to disproportionately lengthy re-visits to many over-familiar sites. Of course Kenneth Arnold's sighting, dubious though it is, should be mentioned: but does it merit 7 of those 300 pages? And does Villas Boas deserve 6?

When they do follow their personal inclinations, though, Hough and Randles betray a worrying lack of objectivity. Many researchers would consider crop circles only marginally relevant, if at all, to the UFO question: yet Hough and Randles award them a chapter of their own. On the other

hand earthlights, which others might consider crucial, rate only a page and a half. The objects seen, photographed, and instrumentally recorded at Yakima, Piedmont (Missouri) and Hessdalen are not even mentioned: instead, sightings which rest on a single witness's say-so (Michalak, Strieber) are trotted out for the umpteenth time because they are 'classics'.

In short, the authors have gone for the easy options, and nowhere is this more evident than in the way they have for the most part slavishly followed American histories which see the phenomenon as virtually a North American phenomenon. The authors may have omitted mention of the remarkable claims from Latin America, Africa and eastern Europe as being too dubious for serious discussion: but they are hardly more questionable than the Manhattan and Gulf Breeze cases on which they bestow relatively lengthy treatment.

It is this unwillingness to rise above the commonplaces of UFO history which most disappoints us in authors we know could have done better. Randles has been involved with UFOs long enough to know there is far more to the matter than she indicates here: is she now so committed to authoring a book every few months that she cannot afford to spend time exploring the deeper significance of the phenomenon, instead turning out yet another superficial overview?

The authors might argue that their book is not aimed at serious students of the phenomenon, but that is no excuse for publishing a book which too often shows signs of uncritical scissors-and-paste work. Many cases—for example, the Roerich sighting (page 36)—are presented without reference to the discrepancies in the testimony. Others—for example the 'wheels of light' on page 16—have even less claim to be classed as UFOs than the unmentioned earthlights. Yet others are offered us without a word of comment, as when we are told of the Hansen case (page 169) that the witness and her son 'were abducted for a while'.

Such shortcomings do not seriously detract from the book: what many will see as a more fundamental defect stems from the fact that it is written from within a belief system. The authors are careful not to commit themselves to any specific interpretation of the UFO phenomenon: but in doing so they reveal their commitment to the view that a UFO phenomenon per se exists.

But it ain't necessarily so. One can accept that there exist flying objects which have not been identified, without feeling obliged to treat them as a category of anomalies in their own right. While the authors of this book have every

right to their personal conclusions, their commitment to a UFOs-exist-as-a-category position means that their book, for all its restraint and reservations, is the expression of a partisan viewpoint. We miss the perspective which would locate the UFO phenomenon in the wider context of human experience of the anomalous.

Judged by High Street standards, this is not a bad book. Within its limits, it is intelligent and perceptive, balanced and honest. The reader cannot fail to emerge better-informed, and will not be seriously mis-informed. But judged by what we know Randles is capable of, this is a disappointing effort. Which wouldn't matter, except that it will make serious students less ready than ever to take her seriously if she should ever take the trouble to take the subject seriously.

—Hilary Evans

Shrouded in mystery

Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince, *Turin Shroud: In Whose Image? The Shocking Truth Unveiled* (Bloomsbury, 1994, 212 pages, hardback, £16.99)

It's Leonardo's of course! The face on the Shroud is not that of Jesus, impressed into the cloth as he lay in death, nor burnt into it through some cosmic explosion as he ascended. Rather, it is a portrait of Leonardo da Vinci, and not only that, but the world's first photograph.

The basic story told in this book is fascinating, but the style is often infuriating and becomes almost paranoid in places. Picknett and Prince tell of the fierce battles over this famous piece of cloth; the way the Church has tried to protect it, the claims of its marvellous powers and the battles waged in the competing societies it spawned.

In 1988, the results of the carbon dating revealed that it was not 2000 years old, as the believers had assumed, but created between 1260 and 1390 AD. For many people this ended their interest, but some believers argued for a retro-active 'thoughtography' theory, or that the carbon dating was actually wrong because the nuclear flash that created the resurrection image also affected the carbon 14 in the cloth.

If such theories are false (and Picknett and Prince label them 'crazy'), then what is the Shroud? The image is so finely detailed, appears more pronounced in negative than positive, and is so true to the wounds and details of what an actual crucifixion would be like, that it can be no ordinary fake; certainly not a typical medieval fake. In fact, if it is no miracle it must have been produced by a genius.

The idea that the genius was Leonardo was brought to the authors, in sinister fashion, by a secretive man who called himself only Giovanni. This led them into a wild exploration through church conspiracies and cults, followers of John the Baptist; worshippers of Mary Magdalene, the Gnostics, Hermeticists and the Priory of Sion. Was Leonardo a member? Did the Church commission him to fake a shroud? Did he have the motivation to create the greatest fake relic in all of history, knowing that it might not be discovered or understood for centuries after his death?

I admit I found much of this confusing. I wanted to

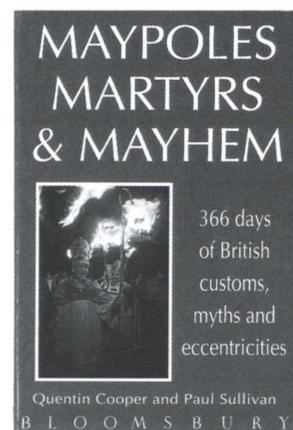
know more of the science behind the discovery of photography—if that is what it was. But Picknett and Prince's grasp of the science is not too strong. For example, they seem to think that ordinary lenses make coherent light (page 47). However, the best part of the story is that they managed to make a crude version of a shroud themselves, using simple chemicals that might have been available to Leonardo. In this achievement they will have started the ball rolling for a thorough investigation, and for this they are to be congratulated.

The book ends with a prediction—that the Church must know the Shroud's real nature and for this very reason it will soon conveniently succumb to flood, fire, theft or sudden disintegration. The fascinating thing—if Picknett and Prince are right—is that the Turin Shroud may be far more valuable than most sceptics had ever imagined.

—Susan Blackmore

The days of our lives

Quentin Cooper and Paul Sullivan, *Maypoles, Martyrs and Mayhem* (Bloomsbury, 1994, hardback, 378 pages, £20); Charles Kightly, *The Perpetual Almanack of Folklore* (Thames & Hudson, 1987, reprinted 1994, hardback, £8.95)



As you read this, do you know what today's date is, and what time it is? Perhaps you can glance at your digital watch, and quickly quote the time to the nearest second, for several time-zones. Is the temperature in your comfortable room what it usually is? Or have you turned up the central heating? What's in your CD player? Have you eaten today whatever you felt like,

whether your preferred vegetables were in season or not? Or heated up a ready meal from Sainsbury's in your microwave? What's on TV? Is someone calling your answering machine? Have you read your e-mail?

For the 'lucky' ones, late twentieth century Western culture has much to offer. Information, entertainment (and their sinister hybrid 'info-tainment'), food from any culture you care to mention, music, movies, facts, fun, sex, art... But for the 'unlucky' ones, the unloved elderly, the single parents, the victims of the social disaster ironically called 'Care in the Community', the homeless, the exhausted *Big Issue* sellers in your High Street, the smack addicts... late twentieth century Western culture must be a nightmare—a cold uncaring world increasingly pivoting on money and media.

But, many say—and you can't keep a good cliché down—that 'it didn't used to be like that'. Time was, when our life was not dominated by the expensive electronic urban jungle. The world certainly wasn't a utopia then, and nor is it a dystopia today, but there used to exist a world that operated without the burden of the effortless mass commu-

nication and all-out information spray in which we find ourselves helplessly immersed today. As recently as the middle-60s, for example, many people in this country did not know what their Prime Minister looked, or sounded, like. And today? We know only too well.

For many people in 1995, the days of their year cease to be particularly interesting, or distinct. Days become annotated boxes on our 'Christmas present' calendars, numbers in our Appointments Diaries, or entries in our Filofaxes. As I write (on 8 February 1995) I see from *Maypoles, Martyrs and Mayhem* that today it is 'St Cuthman's Day'. Tomorrow, as the alarm screams its bleep, it will—apparently—be 'St Teilo's Day'. Even if I were suffering from whooping cough, I don't think I would take the opportunity to imbibe, via his own skull (one of three extant) the waters of his Dyfed well.

Many Westerners don't care much about the seasons any more: we climb into our cars and hit the windscreen wiper button; we put on our green wellies; we look at the computerised weather map on TV and hear about Dutch flooding as if it were a description of anomalous weather on Mars.

So, if 1995's pre-millennium excesses leave you feeling jaded, *Maypoles, Martyrs and Mayhem* may be just what you need. Authors Quentin Cooper and Paul Sullivan survey the year day by day, describing for each things of significance to everyday folk. You might have heard Cooper on Radios 4 and 5, talking about our country's legends, customs and superstitions, and he is very entertaining, irreverent but evangelistic, in his presentation. This is also the tone of the book. Each day is considered for its associations, and it is surprising how many days are (or were) important to so many people. Days it has—but pictures it doesn't, which is a pity. Reading the floral description, I wanted at least to see a photo of the clumsy and what must be acutely uncomfortable figure of the South Queensferry 'Burryman', who stumbles around the Lothian town on the second Friday in August, covered from head to foot in burdock burrs. Many customs are actually bloody hard work, and we need to be reminded of that, and we need to see the protagonists.

Which is where Charles Kightly's *The Perpetual Almanack of Folklore*, has, perhaps, the edge. Kightly also takes the year one day at a time but has a slightly different approach: he quotes from old texts, and lets them speak for themselves, accompanied by beautiful illustrations. There are far less deliberate 'jokes' inserted into the text à la Cooper and Sullivan. Instead, Kightly prefers a more distanced approach, inviting the reader to listen, and then to scoff or endorse privately, as his or her privilege. Kightly writes with the authority—almost—of one present at the original feasts, and essentially boils down for easy consumption his masterpiece *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain* (Thames & Hudson, 1986).

For many people, our modern Western life is too fast and too thin. It may help a little to sit after dinner in the glow of your lounge's halogen lamps, and to remember why the days and seasons were important to our ancestors, and to imagine their lives, incomprehensible to us without

phones, radios, computers, plastics, TVs, cars, Daz, and Quentin Tarantino.

These two excellent books are great sources of ideas to encourage meditation about how we respond to each year's daily surprises, and certainties. Buy them and treat yourself, or—better still—treat your children and your grandchildren.

—Les Francis

Nostradamus does it again

V J Hewitt, *Nostradamus Prophecies for 1994* (Arrow Books, 1994, paperback, £5.99)

It has to be said at the outset that the totally outstanding thing about this book is its remarkable lack of accuracy. I have restrained myself with difficulty, not wishing to totally bore the reader, and have listed hereunder only one excellent example per month—be assured there are many more.

January: 'Queen Diana calms the mob.' Who?

February: 'America's need for economic aid from Britain.' Apparently America has suffered a huge natural disaster.

March: Harriet Harman proposes successful child benefit changes—to increase benefit by a 'major' amount.

April: 'A dry spring—water shortage grows.' April was the 5th successive month with above average rainfall—125% of average (Source: Met. Office)

May: 'African refugees flood Rome—to such an extent that there is no room for native Roman people, who riot and give the Pope a hard time.' Are Rome and the Vatican synonymous?

June: 'Cannabis legalised.' Sorry, it's only for mental patients and difficult prisoners.

July: 'World economy on the brink of collapse. America and Japan have 'gone'—economically speaking. Germany leads Europe.'

August: 'A mad summer (very hot) breeds violence (in UK).' Rainfall 123% of average. Temperature 0.4% above average (Source: Met. Office).

September: 'Besieged Canada appeals to King Charles 3rd.' What can I say?

October: 'Female terrorists (IRA) strike at Irish pact.' In fact the IRA are deeply involved with their political arm Sinn Fein in a peace process for Northern Ireland.

November: 'Thatcher quits the House of Lords (to re-enter the Commons).' She is still in the Lords at the time of writing (January 1995)

December: 'Government bans all forms of hunting.' Aw shucks, I guess I will have to become a vegetarian after all, or is it illegal to hunt a fierce lettuce?

However, I suspect that the author, given some media attention, will find a way of glossing over the glaring errors, extracting a half-truth and presenting it as an accurate prophecy. One thing is definitely correct: According to the back cover VJ Hewitt is 'an international best-selling author'. I guess this means she makes a good living from her Nostradamus 'prophecies', and therefore one can presume she is not about to abandon a financially winning formula.

Having spent over six months checking the publication, it appears to be about as accurate as the old Pagan ritual of slaughtering a beast/bird/human and reading the entrails. One hopes that she will learn by her appalling errors in the last twelve months, but don't hold your breath. Clearly, Ms Hewitt is an ardent fan of New Age unsubstantiated nonsense and the financial rewards attached thereto, and this book is a handy form of remunerative advertising. At the worst, this was an entertaining sleep inducer, but I am sorry for the waste of trees involved in producing the thing.

—Harriett Moore

Seen but not believed

Curtis Peebles, *Watch the Skies: A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth* (Smithsonian Institution Press, hardback, 342 pages, 1994, £19.50)



This superb book, aptly subtitled 'A Chronicle of the Flying Saucer Myth', covers the whole history of the modern UFO movement from the 1890s 'Airship Flap' to the latest abductee and contactee accounts. Details are given of all the major events and individuals (from ordinary observers to investigators, both believers

and skeptics) involved, in a concise but fluent style that reads like a good (science fiction!) novel.

I was pleased to note frequent mention of CSICOP and several skeptical writers, particularly Martin Gardner and of course the UFOlogists Robert Sheaffer and Philip J Klass. Indeed, the author, himself a skeptic, does not believe that alien craft are invading our skies, nor that 'little grey men' are abducting our fellow citizens for their various and nefarious purposes. However, he always lets the evidence speak for itself, without polemic or aggressive 'debunking'.

On 24 June, 1947, near Mt Rainier, Kenneth Arnold sighted nine peculiar disc-like craft, flying 'like a saucer would if you skipped it across the water'. Interestingly, Arnold later changed his description from discs to crescents (in *Fate* magazine, Spring 1948). In fact there had been sightings before this, and disc-like craft sometimes appeared in science fiction magazines. Ray Palmer's *Amazing Stories* had already begun to print Richard Shaver's tales of a subterranean civilization ('Lemuria') and machines from outer space or from inside our (hollow) Earth. (Shaver was later revealed to have spent time in a mental hospital.) Science fiction films would soon make their occupants (human, robotic, and otherwise) a familiar sight to the general public.

Even earlier, in the 1890s, reputable newspapers had reported sightings of strange airships, possibly from Mars, including one which crashed (in Aurora, Texas), and the alien pilot's body was given a decent local burial. These accounts were only rediscovered—and shown to be hoaxes—in the 1960s. The theme of crashed UFOs and dead

aliens was to recur, at Roswell, New Mexico (1947)—where the crashed object was soon shown to be a radar target balloon—and other sites, always without hard evidence.

American Air Force projects Sign, Grudge and Blue Book, and the associated Condon Report, are all described, together with their (often turbulent) relationship with the various UFO-watching groups such as APRO, NICAP, CUFOS, etc.). Initial security measures (in case the reports were of newly-developed Soviet craft) were often misinterpreted as a cover-up to prevent popular panic, but official documents do not support this conclusion.

UFOs have turned out to be sightings of stars, meteors, rocket re-entries, and weather balloons (a large—and secret—'Skyhook' balloon may have caused the death of Captain T F Mantell in 1948). No hard evidence, such materials, has ever proved genuine, and hoaxes have often played a part. UFOs were at one time linked with the 'Bermuda Triangle' phenomenon—now shown to be a non-event by skeptical writer Lawrence Kusche.

In the 1950s, the Saucers finally landed, and 'contactees' such as George Adamski ('professor' and proprietor of a Hamburger stand near the Mt Palomar observatory), Truman Bethurum, the wonderfully named Orfeo Angelucci, and Howard Menger all met the occupants and in some cases went for rides to the Moon and various planets, which all turned out to have Earth-like atmospheres and inhabitants. 'Mental' contact with the kindly 'Space Brothers' inspired George Van Tassel and George King (the 'Primary Mental Channel of the Interplanetary Parliament' and founder of the Aetherius society), and many others who founded UFO groups of their own.

The 1960s saw more sinister developments, such as the 'missing time' experience of Barney and Betty Hill, who under hypnosis recalled their abduction and medical examination aboard a flying saucer (their therapist, Dr Benjamin Simon, was clear that these experiences were only fantasy), and the report of Antonio Villas Boas that he had been forced to have intimate union with the glamorous female captain of a UFO (for scientific purposes, of course).

Animal mutilations, from the aptly-named Snippy (a horse) in 1967 to large numbers of farm animals in the 1970s were originally blamed on Government conspiracy, UFO action, Satanism, or all three in concert. Veterinarians eventually showed that the animals had died and then been chewed by scavengers. Claims of UFO sightings in space and on the Moon were shown to be without foundation by James Oberg in 1976.

From the 1970s onwards, hypnotic regression revealing UFO abduction became the fashionable source of 'close encounter' reports, thanks to the efforts of Leo Sprinkle, Budd Hopkins, Whitley Strieber, David Jacobs, and (more recently) Harvard's John Mack. Abductees have been levitated by little grey men with wraparound eyes into saucers for intimate medical examinations, the insertion of probes in nasal and other orifices, and even the removal of ova and sperm for clinical breeding programs.

All this is in spite of the experiments of Alvin Lawson and William McCall in 1977, showing that naive subjects under hypnosis came up with virtually the same descrip-

tions of UFOs, aliens, abductions and examinations as everyone else.

Thomas Bullard, a folklore researcher specialising in urban myths and legends, claimed that the abduction accounts did not fit into a traditional mould, and that abductees would have had no cultural sources from which to derive their stories. Peebles shows that, on the contrary, all the features of the saucers and their sinister grey occupants can be traced to science fiction magazines and films from the 1930s onwards.

The author describes the UFO phenomenon as a 'myth', that is, a set of ideas designed to make sense of life and its vagaries. He shows how UFO ideas have not been static, but have grown and developed over time, and have often split believers into various factions. He draws detailed parallels with scientific, technological, social and political changes, although I was not completely happy with his view that these changes are entirely to blame for the saucer myth. However, this is a minor point, and this thoroughly entertaining and encyclopedic book deserves to be read by everyone with an interest in the UFO story.

—Mike Rutter

Exercises for the mind?

Betty Shine, *Betty Shine's Mind Workbook* (Corgi, 1994, 272 pages, paperback, £6.99)

Betty Shine is a lady who has apparently improved the lives of thousands of ordinary people with her mind exercises. These exercises are designed, she tells us, to link mind, body and spirit and to allow you to acquire a new optimistic outlook. Now if it is true that these exercises really have improved the lives of all those people, it would be churlish to condemn them. After all, there are millions of people throughout the world whose lives are enriched by visiting large buildings on a Sunday and singing songs to some kind of mystical being, despite the obvious absurdity of such behaviour. So where's the harm?

The book begins by explaining the Energy Counterpart to us. Well actually, explain isn't exactly the right word, since after reading the chapter I was more confused than when I started. Apparently it is all to do with the aura, which Mrs Shine tells us is a word which is 'much used but little understood'. Unfortunately this book offers no help with this understanding. The body, she assures us, is filled with vortices, which appear opposite the ductless glands of the endocrine system. These vortices are located all over the body from the forehead to the base of the spine, and the faster they spin, the healthier we are. In addition there are meridian lines running from our feet throughout the body, like a series of tubes that distribute the life force. In order to clean these tubes, Mrs Shine '...draw(s) the energy back through the feet rather as a pipe smoker uses his pipe cleaner'. Well I'm glad that's clear.

The exercises in this book almost all involve making oneself comfortable in a quiet place and breathing deeply three times. Now that's the kind of exercise I can just about manage. From this position we are able to visit friends and heal them, take imaginary balloon flights, drift along on

clouds and meet spirit healers. She encourages us to let our minds picture all kinds of images and then attempts to analyse what we have seen. Explanations are given of the aspect, size, colour and intensity of the images and how they relate to the personality of the person performing the exercise. Well, there's no harm in that, you might say, and you'd probably be right. However some of the book's claims made me more than a little uneasy.

In an early chapter she advises us that using the mind to control the spinning of the vortices is the key to good health. She then goes on to say that drugs supplied by a doctor serve to slow down the vortices and alter the messages to the brain, thereby leading to more problems. Instead, readers are told to form an imaginary medicine room, in which they take imagined drugs as a cure for their ills. Diabetics are advised to imagine injecting their insulin rather than using the real thing.

She even claims that her methods can provide a cure for cancer. Anorexics too get their mind power cure-all. Mrs Shine advises us that, if we feel hungry, we should sit down and imagine ourselves eating, and this will be sufficient nourishment. Surely all these are dangerous thoughts to put into the kind of suggestible mind that would take this book seriously.

It is also true to say that there is little room for scientific fact in this book, though pseudoscientific terminology abounds. Thus along with the endocrinic vortices we also find mention of blood toxins (removed by, er, sitting in a comfy chair in a quiet room) an electro-magnetic circuit about the body and, of course, those ubiquitous vibrations indispensable to all books of this genre. Unfortunately she has a few problems with self contradiction. On page 69 she tells us 'everything... you make with energy... becomes a reality'. On page 95 she says '...energy is forever. It can NEVER be destroyed.' (her capitals). However, on page 121 we are told that after injecting ourselves with an imaginary hypodermic it will disappear since '...all rubbish automatically disappears'. I have proved this last statement wrong, anyhow, since Mrs Shine's book is still lying on the desk beside me.

One of the more hilarious aspects covered by the book is that of communicating telepathically with our pets. Apparently we just close our eyes and talk to our pet telepathically. It's as easy as that.

I could go on, but to do so would be to infer that this book was worth serious consideration, and it isn't. It is merely a collection of wishful thoughts and comforters. In addition we get line after line of Mrs Shine's appalling poetry and a set of mantras, of which my favourite was:

A Ram A Ram A Ram A Ram
A Ram A Ram A Ram A Ram
A Jai Ram

Which, you will be pleased to hear, you can buy on one of Mrs Shine's cassettes.

I think the best way to sum up this book is to quote from Mrs Shine herself, on page 81: 'Whatever you do, don't take yourself too seriously—you will bore yourself and others to death.' Physician, heal thyself!

—Mike Walsh



Letters

Fantastic archaeology

I am writing in response to Howard Wellman's article 'Fantastic Archaeology' (*The Skeptic*, 8.5).

I never cease to be amazed at the incredible arrogance of people such as Howard Wellman. He is so vociferous in his condemnation of anyone with other than his myopic point of view, that I'm sure that he must derive some sort of perverse satisfaction by his repeatedly referring to his critics as 'pseudo-archaeologists'.

If I, as a layman, was presented with 2 dates for the age of the Sphinx, one from a Geologist, whose conclusions are based upon known scientific data and one from a so-called 'Egyptologist', whose dating was based solely upon opinion and conjecture, then the Geologist will win every time.

Academics like Wellman are always so convinced that they can never be wrong, that invariably miss the chance of updating their knowledge when better and more accurate information comes along, resulting in academic stagnation.

Still, I suppose being a blinkered academic is no worse than some of the irrational beliefs of the multitude of religious crackpot groups that we all know about.

R J Lind
Peterborough

Human rights-1

If human rights only exist when guaranteed by laws (*Letters, The Skeptic*, 8.4), then is it correct to say that in Hitler's Germany the Jews actually had *no* human rights because the laws were stacked against them?

Clearly, without legal sanction human rights may not have much chance of being enforced, but surely ethical questions precede legal formulation (logically at any rate if not politically).

Also, skeptics sometimes accuse

animal-rights supporters of irrationalism, superstition, etc., while surely the reverse is the case. Traditionally, human domination of nature has been based firmly on God's supernatural mandate as given in Genesis, while the scientific, skeptical worldview sees us as just animals like the rest, highly evolved and very clever, no doubt, but no different in essence from the others. Thus, if human suffering is to be avoided, so presumably is that of other animals (or perhaps just mammals), since as far as feelings and emotions (and supporting brain structures) go they are (scientifically considered at any rate) on a par with human beings.

Mike Rutter
Manchester

Human rights-2

Mr Sherwood rebuts, but does not refute, the points I made in my letter about rights (*Letters, The Skeptic*, 8.5).

In questions of moral philosophy—where the issue of rights lies—there are no clear cut answers, only opinions; valid or not depending on the weight one gives to the philosopher. In society and in law, there have to be. My wife does not have a right to the vote: society has a duty to allow her one. Liechtenstein society did not think it had that duty until 1981, when the European consensus caused it to concede the duty.

In this context, to quote authority is unhelpful. I could quote Augustine, the Blessed Origen and Aquinas—who were, in my view, correct but on premises I reject—or Bentham or Glanville Williams in the *Law Quarterly Review* of 1956 (since we are playing Battleships with professors) who were correct but on premises I accept.

Again, to say that right is the obverse—I prefer reverse—of the coin of duty is trivial: are the negatives of one's holiday photographs as valid as the positives? How many

angels can dance on the point of a needle?

I wrote and now write as a lawyer. I cannot enforce a right for a client, even if I could have a fox as a client: what I can do is enforce a duty towards my client against whomsoever neglected that duty.

Why I was emphatic in my letter—I regret the 'shrill ululation'—was that, in practice, the concept of rights is dangerous, although in moral philosophy very useful. The danger is that Animal Rights activists or Islamic fundamentalists try to enforce non-existent rights rather than existent duties that can be enforced and can be strengthened, if there is consensus: *vide*, the current bill on hunting with dogs, now before Parliament. Do we really believe that Iran has a right to kill Rushdie, because it thinks it does? That job should be left to literary critics.

If I am not careful, Mr Sherwood and I will end up like 17 century polemicists and write pamphlets like: 'The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience discussed in a Conference between Peace and Truth', to which a Mr Cotton replied: 'The Bloody Tenent washed white in the Blood of the Lamb', and the original author rejoined: 'The Bloody Tennent yet more Bloody by Mr Cotton's endeavour to wash it white in the Blood of the Lamb'. Pithy titles, all!

M W Evans
Dunfermline

Curse of the gremlins

The Skeptic is an impressive publication is it not—everything computerised and the fancy email address and all. So why does my copy get addressed to *Broseley*?

Perhaps us non-believers really don't exist. Yes—that's why my *Freethinker* is addressed to *Bowley*. Cracked it. What a relief.

John Bosley
Huddersfield

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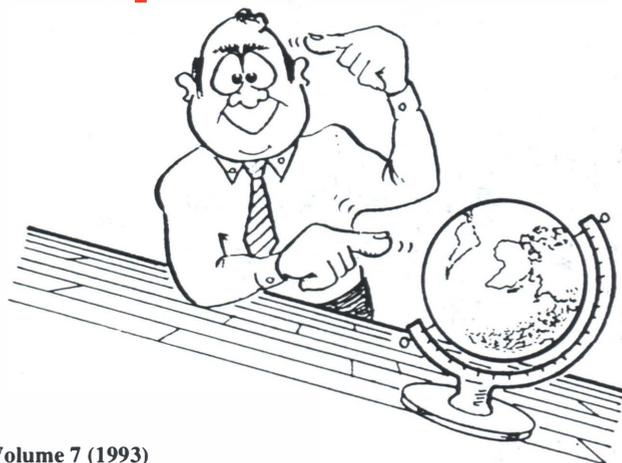
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