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Noreen Renier Update

By [Gary P. Posner](#)

[When last we convened](#) on the subject of Noreen Renier, our famed former Floridian with forensic foreknowledge (via "psychic" power) had filed an appeal with the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in hopes of being awarded \$30,000 from her arch-rival, John Merrell.

We noted in our Fall 2011 coverage that two prior courts had ruled against Renier in this quest. But the appeals court, after fielding written briefs from both parties, has scheduled oral arguments for March 21.

In the meantime, Renier has been quite busy on a promotional book tour, including an appearance at the University of Arkansas' Clinton School of Public Service on February 9. The video of that 45-minute lecture, largely her standard, and very entertaining, stump speech, in which she recounts her "psychic" career from novice to newsmaking, can be viewed [here](#).



One of the highlights, as always, is her version of the FBI-related "missing airplane" case (discussed extensively in our [Spring 2010 issue](#) and in [my *Psychic Sleuths* chapter](#) about Renier. Though one assumes that she must know that much of her storytelling is contrary to fact, she continues to claim that the plane finally was found in the snowy woods by locals looking where the search planes, directed to coordinates provided by Renier, had been circling overhead the day before. In reality, the father-daughter duo who discovered the wreckage knew nothing of any search planes, and had embarked in a direction based upon news accounts quoting witnesses who had heard the crash days earlier.

Renier also, as always, claims to have accurately psychically seen "the two men in the front seat [of the wrecked plane], their necks broken." The front passenger seat had actually been occupied by a woman, whose severed head was found on the wing. Further (as always):

And then, as I'm looking, someone is picking up something, walking several feet, and placing it under a tree. When they found the airplane . . . there was a headless woman sitting under a tree like someone had carried her there.

In actuality, the woman's torso was still in her seat, and the medical examiner determined that all four passengers had "died immediately" upon impact.

A bit later, while telling an enchanting story about a black family's home being haunted by a poltergeist, Renier says that a police detective observed items inexplicably flying across a room, and that when he picked up the telephone, the spirit voice said to him, "You're too stupid to solve this crime. Get your white ass out of this house!" Even granting the possibility of poltergeists, it seems infinitely more likely that such words would emanate from the mouth of a mischievous human.

During the Q&A session following her address at the Clinton School, the final question from the audience was, "Do you see [in the next few years] the scientific community embracing the psychic community and working together publicly more, and having it be more accepted?" Renier's rodentially remarkable response:

That would be on my wish list . . . but scientists . . . stay in a very safe zone, unfortunately. They used to call me up . . . to heal a rat. I don't want to heal a rat! There's no way you're going to get my energy wanting to heal that animal! Give me a real person! They've done some of that. It's slow; it's baby steps. We'll get there, but I don't think it's anytime soon, unfortunately.

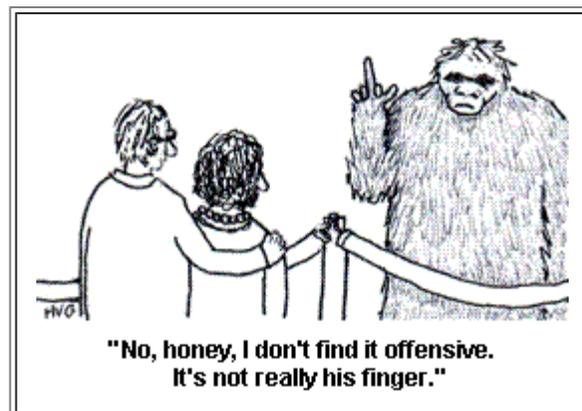
Renier's rat-healing recollection is almost certainly a confabulation of a case [discussed \(with accompanying photos\)](#) in my *Psychic Sleuths* chapter, in which, while holding a bone allegedly sent to her by the police (to divine the identity of a decomposed body), Renier's initial "psychic" vision was of a rat rather than the person whose hand the bone had come from. Given the credibility concerns regarding such "psychic" anecdotes, it's no wonder that acceptance comes in "baby steps."

Randi Documentary Slated for 2013

A documentary on the life of James Randi is currently in production and is expected to be completed sometime next year. Titled *An Honest Liar*, the film, according to [its Website](#), "profiles the life of famed magician turned professional skeptic James "The Amazing" Randi as he embarks on a series of public crusades to expose the world's beloved psychics, mentalists, preachers, and faith healers with religious fervor. Along the way, the film will show how easily our perceptions can be fooled -- by magicians, con artists, and even documentaries."

More information about the project, as well as a viewable six-minute trailer, is available on the Website, which also announces that donations to help finance the film would be gratefully accepted.

Snippets



For more than half a century, a mummified finger has made the Royal College of Surgeons Museum in London its home. Thought to be that of the legendary Yeti, an American explorer snatched the finger from a Nepalese monastery and then, I kid you not, "smuggled [it] out of India with the help of Hollywood actor James Stewart, who hid the artefact [*sic*] in his wife's lingerie case" (how abominable!). A BBC documentary team was permitted to obtain a DNA sample from the appendage, which only recently was rediscovered during cataloging, and had it tested by experts at the Edinburgh Zoo. Alas, according to Dr. Rob Ogden of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, the DNA was determined to be entirely "human" (how non-Abominable!).

(*BBC News* online, December 27)

Now for a primer on how to get terminated from your job as a 24-year police-force veteran. First, obtain some birdseed, which can, through its magical powers, be useful in casting a Santeria spell over your nemesis. Next, recruit a janitor to sprinkle said seed in the office of your nemesis, in this case, the North Miami Beach city manager. Step 3, have the janitor instead spill the seeds, er, beans, to the city manager. Then have the city manager accuse you of conduct unbecoming an officer. This strategy worked perfectly for Officer Edith Torres, who had been incensed by City Manager Lyndon Bonner's plan to eliminate some police jobs, and by these means guaranteed that hers would be one of those eliminated.

(*Miami Herald*, online, December 5)

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