



REPORT

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• skeptic (n): a person who searches for truth through questioning and reasoning •

Noreen Renier's Presentation at Remote Viewing Conference

By Gary P. Posner

As many of our readers know, *TBS Report* has been closely chronicling the career of internationally renowned "psychic detective" Noreen Renier since our infancy. The reasons for our special interest in Renier, as opposed to some of the others who ply her trade, have been primarily twofold. When we first discovered her, and for years thereafter, she was a resident of the Orlando area (eventually moving from Florida to Virginia in 2004). And her legal battles with skeptic John Merrell (see his non-related letter on page 7), a co-founder in 1982 of the Northwest Skeptics, have spanned a quarter-century, though a final truce may have been ordered in a Virginia courtroom on February 25 (see next issue for whatever information we can obtain).

Our Summer 2005 issue carried my review of Renier's memoir, *A Mind for Murder*, which I described as an "entertaining adventure [and] page-turner," though I concluded with this: "But as even a tasty meal begs dessert, *A Mind for Murder* leaves me hungry for a morsel of compelling scientific evidence to substantiate this sort of 'psychic' power as fact rather than fiction." A decade earlier, in the chapter about Renier that I contributed to *Psychic Sleuths* (Prometheus Books, 1994), I singled out one particular case — about her assisting an FBI agent in locating a missing airplane in 1984 — for special scrutiny.

Though Renier's website is frequently changing, as I write this, the top of its "Special Events" page features the chapter about the airplane case from her book. And the bottom of the page contains a blurb about her presentation, titled "The Psychic Connection in Criminal Investigations," to the International Remote Viewing Association's 2006 conference, along with a link to purchase the DVD of her lecture for \$13.

Though the link didn't work, I did find the DVD on Amazon.com (a literal "steal" at \$24.95). And, I must say, in terms of entertainment value, I enjoyed her IRVA

presentation every bit as much as her book. Renier shines charmingly, and it is easy to understand why people predisposed to believe in "psychic" powers find her such a persuasive practitioner. Indeed, in a review of her appearance (posted on her website), an IRVA member describes her as "perhaps the most entertaining speaker of the conference ... with an animated demeanor that rendered her already interesting subject matter absolutely fascinating."

The DVD runs 47 minutes, the last 20 of which are a Q&A session. Renier enchants the Las Vegas audience with a necessarily fast-forward overview of her career as a master of "psychometry," the ability to read vibrations from objects. As she explains, depending upon what is required of her, she can "become" either the "victim" (missing or deceased) or the "bad guy," or can "float above" the crime and observe it as it happened. She almost had *me* believing her, though her stories about reading the minds of a horse and a "really chatty" oak tree were a bit much. I found her one-liner about canines to be much more credible: "I've [also] talked to a few dogs, but they really don't have much to say."

During the Q&A, one questioner offered, "It seems as though there's a skeptic from Tampa Bay that seemed to make a career out of debunking your fine work, and you ended up, I think, as I recall, going to court twice, beating them twice in court, when they tried to say that what you did was nonsense." He apparently had read chapters 17 and 18 of the first/canceled (see our Summer 2007 issue for full coverage of the reason why) edition of Renier's book, which detailed her version of the Renier-Merrell lawsuits and concluded with a paragraph that began, "The most relentless [other detractor] is Gary Posner of the Tampa Bay Skeptics, who seems to be on something of a crusade to discredit me." Though neither Merrell nor I is mentioned by name on the DVD, the questioner apparently had morphed Merrell and me into a single entity. Renier does not correct him (in fact, she nods affirmatively), though as she proceeds to talk about the genesis of the litigation, she does refer to that nemesis as "the skeptic [with] I guess they're called the Northwest Skeptics."

(continued on page 5)

**TAMPA BAY SKEPTICS
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and "\$1,000 Challenge"**

Tampa Bay Skeptics, Inc., a Special Interest Group of the Center For Inquiry Tampa Bay, is a nonprofit educational and scientific organization devoted to the critical examination of paranormal and fringe-science claims. TBS does not reject claims on *a priori* grounds, but rather is committed to objective and critical inquiry.

TBS's "\$1,000 Challenge" is open to anyone claiming verifiable scientific proof of the reality of ESP, UFOs, dowsing, astrology, or any paranormal phenomenon. Please contact us for details.

Tampa Bay Skeptics Report is published quarterly. We welcome news clippings, and articles and letters for publication (subject to editing for length, clarity, and taste), and solicit opposing points of view.

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REPORT**
Since 1988

c/o Center For Inquiry Tampa Bay
5201 W. Kennedy Blvd.
Suite 124
Tampa, FL 33609
Phone: (813) 849-7571
Fax: (813) 849-7572
E-mail: tbs@centerforinquiry.net
Web: www.tampabayskeptics.org

Founder and Editor:
Gary P. Posner

Cartoonist: Valerie Grey

Cartoonist Memoritus: Don Addis

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C h a i r m a n ' s o r n e r

The Adaptable Human

By Terry A. Smiljanich

It is a common misconception that humans evolved from a progression of predecessor hominids, each more "evolved" than the last one, and that looking backwards through this progression should lead to a "missing link," i.e., *the* common ancestor. Similarly, looking forward through that same misconceived progression falsely implies that we humans were inevitable, the pinnacle toward which all of our ancestors climbed.

Anthropologists have learned that the actual picture of human evolution is much messier and convoluted. Our fossil ancestry includes several false starts, side trips, and parallel tracks. For example, our species, *Homo sapiens*, lived alongside Neanderthals just 35,000 years ago. A newly discovered species, *Homo floresiensis* (sometimes referred to as "Hobbit" due to their very small size), lived contemporaneously with modern humans just 18,000 years ago.

Neanderthals exhibited complex socialization skills such as burial rituals and, but for a few fortuitous changes in climate, might have outlasted and supplanted *Homo sapiens*. Neanderthal anthropologists would today be studying *human* fossils and wondering how related *we* were.

The Smithsonian Natural History Museum is opening a new exhibit illustrating the complex patronage of humans. Rather than showing the usual steady progression of an ape slowly evolving into a person, the new exhibit tells a story far less linear in shape.

Anthropologist Rick Potts, the director of the Smithsonian's Human

Origins Program, sees another lesson in this new exhibit. The typical story told is that as climate change turned ancient forests into grasslands, hominids climbed down from the trees and became bipedal. No, he says, ancient climates changed back and forth, from wet and warm to dry and cool, and then back again. Hominids adapted to grasslands with upright stances, but retained their long arms for tree climbing.

We are a group of species which evolved techniques to adapt to a changing environment. Our tools evidenced an ability to adapt to new climatic conditions and available foods. Rather than "survival of the fittest," Potts likes to think of it as "survival of the versatile."

Climates continue to change. Whether current long-term warming trends will continue, and whether human activity has contributed to the warming, is an entirely separate debate. No scientist, however, argues that our current global climate will not change.

If the ice caps melt, and if sea levels rise to inundate New York City, humans will no doubt adapt to the new conditions. Polar bears and other species won't, of course, be so lucky, but humans have, as a whole, never been too concerned about whether other species die off. "Too bad for them — we're doing OK."

The adaptable human may even achieve the ultimate in global climate control — diverting an approaching asteroid threatening to wipe out human life. If the dinosaurs had been as adaptable as humans, they too might have staved off a similar disaster. Lucky for us they didn't.

Complementary and Alternative Medicine As Snake-Oil Science

By Valerie Grey

Integrative Medicine is the new, deceptively benign-sounding euphemism for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), which includes the likes of acupuncture, chiropractic, homeopathy, iridology, reflexology, magnetic therapy, qi gong, Ayurvedic medicine, therapeutic touch, and faith healing. I admit to having fallen for mainstream news reports claiming that legitimate scientific research has provided evidence of the genuine efficacy of acupuncture and hypnosis. But it turns out these media claims are, at best, nothing more than scientifically ignorant, sensationalist reportage and, at worst, intentional falsehoods.

In his 2007 Oxford University Press book, *Snake Oil Science: The Truth About Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, biostatistician R. Barker Bausell, Ph.D., describes a large-scale NIH-funded study of acupuncture that he helped design and administer at the University of Maryland. (It proved that the acupuncture involved was a powerful analgesic placebo, but absolutely nothing more.) The book includes a comprehensive meta-analysis evaluation of all the thousands of available CAM clinical studies to date and concludes definitively that there is no *reliable* scientific evidence whatsoever that *any* CAM therapy works better than placebo. Very little CAM research adheres to even minimum scientific-methodology standards for clinical trials (many studies violate *all* such standards), and the little that does is uniformly negative in outcome. It's reminiscent of tests of psychic phenomena: the tighter the controls to prevent cheating, the closer you get to results entirely predictable by chance. For CAM, simply substitute "placebo effect" for "chance."

Most CAM therapies postulate ludicrously bizarre hypothetical mechanisms which have not been proven, many involving wholesale violations of the laws of physics. In glaring contrast, the existence of the powerful placebo effect, especially where it involves alleviation of pain, is well documented, and some of the wholly physiological mechanisms that drive it have been empirically demonstrated. (There is an interesting hierarchy of placebo-effect strength: from small pills to large pills, then capsules, then injections, with fake surgery — complete with anesthesia and real incisions — the most powerful of all.)

Dr. Bausell explains the psychological pitfalls of cause-and-effect induction, and details the key components of a near-fully reliable clinical trial:

- Randomization of study participants (to control for the natural variability of disease processes)
- Placebo control groups (many CAM trials make no effort at all to compare against placebo!)
- Large study populations (at least 50 in both experimental and placebo groups to mitigate against statistical flukes and the false-positive effects of attrition)
- Credible placebos (placebo pills for testing homeopathy are easy, since homeopathic pills, by definition and design, are diluted to contain perhaps one molecule of active ingredient, but imagine the difficulties of a conscious patient believing that he may be receiving *placebo* acupuncture needle sticks)
- Low attrition rates (dropout rates greater than 25% generally indicate a too-obviously fake placebo)
- Effective double/triple blinding (neither test subjects, therapy deliverers, nor evaluators know who is receiving the genuine therapy; hard to accomplish when the real therapy involves hands-on administration by, for instance, an experienced chiropractor or acupuncturist)
- Publication in respectable peer-reviewed scientific journals with high experimental-methodology standards (e.g., *JAMA* or *NEJM* versus, say, any of 60+ unself-critical reflexology or chiropractic journals)
- High-quality-study duplication by other independent researchers (Unintentional or deliberate deceit is still, however, a possibility that cannot be ruled out. Interestingly, there have even been meta-analysis studies about the relative reliability of CAM research as a function of country of origin and publishing language, showing statistically significant patterns of unreliability; e.g., some countries never seem to produce any negative results at all!)

The endorsement of shabby research by pro-CAM organizations is like telling the public, based exclusively upon interviews of some ecstatic past winners, that playing Lotto is a good gamble. (My statistics professor called Lotto "extra taxes for the mathematically challenged.") How many CAM patients do you think can define the scientific method or list even a few of the essential ingredients of a solid, meaningful clinical trial?

Maybe CAM should instead be called SCAM (So-called Complementary and Alternative Medicine), SHAM (So-called Holistic and Alternative Medicine), or even SHAZAM (So-called Holistic and Zany Alternative Medicine). I cannot recommend Bausell's *Snake Oil Science* enthusiastically enough.

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Snippets

One of the most famous stories involving so-called “spontaneous human combustion” — when a person allegedly bursts into flames for no apparent reason — is the 1951 cremation of St. Petersburg’s Mary Reeser. This elderly, obese woman was prone to falling asleep (with the help of pills) in her upholstered living room chair, with a lit cigarette in mouth, while wearing flammable nightclothes. The incident, which we have previously mentioned a few times over the years, was unusual in that while the fire was confined to a limited portion of the room, her body and chair (except for her left foot/slipper and the springs) were entirely consumed, as if they had burned like a candle. Adding to the mystery was the spurious report that her “shrunk skull” had also been found at the scene. Because of the oddities, the St. Pete. police have never officially closed the books on this case. But, odd or not, the greater mystery would seem to be how anyone could categorize this case of human combustion as having been “spontaneous.”

(*Tampa Tribune*, Nov. 10)

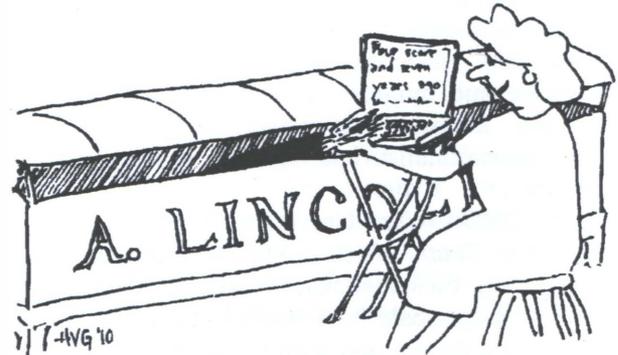
Drinking tea is not only tasty and refreshing, but provides the body with healthful antioxidants. Eating asparagus, while perhaps more of an acquired taste, is also quite healthful. But the question for us skeptics is: Whereas reading tea leaves seems to be an exercise in paranormal nonsense, can someone such as Jemima Packington, who tosses asparagus spears into the air and analyzes their landing pattern, foretell the future with uncanny (the spears are fresh) accuracy? The answer to her many fans in Pershore, England, is a resounding “yes,” since, in 2008, this self-defined “asparamancer” correctly predicted the order of elimination in the British version of the TV show *Big Brother*. So, there will apparently be some exciting goings-on in 2010 at Buckingham Palace, since one of Packington’s spears points to a member of the royal family becoming engaged this year, and another one dying.

(*St. Pete. Times*, Jan. 1)

“Facilitated communication” is another alleged phenomenon reported upon in our pages some years ago during its 15 minutes of fame. Miraculously, a severely brain-injured person in a chronic vegetative state, with zero ability to communicate, is suddenly rendered able to express feelings and answer questions appropriately. All that is required is the help of a passive “facilitator,” a trained therapist who holds the patient’s hand, pointing one of the fingers down toward a computer keyboard, whereupon the patient’s thoughts guide the facilitator to help tap out messages. Such a case, involving a 23-year-old Belgian named Rom Houben and his “facilitator” Linda Wouters, made international news late last year when Houben’s

mother announced that Rom would be writing a book about his experience. But, as University of Pennsylvania bioethics professor Arthur Caplan explained at the time, “That is Ouija board stuff. It’s been discredited time and time again. [The] person doing the pointing [is] doing the messages, not the person they claim they are helping.” And, more recently Houben’s neurologist has concluded that FC does not work.

(*A.P. via St. Pete. Times*, Nov. 25, Feb. 20)



“Four score and seven years ago . . .”

As a cost-cutting measure, Britain’s Ministry of Defence has shut down its UFO hotline and will no longer investigate sightings. Roy Lake, founder of the London UFO Studies group, says, “I think it’s a stupid thing to do, because this could create a threat to national security. . . . I think the government knows damn well what’s going on up there, and they’re covering it up.” But the military, which takes no official position either way on ET visitation, says that none of the 12,000+ previously investigated UFO reports turned out to be a national security threat, and the closing will save about \$73,000 annually.

(*St. Pete. Times*, Dec. 5)

And from our “Makes At Least As Much Sense As Asparagus Tossing” Dept.: Serbian pharmacologist-turned-sports-trainer Marijana Kovacevic “is amazing,” says soccer player Dusan Petkovic. “She uses a combination of electricity and the miracle gel that is her exclusive product. The electric current goes through a stick holding the gel, which is applied to the injured spot.” The miracle gel contains horse placenta fluid, which is why authorities in Belgrade are searching for Kovacevic, who has been practicing her craft without a medical license and has apparently gone underground after recently treating the injuries of several English Premier League soccer players.

(*St. Pete. Times*, Nov. 23)

“Snippets” are derived from the referenced sources and then rewritten by *TBS Report’s* editor. Please submit your clippings to TBS.

“Renier’s Remote Viewing Talk” (from page 1)

Shortly thereafter, Renier excitedly discusses the aforementioned missing airplane case. Anyone can make a mistake, and I made a doozy in my *Psychic Sleuths* chapter, in which I quoted from an NTSB report stating that the crash (see photos) had occurred “during a forced landing after a fire ignited in the aircraft.” In fact, the news clipping I referenced pertained to *another* small-plane crash that had occurred in the same general area in the same general timeframe. As soon as I discovered my error, I added a prominent mea culpa to my website’s posting of that chapter.

In contrast, despite having learned, two decades earlier, the actual findings of the crash investigation, Renier weaves a fantasy for her audience, as she has done in multiple prior venues such as in an Oregon courtroom in 1986, on the *Joan Rivers Show* in 1990, and in her 2005 book. As usual, she describes how she psychically became the airplane and “could see this dark landing strip below me,” and then “sort-of quicksand and rocky stuff. And then, all of a sudden, a mountain there — I’m not at the top, I’m in the middle. And the trees like open up and they swallow me.” She even goes on to describe the “dirt road, like a ribbon, going up the mountain.” But though she was right about the trees, there were no mountains, or even hills, within many miles of the swampy crash site.

And as she has done time after time, she describes an old, rusty gas station and an old, toothless woman (and her barking dogs), and says it turned out that the authorities “knew the old lady at the gas station ... she had died the year before.” There was even testimony by the FBI agent and his ex-wife (whose brother was on the plane) to that effect in the original 1986 Renier v. Merrell libel trial. However, in a 2006 taped interview with Merrell conducted on site in Gardner, Massachusetts, Lt. Gerald Poirier of the Gardner Police Department, who was intimately involved in the investigation (the incident occurred within his jurisdiction), stated that he had never encountered, or heard of, any such old abandoned store, or gas station, or any such woman.

In another taped interview conducted by Merrell during his same investigative trip to the scene, Carl and Cheryl Wilber, the father/daughter duo who found the missing airplane, were equally adamant. Coincidentally, Carl, his wife Pat, and Cheryl derive their primary income from a family pet-care business, specializing in dogs, which has been serving their area for four decades. During their conversation with Merrell, Carl and Cheryl strained, unsuccessfully, to think of anyone who could have possibly fit the bill. They told Merrell that if such a woman had lived there in the early 1980s, they are certain that they would have known of her and her dogs.

There are many more details that could be dissected, but the coup de grâce is Renier’s “psychic” portrait of the bodies as they were found amidst the carnage. In this 2006 DVD presentation, as in her prior TV appearances and her book, Renier tells of seeing, in her trance, a heroic occupant (the brother of the FBI agent’s ex-wife) carrying his “headless” female companion from the crumpled plane and gently placing her against a tree, before succumbing to his own injuries. In all these retellings, Renier sees the remaining two male occupants still in the front seat, their necks broken. And, as always, Renier tells her spell-bound audience that the officials found the scene to be just as she described it in her vision.

In reality, as I have previously reported in my book chapter, the medical examiner determined that all four occupants, including the brother, had “died immediately” upon

impact — no one had managed to walk away or carry anyone anywhere. But as I learned only later from Merrell’s interview with the Wilbers, one of the two crushed occupants they saw (though admittedly without benefit of “psychic” power) in the crumpled front cabin — still sitting next to the pilot — was *the woman*. The brother and another male apparently had been thrown from the rear cabin upon impact, their dismembered bodies found strewn about in the snowy debris field.

But why quibble over details? Isn’t it enough that Noreen Renier is a riveting persona who enjoys “artistic license”? Just shut up and enjoy your \$24.95 DVD.



Top photo courtesy Worcester (Mass.) Telegram & Gazette.
Bottom photo courtesy National Transportation Safety Board.

TAMPA BAY SKEPTICS CONSULTANTS

Judith Becker Bryant, Ph.D.
Psychology Dept.
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And check out the TBS website's
full page of "Resource Links"

Scientology Claims Healings in Haiti

The Church of Scientology, whose worldwide spiritual headquarters is in Clearwater, has taken it on the chin in recent *St. Petersburg Times* and *N.Y. Times* articles. So let's throw them a bone with the following excerpts from a January 23 French wire service (AFP) story:

Amid the mass of aid agencies piling in to help Haiti quake victims is a batch of Church of Scientology 'volunteer ministers' claiming to use the power of touch to reconnect nervous systems. ... "We ... reestablish communication within the body by touching people through their clothes." ... "All the patients are happy with the technique," said [a Parisian volunteer named] Sylvie. "But some doctors don't like [our] yellow T-shirts. It's a color thing," she insisted. One U.S. doctor, who asked not to be named, snorted, "I didn't know touching could heal."

Wisdom from the Archives

From an above-titled item in the "*Skeptical Inquirer News*" e-mail, Vol. 2, No. 2, February 2010:

Every so often we get inquiries about the availability of past articles, and one that seems to get requested more than others is James Lett's *A Field Guide to Critical Thinking*. Lett addresses some of the key hurdles including the irresponsibility of mass media, pervasive American irrationality, and the ineffectiveness of public education, which generally fails to teach students the essential skills of critical thinking. The article rings as true today as it did when it was published in the fall of 1990.

Lett, a member of TBS's Executive Council since its inception, published an edited version of his "Field Guide" in our Spring 1990 issue. The full version, as it

appeared in *Skeptical Inquirer*, can be found at www.csicop.org/si/show/field_guide_to_critical_thinking.

Tampa Bay MUFON Reconstitutes Group

We recently received notification that there is now once again a Mutual UFO Organization affiliate in our area. The Tampa Bay MUFON Group held its first meeting on February 13 at the Clearwater Public Library — East.

The group's organizer is Bonnie Korniak, who is MUFON's State Section Director for West Central Florida. She can be reached at tampabaymufon@yahoo.com.

TBS in the Media

TBS founder Gary Posner was interviewed for Stephanie Hayes' January 16 *St. Petersburg Times* article, "Are they true seers or just counselors?"

Though the tone of the article was sober, Hayes had indicated on the phone that it would be much lighter. One of her key questions asked what Posner would recommend to someone who was out of work and planning to spend their last \$20 on a "psychic" counselor. In keeping with the "light" tone, Posner suggested that the person should instead give *him* their last \$20, for which he would dispense priceless advice as to why giving it to a "psychic" would have been a waste of money.

Hayes laughed with apparent delight, as if that would be her preferred quote. But the one she chose to use (containing a grammatical error that was not Posner's doing) was to the effect that, in Posner's opinion, self-styled "psychics" are either intentionally deceiving the public or, if sincere, are deluding themselves.

Letters • Readers' Forum

Editor: I would like to comment on your and Terry Smiljanich's *TBS Report* articles this past year about man-made global warming (MMGW).

Since 2001, I have been involved with developing emergency telecommunications systems both in the U.S. and Canada, some managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and others by Environment Canada. But unlike Terry, whose two close marine biologist friends are convinced that MMGW is real, several climate specialists from both of these government agencies have privately voiced to me their outright disbelief, and have told me that many more of their colleagues are skeptical.

The main reason for their view centers on their observation that the database of critical historical measurements is being "mined" by advocates in such a way as to favor MMGW as the principal cause of the warming that was observed in the 20th century. They tell me that several alternative mechanisms seem to them to be equally (if not more) plausible.

John Merrell
Snohomish, WA
johnmerrellusa@gmail.com

Editor: You are absolutely correct in your article "Assessing the Credibility of CFI's Credibility Project" [see our last issue], which I read in the Jan/Feb issue of *Skeptical Inquirer*. I teach psychology, including a skeptics course that emphasizes critical evaluation of paranormal claims.

In my book, *When Good Thinking Goes Bad*, I devote a chapter that urges the same standards be applied to global warming as a skeptic would apply to a psychic claim. I can't tell you how many readers seem to be upset by such a suggestion!

Todd C. Riniolo, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Medaille College
Buffalo, NY
triniolo@Medaille.edu

Editor's reply: I don't place man-made global warming on a par with claims of the paranormal (of which we skeptics demand "extraordinary" confirmatory evidence), but I certainly believe that a degree of healthy skepticism is warranted.

Robert Sheaffer, a regular columnist for *Skeptical Inquirer*, which also lists him as a "Fellow" of its parent Committee for Skeptical Inquiry (CSI — of which I am listed as but a mere "Scientific Consultant"), has submitted a manuscript in rebuttal to four articles critical of MMGW skeptics in the current (March/April) issue of *S.I.* (he tells me it has just been accepted for publication).

In his opening paragraph, Sheaffer notes, "The climate may or may not be warming, and if it is humanity may or may not be the primary cause, but the evidence put forth to support the [MMGW] claim is now seen as seriously tainted by bias and manipulation." He then points out that "even Britain's Weather Office has [on February 22] proposed 'A new international analysis of land surface air temperature data,' this time using 'verifiable datasets starting from a common databank of unrestricted data' and 'methods that are fully documented in the peer-reviewed literature and open to scrutiny.'"

Sheaffer concludes, "I keep reflecting upon how my mentor in skepticism, the late Philip J. Klass, wrote a dedication in his first UFO book to 'my father ... from whom I learned to withstand the sometimes fierce pressures of prevailing opinion.' It seems to me that this is a lesson that CSI needs yet to learn." Many of *TBS Report's* readers may know that Phil Klass, the world's premier UFO skeptic, was my mentor as well.

Klass for years chaired the CSI (formerly CSICOP) UFO Subcommittee, which was co-vice-chaired by Sheaffer and his fellow CSI "Fellow" James Oberg. Perhaps Phil is haunting the three of us from the grave, as Oberg is also critical of *Skeptical Inquirer*. Excerpted from an e-mail to Sheaffer and me about the current issue: "[Note] the loaded semantics, attacking motives and intelligence of different-thinkers, appeals to bandwagon — all signs we have learned over the decades to recognize as indicators of non-rational argumentation."

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Followed by optional lunch at a local restaurant

*****TBS/CFI Tampa Bay Office is Moving*****

Due to the present economic climate, Center For Inquiry Tampa Bay will be vacating its Bridgeport Center office suite shortly before April 30, the date of lease expiration. Beginning then, and until such time as the economy, and its coffers, so warrant, CFI Tampa Bay will be operating out of the home of its acting executive director, Rick O'Keefe.

When the present office suite is vacated, the phone and fax numbers will remain the same, but the official mailing address for CFI Tampa Bay and TBS will become:

13014 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Box 363
 Tampa, FL 33618-2808

Tampa Bay Skeptics, as a Special Interest Group of CFI Tampa Bay, has had the good fortune for the past six years of being able to claim a portion of the Bridgeport Center suite as its own and hold its quarterly meeting there. However, beginning with our summer meeting in June, we will most likely resume convening in libraries, as was our standard practice prior to the summer of 2004.

As always, the venue of each upcoming TBS meeting will be announced in *TBS Report* and on our home web page.

Visit TBS's Website

www.tampabayskeptics.org

If for no other reasons, check out the web versions of our *TBS Report* articles for their related links and for the occasional graphics not present in our printed newsletters due to space constraints.

And send us your **e-mail address** if you would like to be added to our **TBS Update Service**.

TBS and James Randi "Psychic" Challenges

Tampa Bay Skeptics has a standing "\$1,000 Challenge" for scientific proof of any paranormal phenomenon.

The James Randi Educational Foundation will award its fully secured \$1,000,000 jackpot to the first person able to successfully demonstrate paranormal power for Randi.

These monetary rewards, and a place in history, await the first successful candidates. All UFOlogists, psychics, astrologers, dowsers, and the like are encouraged to come forward and offer your proof. See the "\$\$\$ Challenges" page on the TBS website or contact us for more details.

Center For Inquiry Tampa Bay

As the opening paragraph of its website explains, Center for Inquiry Tampa Bay (of which Tampa Bay Skeptics is a Special Interest Group) offers an opportunity to put your principles into practice by joining other reasoning people in working for positive change in society. CFI Tampa Bay sponsors social events for freethinkers as well as intellectual programming, and assists with campus outreach.

One ongoing event, the lecture series on the third Saturday of each month at 11:00 a.m., often covers topics that may be of particular interest to TBS members.

For more information on upcoming CFI Tampa Bay events, visit their website (www.CenterForInquiry.net/Tampa) or contact them by mail (5201 W. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 124, Tampa, FL 33609), e-mail (Tampa@CenterForInquiry.net), phone (813-849-7571), or fax (813-849-7572).



c/o Center For Inquiry Tampa Bay
 5201 W. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 124
 Tampa, FL 33609



A Special Interest Group of the



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