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THE VANISHING HITCHHIKER IN SOUTH AFRICA: Additional Notes

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FN 13 (March 1989) reprinted an article by David Barritt (1987) that presented a complex of beliefs and alleged experiences concerning a Vanishing Hitchhiker who since 1973 has appeared near the South African town of Uniondale. For convenience's sake, we can distinguish five stories in this complex:

- A: A girl died in a motor-accident.
- B: A couple stopping by chance on the place of accident around midnight saw the transparent, white-dressed ghost of a girl.
- C: A car driver gave a girl a lift but she vanished from the car. D: A motorbike rider gave a girl a lift but suddenly only his spare helmet which the girl had used was clipped to the luggage rack.
- E: A university scientist set the girl's spirit at rest. In March 1981, I did not know about the existence of such stories in South Africa. Then I sat in front of some huts of the so-called "retirement home" of Okombahe in Damaraland, formerly called reservation, in Namibia. One of the old Dama women sang a song in which the word "ghost" appeared. I used this to lead the conversation to legends and asked whether there were ghosts around. "Many!" another woman remarked, and a third one told how at night she met a supernatural dog. Then a woman of about 35 years said:

I once heard this. But I do not know whether it is true. There was, this was now in Swakop(mund), between Swakop(mund) and Walvis (bay) it was, it did happen. Had come a white woman from Europe, so I think she had come, so as Sister now had come from Germany. [She took me for a mission nurse, for what other white woman would walk around Okombahe? --SSJ] And so she now travelled around the places, looked. And then between Walvis and Swakop she, they had a car accident, and the woman was dead on the spot. So. And this white woman appeared as a ghost. Just between Walvis and Swakop. When the cars passed then she stood there as a human being and then she stopped,-- and then you stop the car and then the [driver] will open the door for her and then she will climb in, there she now will sit just like a human being and then she will perhaps beat you or do whatever, and suddenly she is gone. So did she do. On the road.

She stands there and asks for a lift or how is it?

Yes, she came just as a human being and asked for a lift in order to get along, to Walvis or to Swakop. And when you did stop for her, then she was sometimes [corrects self] then she was suddenly gone. [My translation of the Afrikaans recording --SSJ.]

I was surprised. The Vanishing Hitchhiker in Okombahe and in a form definitely shaped by unbelief! Two weeks later, in the south of Namibia, I met a teacher from Cape Town, about 35 years old, engaged in teachers' training. He asked about my experiences in Damaraland. I told that I even met the Vanishing Hitchhiker there. As he did not know what I meant, I briefly told the story. Then followed the typical answer so familiar to students of contemporary legend: "But not this happened in the Eastern Cape Province!" I recorded his (English) report:

I can't say what year it was, I think it was, now, I must be very careful on the year. I think it was 1973 or 1974. When this youngster was on a motorbike and was travelling through to Uniondale. And as he went through this particular pass--I am not sure which pass it was--he saw this young lady walking. She was dressed in black. She had black slacks and a black jersey. And she was hitchhiking. So he stopped. And he said to her: 'Well, look, I'm on my way to Uniondale now and I'm going to give you a lift.' Now, you know, the safety regulations in South Africa state that if you give anybody a lift on a motorcycle, that person must wear a crash helmet. So, when he stopped, he told the girl: 'Well, look, it's a safety precaution, so it is for you to put on the crash helmet.' And he helped her on with it. She was on the pillion, is that what you call it, the seat on the back. And he told her: Well, she just must hold fast, you see. And then he started while he moved off.

And he went along,--this was reported in the papers really, this is what I read in the news-papers!--And as he moved along, somewhere on the line he sensed that there was nobody clasping him. And he happened to look around and lo and behold! she was gone. Then he thought: Well, it is a very bumpy road that at one stage or another she must have fallen off. So he turned around. He went back. Right back to the spot where he first found her. And as he stood there, completely puzzled by all this, you know what he saw? He saw his crash helmet on the pillion, tied up as it was before. He was so shocked that he left immediately and he went through to Uniondale. You know, when he came into the police station he was in such a state that it took him about half an hour to recover from this shocking ordeal of his, and when he told the police about this, the police decided to investigate. And when

they went by car, they took a police truck, you know, a police van, and they went right back to the spot where he said he picked her up and they checked there. Well, nothing happened.

And then subsequent to that, the same thing happened. Now, there are two occasions that I recall very, very distinctly. One was, in which a truck driver gave the same girl a lift. And he said, he was driving along and she was seated, I think, fairly near to him. But he noticed that she was very cold. And this puzzled him, too, you know. And as he drove along, I think something about the atmosphere alarmed him. He became [?], he got a whiff of the super-natural, you see [laughing]. And he looked at her, and while he looked at her she was gone! And then he--I don't know what he did. I think he went to the police station, too [laughing] or so and he told the people about it and it took him quite a time to recover actually.

And then the very last incident is the incident that you just mentioned there. But this was in the paper! In the Cape Argus. In actual fact, people were warned not to give ghosts lifts. In Cape Town! Really. That the people of Uniondale became so accustomed to this particular incident that when people are coming there in a state of shock then you know it is that ghost who. And they tell them: 'Don't even bother to explain! We know you gave a girl a lift!' They described the girl, and they discovered that this girl had died in an accident some time ago.

But the other occasion was an occasion in which a young man, too, gave this girl a lift, well, of course, he liked to pick up pretty girls along the way specially at night. And she direct him, she directed him now this particular occasion of course, directed him to her home in Godwood. And he gives her a lift right up to this address, and when he stops there, she says to him: 'Well, look, let me just check up to see if my people are there! But don't leave here, they might be out, you see.' Then he'd wait and wait, and he went and he'd get impatient. And he'd go and knock at the door and ask her parents now: 'Excuse me, but did so and so come here?' Particular girl, this is her name, gives a description of the girl. And they also became so used to it. They said to him: 'No, she died about six years ago or so. And don't take any notice of that!'

But this appeared in the newspapers! Now I mean, I think, lately there were not many of these incidents. No reports of these incidents. But I think it was 1973 and 1974, when there were a lot of these reports in the Argus and in the Times. In actual fact, I am sure you can verify by going to the Cape Times or the Argus and asking them, you know. Just to validate this officially. [laughing]. Whether they ever received such reports that occurred at that time were such that it had become customary for people to accept hitchhiking ghosts.

Mr. M's first two versions correspond to Barritt's story types D and C while the third one somewhat deviates from C because the stress is laid on the explanation by the dead girl's parents. I shall call this form CX.

I followed Mr. M's advice and asked South African newspapers for information. In 1983, the Cape Times kindly sent me 4 photocopies of their archive clippings under the heading of "spirits." Three relate to our topic:

8 May 1976: "Hitch-hiking ghost had last laugh" (= D)

10 May 1976: "WP (Western Province) has its own ghosts-of-the-road" (= CX)

4 April 1978: "Ghost rider in the night" (= D)
Compared to Barritt's as well as M's reports the Cape Times representations are more condensed and contain some underlying irony. For example, in story C, after the hitchhiker has vanished from Anthony le Grange's car, the Cape Times reports:

Taking note of the icy shivers running down his spinal column Mr Le Grange [sic] raced for the Uniondale police station, where he poured out his story to an understanding Constable Potgieter. It is believed that Constable Potgieter also felt a few shivers, but did not let on. [Compare Barritt's version in FN 13:3.]

Then the book of artist Penny Miller, Myths and Legends of Southern Africa came to hand. She reprints stories about "The Spectral Hitchhiker" opposite a lovely full-page picture of the ghost girl hitching at the roadside. She reprints versions of A, C, and D, adding a new one:

A girl hitchhiker is also supposed to haunt the verges of Du Toit's Kloof, but she is not as well authenticated as Uniondale's lady--for no one who meets her lives to tell the tale: It is said that whoever takes her in their car is always involved in a fatal accident (1979:89).

I asked Mrs. Miller for her sources, and she informed me "that the report of the motor-bike incident was fully reported in the 'Cape Times' and I actually cut out the article (fully illustrated with the photographs of the young man in question with his motor-bike, also the café mentioned) . . . Apparently the young lady tried to flag down a motor-bike rider shortly after this incident, but the man in question also having read the report made sure he did not stop" (1983).

In his unpublished Ph.D. thesis, P. W. Grobbelaar summarizes various hitchhiker stories (1981:819-23). He mentions "about a dozen cases" of a ghost soldier hitching at the roadside between Koringberg and Saldanha and gives four of them in more detail. Furthermore he offers variants of A, C, CX, D, and an additional one of C in which the character of the ghost is remarkably similar to that described by my Okombahe informant. In Grobbelaar's version, a Mr. A. J. Coetzee (age 20) was driving on the Uniondale road on 4 April 1980, when he suddenly felt embraced by a girl. Alarmed, he accelerated to about 130 km/h, when his passenger beat him a few times so that his head jerked, but then she suddenly disappeared. Another report states that the hitchhiker of Uniondale isn't a girl at all but an old coloured man covered with turkey feathers who is trying to avenge the death of his son.

Grobbelaar's sources were either collections of the University Department (CX and stories about the ghost soldier) or newspapers (C = Die Burger [8 May 1976]; D = Rapport [9 April 1978] and Die Burger [7 April 1978]; "the aggressive ghost" = Die Burger [10 April 1980]). Obviously the stories were spread both by the English and the Afrikaans press.

What I have found is probably only the top of the iceberg. It can be assumed that more papers printed these thrilling stories and certainly many more people told them "to a friend." Michael Goss's discussion of real-life hitchhiker encounters (1984), which arrived at the end of my research, includes a chapter on South African material. This, however, is based on an earlier article by David Barritt (1980) and Cynthia Hind's article in Fate Magazine (1979), which is also based on South African newspaper reports. These sources neither add to nor contradict the main points discussed so

far. Still, the tale must have been very popular around 1976-1980. Variations sprang up: The ghost vanished from a car, a truck, a motor-bike; the sound she made was a repetition of her death cry; it was laughter. And a number of new texts were added to the core stories to satisfy a general thirst for knowledge or to explain what emotionally upset masses of people. The reports were embellished with more details: the headphones of the motor-bike rider hindered him from properly understanding the girl's speech; the headphones he lent her suddenly were found firmly plugged into his own ear.

The stories are a striking example of the importance of the press in connection with contemporary legends. The South African press played its role in the game of legend-telling perfectly. It transformed the legend into an official report. Not a friend of a friend experienced the story but the person interviewed. These "interviews" were strengthened by alleged police statements again and again, making the story even more official. The press did not adapt the core story to local places and persons but consistently connected it to Uniondale. Marie Roux was the ghost girl, Anthony La Grange, the driver of the car, Dawie van Jaarsveld, the motor-bike rider, and Easter, the time of the apparition. Thus a nationwide Uniondale legend was formed by the press, and people nationwide were left expecting the ghost girl to hitchhike at the same spot next Easter. The effect on readers can best be seen in Mr. M's report. His repeated references to the newspapers as sources of information and testimony for the story's truth reveal how even a well-educated person was convinced of its truth because it had been printed. He had been so impressed by the news reports that several years later he was still able to retell the events in detail. The three stories told by him show how deeply involved he still felt.

In contrast to these narrations stands the short description of the Namibian ghost hitchhiker by the Dame women. Though told in surroundings where "there are many ghosts," the narrator states right away that she doubts the truth of the story. This doubt can be taken as the red line of her representation. It is stamped on form and style. No hair-raising particular event is told; instead it is information that "it is said" that sometimes the ghost appears and acts like this. The narrator does not feel involved at all.

The variants of the Vanishing Hitchhiker in southern Africa confirm what has been observed about contemporary legends in other countries and continents. The press plays a major role in distributing and confirming the alleged truth of the stories. And the belief in contemporary legends cuts through social and educational groups; it is restricted neither to specific ethnic/economic groups nor to localities.

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MODERN LEGENDS IN THE BELGIAN ORAL TRADITION: A Report

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[This is a condensed version of an essay that will appear in full in Fabula --Ed.]

Because of changed circumstances, people have gradually altered, either consciously or unconsciously, their way of living, thinking, speaking, moving, eating, etc. Whoever visits folklore museums, browses through family albums, or talks to older people about the past, learns about these various processes of change. Also much has changed on the level of communication. In the old days, people used to gather to tell narratives or listen to gifted storytellers, who could produce stories of varying length about real or invented figures and events. This phenomenon has now virtually disappeared.

But we are no longer panic-stricken when we see that traditional narratives disappear. We now know that oral narrative is for all times, and in fact humans cannot live without stories. However, narratives and their contexts change constantly. Opposed to the linear, more episodic narrative that deals with kings and princes, dwarfs and elves, helpful animals and wicked witches, werewolves and revenants, sunken castles and haunted houses, now there is the short tale, which seems to be told in a hurry.

The contents of these ephemeral stories no longer point to a fairy-like spot or a mysterious and distant past. On the contrary, they refer to every possible aspect of the present age. Since these narratives are so up-to-date and realistic, they may often compete with the media. They either provide journalists with source material, or the imagination of storytellers is itself inspired by wildly sensational news stories, which hardly limit themselves to the truth. In either case, these stories present themselves as trustworthy. Such narratives have been called "urban" or "belief legends," but since they are inspired by current events, it seems more appropriate to call them modern legends (Buchan 1978; Bausinger 1975).

After attending the first Sheffield conference on contemporary legends in 1982 (reported in Fabula 24 (1983):110-11), we started collecting this modern legend material in a more or less systematic manner at Leuven University. As a first step, we drew the attention of our students to this genre.

We discussed some concrete examples, and stimulated them to note down similar ones. To make this material known outside the lecture room as well, we published an extensive review of Jan Brunvand's Vanishing Hitchhiker in De Brabantse Folklore (1984). At the end of this review, we appealed to

readers to write or phone in similar material. Although the direct result of this appeal was nil, the article had a positive result all the same. On Sunday, 14 October 1982, we were able to talk for two hours on Marc Van Poeke's popular radio program *Kramiek*. The subject was folklore in general and contemporary legends in particular, and the program also included telephone calls from listeners. The response was satisfactory, and afterwards there was a host of written reactions.

In the meantime, students remained productive. Within six years, 161 students provided over 450 legends, while another 26 texts came from a dozen correspondents. Most of the stories were written down by the persons concerned, while others were recorded in shorthand, almost always mentioning the source and the time and place in which they were heard. Apart from handwritten material, we also have scores of messages from newspapers and periodicals. The provisional total is now more than 500 legends, representing about 50 different types.

Compared with what exists abroad, the Leuven harvest still seems rather poor in quantity. We reach about 50 students each year, which leads to 300 potential informants in six years, but so far only 53% have contributed material. Out of 161 students, 61 (37.8%) knew only one legend. The average number of modern legends per student is therefore relatively low (2.7). Only four students knew ten or more legends.

We are aware that we could have collected more material if we had given our students a subject index or a register of types. We have deliberately avoided this, and therefore are certain that the stories collected belong to the students' active repertoires. In order not to influence the narrative process in any way, we have not yet published any legends from our collection. In 1990, we hope to publish our material in book form. We take it for granted that this publication will stimulate the retelling of legends included in the volume and also the narrating of variants and new stories.

Important sources include secondary schools (both teachers and pupils), the youth movement, the family circle, and resident students. But printed sources like the newspaper, books for adolescents, and even school texts influence the popularity of the genre. The English textbook *Say Your Say* (1976), for instance, reprints a version of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker," reprinted from an anthology of American folk tales and narratives. Belgian newspapers are also particularly interested in foreign rumors.

Why then such a small harvest? When asked, students seemed not to find the subject very exciting. They have heard about some of the events described in legends, but since they have never doubted their truth, they have always taken them for granted. In addition, most of the stories seem to have lost their immediate impact; they were told years ago at school or in the youth movement. It is possible, therefore, that our 21- or 22-year-old students are past the age for this kind of narrative, which may circulate more actively between the ages of 16 and 18. Further research will need to test this hypothesis.

Ultimately, the way in which these stories are told seems also to play a role. Experience teaches us that they are easily schematized, so that salient details tend to disappear in memory. The skeleton that remains is caught up in such a rapid flow of communication that the legend itself barely clings to the memory. Hence many informants' reaction: "We did hear something of the kind, but didn't pay much attention to it."

The narrative quality of the material collected obviously varies. A number of texts are mere announcements, hardly deserving the label of modern legend (or even "story")

because they have no real point. The following is one example:

Hitler might still be alive in a Latin-American country. The body that was found in a bunker was that of a double chosen by Hitler himself. His wife's body, though, was real.

Some communications look like tales reduced simply to a taboo. Here are two examples:

Never put your handbag at your feet in a cinema. Your neighbor might take it, hand it on to the corner, and they will take it outside straightaway.

Watch out for people who ask you to try a glove on. A narcotic injection needle might be hidden in it.

These examples suggest something abnormal or horrifying. They do not show exactly what is wrong; one can find out only by comparing parallel variants. The first text refers to a popular legend of which we have six versions. One goes as follows:

I heard this story from my father, who picked it up at the police station in Duerne-Zuid. It was about an older woman who went shopping in Antwerp and made use of the public toilets. She put her handbag on the floor, and it was grabbed from under the door. Finally she went back home, where she received a telephone call from a man who pretended that his wife was a kleptomaniac. He said he would like to return the handbag to her. An appointment was made in a pub for the stolen property to be restored to the owner. However, the man failed to show up, and when she returned back home, she found the house stripped empty.

Other versions put the place where the handbag was stolen at a warehouse or restaurant.

The second text refers to a widespread legend about how innocent women are drugged and forced into prostitution. Here is one fuller text:

My parents told me the following story. They have heard it from friends, who in their turn have heard it from friends... In other words, it was spread about in the sixties. It all happened in the SANDAM shop for handbags, glove, etc., at the corner of Leuvensestraat and Vissenstraat in Tienen. (About 15 km. from Leuven --ST.) Some gloves there would have a needle drenched in sedatives attached to them. When you tried them on, a prick from such a needle would be sufficient to make you feel sick and nauseous. A helpful shop assistant would then help you and take you to some private room. The girls were then taken away to be sold as female slaves or prostitutes.

The tone of modern legend is far from optimistic: accidents, adversity, unfortunate coincidences and the like dominate. But in modern legends, people are not simply toys of strange, uncontrollable forces from another world; on the contrary, they may be victims of their own negative actions. Or else, people may be victims of others' actions. Modern legend makes it quite clear that human beings cannot control the course of their own lives. There is no room for words of comfort, good omens, or protecting hands--motifs that do occur regularly in traditional legends, which may offer

religious or other acceptable solutions. In contemporary Belgian legends such solutions are totally absent; there are only three shades of meaning, bad, worse, and worst. These take the concrete forms of bad luck, accidents, and catastrophes. Several legends rely on such negative chains of events.

At a musical performance in the Muntscouwburg (Mint Theatre) in Brussels, a lady and a gentleman were moving to their seats, and just as the gentleman sat down, his wife says, "Hugo, look, your zipper is still open." The man promptly does what he can to close it, but at precisely the same moment a lady barges in, right in front of him, dressed in a beautiful long lace dress. Her dress gets caught in the zipper. She turns around to see what is wrong. The gentleman tries to get the dress out of the zipper again or tries to open his fly, but cannot. In order not to tear the dress, the man and woman decide to leave the room together. First they make another try in the corridor, but because the task seems so arduous, they move on to the restrooms. They go into the ladies' together. There they are caught by the police and are fined for an act of indecency. (Cf. Brunvand 1981:139.)

A farmer wants to go to his field with his combine harvester. The children want to go with him, but are not allowed to. They hide in the harvester. The farmer unwittingly starts the machine, and the children emerge in bits and pieces. The farmer runs back home and asks his wife to come and have a look at what has happened in the field. When his wife keeps asking what is the matter, he only answers that she must go to the field. While she is gone, the man puts a bullet through his head. The woman discovers the mutilated bodies of her children. Then she arrives back at the farm to get help and finds her husband's body.

Many legends collected by Brunvand are also very popular in Belgium:

- "The Runaway Grandmother" (1981:112)--12 variants
- "The Severed Fingers" (1984:34)--38 variants
- "The \$50 Porsche" (1981:22)--12 variants
- "The Spider in the Yucca" (1986:83) --10 variants
- "Foreign Matter in Foreign Food" (1984:118)--53 variants
- "The Choking Doberman" (1984:3)--11 variants
- "The Hippie Baby-sitter" [cooked baby] (1981:65) --23 variants
- "The Attempted Abduction" [kidnapping of young women in fitting-rooms] 1981:184, 1984:78, 1989:206)--31 variants
- "Thefts of Food" (1989:178)--12 variants

Overall, almost 50% of our modern legends deal with deception (2 variants), theft and burglary (113 vars.), violence and destruction (38 vars.), and death or murder (80 vars.) In addition, many contain racist allusions such as "boutiques and restaurants run by foreigners are dangerous." Going on holiday, a habit deeply ingrained in modern society, involves all sorts of risks. "The Runaway Grandmother," "The Wife Left Behind" (1981:132, 1989:126), "The Mexican Pet" (1986:21), "The Spider in the Yucca," "The Strange Inflammation of the Skin" and other stories illustrate this danger. Moreover, modern items such as cars, hospitals,

warehouses, underground parking lots, and restaurants are the sites of the genre; mysterious hitchhikers, aggressive punks, drug-addicted baby-sitter are its main actors.

Yet it would be wrong to conclude that modern legends give a purely negative view of reality. Occasionally the genre also has its sense of humor, or else the point of the story stimulates laughter. True, this kind of story represents only 5% of the Leuven material, but one example may be mentioned.

A man invites his friend to go out fishing at sea. At first the friend refuses, but when the man insists, he comes along after all. Once at sea he becomes seasick, and when he vomits, his set of false teeth falls into the sea. His friend feels guilty and ties his own set of teeth onto his fishing line. He hauls them in and shows the other the set, telling him that perhaps it is his. The friend looks at it, says with disappointment that it is not, and throws the set back into the sea. (Cf. Brunvand 1986:87)

Legends about student examinations likewise belong to this jocular group. Here is one example.

A student sees that he will not be prepared for the next exam. One hour before the test, he calls his professor and says that his car has broken down and so he cannot arrive on time. The professor suggests postponing the exam an hour. The student replies that this is impossible, as the engine trouble is too serious. He cannot get there that fast, so he asks whether he could be examined over the telephone. The professor agrees. The student does an excellent exam--with his lecture notes open in front of him.

For completeness' sake, the Leuven material also contains some legends with semi-traditional content: meetings with strange figures or noises that cannot be identified. Here are examples of each:

Every night, an old woman wanders through a house in Wodecq [a village in the province of Hainaut, where Flemish children in youth movements spend a week or more every year during their summer holidays --ST]. She is searching for her childhood. She lived in the area of the lodge, and went to school there. As an orphan, she was abandoned by everyone. When people go to bed, they have a reasonable chance of meeting the old woman while she roams through the house. There is no need to be frightened. She will not do you any harm, but merely stops you to have a chat. The only thing you can do is give her a sweet. Then she will continue her journey.

I used to live in a room on the intermediate floor in Kortrijk. Whenever the girl in the room above me was gone, I heard her bed and wardrobe creaking. It seemed that a long time ago a female student had died there.

Modern legends are much more than oral pastime. They are a kind of mirror of daily life. Perhaps, like jokes (see Richmond 1983:xviii), they are alarm signals triggered by what has gone wrong in our societies. Therefore, they deserve special attention from folklorists and scholars of folk narrative.

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THE US-EBE "SECRET TREATY":
FOLKLORISTS SHOULD BE APPALLED

Bill Ellis

Since 1950, stories have circulated about "secret" contacts between the US government and extraterrestrials. In particular, the US Air Force was said to have recovered the remains of a crashed UFO in New Mexico and stored them under tight security in a "secret room" at Wright-Patterson AFB near Dayton, OH. The rumor, apparently first given currency by columnist Frank Scully, reappeared several times during the 1960s and even achieved notoriety in 1974 when UPI picked up and distributed a version of the rumor. The major UFO investigating networks, however, were unable to verify any part of the story (Spencer 1976:134-36).

Lately, the narrative has reappeared. Bolstered with a series of alleged "secret documents," the rumor now holds that the US government recovered several UFOs, including a number of living "extra-terrestrial biological entities" or EBEs. After being held in seclusion, the revised account holds, the EBEs agreed to make a deal with the US military, trading their advanced technology for the right to abduct and conduct biological experiments on a certain number of humans. The EBEs, however, feed on human blood, and the experiments involve implanting mind-control devices in ordinary citizens' brains. Government officials felt it acceptable to trade the blood and the minds of their people for the military secrets they would so gain.

A number of UFOlogists have publicized documents that claim to document this secret involvement. One such, labeled "Operation Majestic-12," claims to brief President-elect Eisenhower on the status of research into two crashed UFOs. The document, anonymously mailed to a TV producer, was made public in December 1984. Other researchers claimed to have been shown even more damaging documents at about the same time. Linda Moulton Howe, a documentary journalist, claimed that in April 1983 she had been shown another presidential briefing paper that described four crashed saucers along with direct contact with the EBEs (1989:149-52).

Most dramatically, in December 1989, William Cooper claimed to have seen a "Grudge/Blue Book Report No. 13." This secret government document gave details about a variety of US-alien projects, including the secret treaty, experimental flights of alien craft, and six underground alien bases in the American West. It also claimed that the dominant alien species "must have human blood and other human biological substances to survive," though they could, if required, "subsist on other animal fluids" (Howe 1989:188-89).

Many UFO researchers immediately recognized this scenario as folklore-in-the-making; Jerome Clark, editor of the respected International UFO Reporter, publicly discounted the rumors as "nutty ideas" (1989:3). Still, some UFO researchers took it quite seriously. One, John Lear, circulated a petition calling for the impeachment of President Bush (Muyghe 1989:85; Rogerson 1989:2). Howe published a huge, lavishly produced compilation of clippings, "secret" documents, and photos of mutilated cattle (1989). Even Whitley Strieber was impressed enough by the documents to include a mention of them in his second volume of abduction experiences (1989:115-17) and then used them as the basis of his first post-Communion novel, Majestic.

Skeptical researchers were quick to recognize the outlines of older anti-semitic rumors (Clark 1989:22, Rogerson 1989:11). Many of the scenario's "secret conspiracy" elements suggest that it is derived from traditions about Jewish-dominated groups plotting to take over the world. The more extreme UFO groups in fact often mention such plots by "International Bankers," "the Bilderburgers," or (perhaps for anti-Catholics) "the Club of Rome." Operating out of Switzerland, they secretly control world economy and, "Using computer Models and Scenarios, they keep the world in a state of fear and confusion" ("Trap Groups" 1989:25). Such beliefs are part of a larger corpus of sinister conspiracy lore featuring ethnic goons out to drink "our" blood or kill "our" babies (Campion-Vincent 1989). Cooper was even shown USAF photographs of EBEs with grotesque hooked noses.



Phillips Stevens, Jr., surveying anti-ethnic "satanic" rumors, said, "Folklorists ought to be outraged" (1989:15). Yes, but at whom? We might blame the more extreme ufologists for being willing to entertain such an outrageous scenario. But the truly appalling story is how it actually came into the hands of the ufologists. According to William L. Moore, one of the recipients of "secret data," much of the material was deliberately fabricated by a group of US Air Force officers, who passed the authentic-looking documents to UFO researchers with a reputation for credulity.

One such, an amateur scientist named Paul Bennewitz, had provoked especial ire by concocting devices for intercepting extra-low frequency (ELF) electromagnetic waves, which he believed were the key to alien brain implants. Unfortunate-

ly, he carried out his experiments close by the Kirtland USAF base in Albuquerque, where ELF waves were actually being tested as part of our SDI ("Star Wars") program. As part of a program to divert his attention from real waves, Air Force officials evidently contacted him and promised to reveal "the secret," planning to feed him absurd claims so that they could eventually discredit him as a kook (Stacy 1989:9).

But the USAF did not limit their "secrets" to Bennewitz. Similar meetings took place with other researchers, some of whom were shown photographs of aliens and mutilated human beings. The officers also told the researchers that movie footage of landing UFOs and aliens was forthcoming. Linda Moulton Howe, under contract with the TV network Home Box Office to produce a special on UFOs, lost her job when the "government" footage could not be produced. Bennewitz, frantic about the dangers aliens posed for mankind, suffered a mental collapse. (Stacy 1989:10).

The documents show clearly that the final aim was to ridicule and discredit UFOlogists. The codeword "Majic" (allegedly short for "Majestic") is a misspelling of "Magic," which is what all the pseudo-science details in the document amount to. Another claims that the correct title for the EBEs is really "alien life form" or "ALF" (Howe 1989:187). This name happens to be the same as the title character on a popular TV comedy about a bumbling alien from the planet Melmac. And one of the later "leaks" claimed that MJ-12 was US Government "misinformation ploy to delay and confuse the release of information should anyone get close to the truth. . . . It was designed . . . to result in a fruitless search for material which did not exist" (Howe 1989:298).

Some UFOlogists are convinced that the documents were designed to divert those who were getting close to more dangerous secrets. I doubt it, given the near total incompetence shown by military and executive officials in recent authentic conspiracies like Nixon's Watergate burglary and the Oliver North Iran-Contra funding scheme. With boys like this in charge, how could real alien contact possibly be kept covered up? It is more likely that what we see here is messy fall-out from a prank perpetrated by bored military types.

Nevertheless, folklorists should be appalled to find such a scenario coming, even informally, from the USAF. It is one thing for ethnic stereotypes to appear in contemporary legends as a release for genuine social tensions. It is quite another for government agents, with all the warrant that their positions provide, to plant such stereotypes and set them circulating among communities, however marginal and small in size.

Since the early years of the discipline, folklorists have sometimes felt justified in hoaxing their informants, partially to tease material out of them, partially to "educate" them out of their "delusions." Hence Newbell Niles Puckett felt justified in laughing at Afro-American folk beliefs, for "this ridicule is destined to be a most potent factor in forcing the Negro to relinquish them more quickly than he ordinarily would" (1926:582). He admitted to handing informants his home-made "jacks" and mojo charms to impress them (279-80, 302). But the worst consequence of Puckett's "conjuring" was that one of his informant's enemies was so impressed that he "left the place running." Leon Festinger's team raised more troubling ethical questions when they "joined" a group of apocalyptic UFO enthusiasts, as reported in *When Prophecy Fails* (1956). One gained entry by claiming to have picked up the Vanishing Hitchhiker, a story that then became part of the group's rationale for being and helped recruit new "believers." Yet these field-workers were at least aware of what they were doing and published their

methods and the results they obtained.

But neither Puckett nor Festinger fabricated legend material to damage informants or to encourage racist ideas. By contrast, the USAF officers acted more like the New Orleans park officials, who, in a case recently studied by Ethelyn Orso, set a ghost story adrift hoping to scare blacks out of a recently integrated park. American officials, regrettably, have a long and ugly tradition of intimidating minorities by using their folklore against them. Gladys-Marie Frye (1975) has documented the Ku Klux Klan's use of local ghost stories to "scare niggers" into submission. More recently, the American General Edward G. Lansdale gained some renown for his ability to use folklore as "psychological warfare" against Filipino and Vietnamese guerillas. Lansdale admitted to pacifying one area by asking a soothsayer to spread rumors about a vampire, then ordering his men to snatch one of the enemy, pierce his neck, and drain out his blood. The guerillas left the area at once (Fish 1989:396).

True, the US military's actions against ufologists have not been so gross. But by polarizing the situation, they have made it difficult for serious researchers to return to the genuinely puzzling issues: if not EBE's, then what are the dynamics that cause the surprisingly constant alien abduction experience among otherwise normal individuals? Hufford (1987) has suggested that in many areas, folk explanations, like it or not, explain puzzling supernormal experiences more logically and completely than "rational" explanations proposed by the academy. Bullard (1989) notes that this is especially true of alien abductions, where psychological and folkloristic theories inevitably beg questions and shuffle discordant data under the table.

Perhaps we ought to acknowledge that the folk have a right to believe, even if this implies a right to be wrong. Lauri Honko insists that supernatural spirits are, after all, empirical beings: "Although the investigator himself is unable to see the spirits, he must admit that his informant really saw them" (1964:10). We should be outraged when government officials make fools of UFO enthusiasts, no matter how "kooky" they are. Ultimately such ridicule harms both amateur and academic researchers, and also those who struggle with the disorienting experiences they know they have had.

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1989 AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY MEETING

The ISCLR Council met on 18 and 19 October, 1990, at the AFS meeting at Philadelphia. Present were Keith Cunningham, Bill Ellis, Mark Glazer, Sylvia Grider, W. F. H. Nicolaisen, and Paul Smith. Minutes from the 1 April meeting were approved, and a Treasurer's report, submitted in absentia by Sandy Hobbs, was read and accepted. As of 9 October, ISCLR had 83 paid members, 43 from the USA, 19 from the UK, 5 from Canada, 2 each from France and Israel, and one each from West Germany, Andorra, Australia, Holland, Belgium, Finland, Iceland, Morocco, Norway, and Sweden. In addition, two organizations had paid affiliation fees. ISCLR's finances showed income of £866 UK pounds sterling and expenses of £228.08 for a balance of £637.92.

To expedite finances and subscriptions, the Council agreed to maintain bank accounts in both the UK and the US. Vice President Mark Glazer and Treasurer Sandy Hobbs were authorized to open accounts in ISCLR's name respectively with the First National Bank of Texas and with the Cooperative Bank in Britain.

A general meeting for ISCLR members will be called during the Sheffield Contemporary Legend seminar in July 1990. The Council will also meet during this time. Tom Green and Sylvia Grider will investigate the possibility of holding the 1991 Contemporary Legend seminar again at Texas A&M.

A Nest of Vipers, the selected essays from the 1987 and 1988 Sheffield Seminars, will be offered first to Sheffield Academic Press (who have, as of 2/90, accepted it --Ed.). ISCLR will proceed with the planning of Contemporary Legend as an annual publication of 200-250 pages. This annual will consider essays given during the legend seminars, but will have an open submission policy. Paul Smith and Gillian Bennett were asked to serve as co-editors.

The AFS meeting also featured many interesting papers touching on contemporary legends and closely related topics. Following are shortened abstracts of papers that members may find interesting.

ALLISON, Randy (Texas A&M University) ROCK OF AGES: OLD MATERIAL FOR A NEW AGE. Discusses the New Age movement's belief in the spiritual and mystical healing powers of crystals and precious stones: Crystal Power.

BAKER, Ronald L. (Indiana State University) PEARL BRYAN

IN LEGEND. Comparison of local legends and ballads discussing the 1896 murder of Pearl Bryan.

BARD, Marjorie (University of California, Los Angeles) IDIONARRATING: A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE NATURE OF STORY-TELLING. Discussion of "self-to-self" (internalized) narrating as a natural response to any noteworthy experience.

BRADY, Erika (Southeast Missouri State University) STRANGE ALCHEMY: "REWRITING" THE GOLDEN BOUGH. Examination of popular fiction incorporating themes from Frazer's The Golden Bough. Works relying on Frazer are disturbing, but thematically integrative and affirmative, while works based on the occult are disordered.

BRUNVAND, Jan Harold (University of Utah) SOME NEWS FROM THE MISCELLANEOUS LEGEND FILE. Miscellaneous press clippings sent by readers of a syndicated newspaper column about urban legends suggest themes that may represent emergent legends.

CAMPION-VINCENT, Véronique (Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris) THE BABY-PARTS STORY: A NEW LATIN AMERICAN LEGEND. Case study of a rumor, beginning in Honduras and spreading through Europe, that rich American were buying up Latin-American children and then dismembering them as sources of organ transplants.

DAVIS, Anna A. (Texas A&M University) NARRATIVE REACTIONS TO BRUTAL MURDERS: A CASE STUDY. In 1987 two brutal murders took place in Huntsville, Texas. The way in which the community sought to make sense of them through the conduit of legend and rumor illustrates the power of narrative to contextualize otherwise meaningless events.

DEGH, Linda (Indiana University, Folklore Institute) TESTIMONY OF MIRACLES: LEGEND-TELLING IN AN AMERICAN FOLK CHURCH. Examination of a set of legends emergent from religious ritual performances within a particular performances within a particular Pentecostal congregation in Bloomington, Indiana.

DICKSON, Roland (California State University) BLACK BART. Investigation of legends surrounding California's most famous highwayman and the people who inspired them in real-life.

ELLIS, Bill (Pennsylvania State University, Hazleton) THE DEVIL-WORSHIPPERS AT THE PROM. Study of a rumor-panic that occurred in April 1987 at several high schools in north-eastern Pennsylvania, who believed that Satanists attending on prom night would commit ritual murder and/or suicide.

EVERTS, Dana (Museum of International Folk Art and the New Mexico Arts Division) "YES, SHE DID SCARE HIM.": ISSUES OF POWER IN ISTHMUS ZAPOTEC WOMEN'S FOLKLORE. The Isthmus Zapotec women of Southern Mexico, renowned for their high social status, articulate power issues through folklore, especially belief legends about witches and the local folk religious cult of La Mano Poderosa (The Powerful Hand), interpreted by Zapotecs as the hand of Mary.

FINE, Gary Alan (University of Minnesota) A GENERAL THEORY OF CONTEMPORARY LEGENDS. Folklorists should present comprehensive theories that explain the range of narrative forms that are classified under this rubric. They should address the content of the narrative, the performative situation in which such narratives typically occur (interpersonally and through the popular press), and the structural conditions of modern society that give rise to such narratives.

GRIFFITH, Jim (University of Arizona) LEGENDS OF SAN FRANCISCO FROM MAGDALENA, SONORA. The reclining statue of Saint Francis Xavier in Magdalena de Kino, Sonora, some 60 miles south of the international border, is the focus of an important regional devotion and annual pilgrimage for Mexicans and Mexican Americans.

KRUESI, Maggie (University of Pennsylvania) MIRACLES IN THE NEWS AND IN THE ACADEMY. The story of a local miraculous healing, as presented in a newspaper column and locally

produced TV news documentary, is compared with those of individuals who have talked about their own experiences of miracles.

LEWIS, Elizabeth U. (Texas A&M University) ALL SHOOK UP: THE CONTINUING DEATH OF ELVIS PRESLEY. Many of Elvis Presley's fans, predominantly Southern white women over the age of 40 in a lower socioeconomic group, refuse to accept the finality of Elvis's death because Elvis represents success. To accept the reality of his death is to accept the death of hope in their own lives.

LINDAHL, Carl (University of Houston) THE WHITE SAVAGES OF RECENT FRAZERIAN FICTION. Discusses a body of popular fantasy, based on Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, celebrating secret societies that practice natural religion and human sacrifice. Recently this theme has taken a twist: the "savages" who perform their exotic magic in the midst of the urban world are controlled by "civilized" whites with sinister motives.

MECHLING, Elizabeth Walker (California State University, Hayward) FOLKLORE IN THE SELF-HELP LITERATURE FOR AMERICAN MANAGERS. A morphological analysis of the narrative formulae found in a sample of over 30 self-help paperback books aimed at middle-managers. These popular narratives often adopt structural formulae similar to those found in traditional folk narrative genres, including folktales and urban legends.

MILLIGAN, Linda J. (Ohio State University) THE "TRUTH" ABOUT THE BIGFOOT LEGEND. Describes the legend debate process among a group of people who all believe in Bigfoot but who debate its nature. Through their legends they debate the nature of reality. It is this deeper debate perhaps that explains why the legend persists and is so widespread even though few people claim to have seen this elusive creature.

MUNRO, Joyce (Wayne State University) THE CHANGELING AS AN ARTICULATION OF MATERIAL DEPRIVATION SYNDROME. Prior to the development of a medical model of Maternal Deprivation Syndrome in the mid-20th century, the changeling tale provided a folk model for it. This paper compares the changeling tale as found in Celtic sources with contemporary American medical cases.

ORING, Elliot (California State University, Los Angeles) LEGEND, TRUTH AND NEWS. The concept of "legend" is a function of skepticism and proceeds from the ideology of the folklorist. When that skepticism is suspended, the legend is transformed into "news." When the news is studied as legend, folklorists will be able to move beyond the study of marginal groups and behaviors to focus upon those expressions central to the definition of modern society.

ORSO, Ethelyn G. (University of New Orleans) THE MONA LISA OF NEW ORLEANS' CITY PARK: THE MAKING OF A LEGEND During the mid-to-late 1950's, as New Orleans was forced to eliminate segregated public facilities, a rumor developed that the City Park of New Orleans was haunted by a dangerous female revenant, Mona Lisa, who made the park unsafe to visit at night. The rumor may have been started or encouraged by city officials who saw it as a way of frightening blacks from the park at night.

PATTERSON, John S. (Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg) JOHN BURNS AND JENNY WADE: THE HERO AND HEROINE OF GETTYSBURG? Anecdotes and legends connected with two famous civilians associated with the battle of Gettysburg illuminate qualities deemed appropriate for mid-19th-century heroes and heroines.

PRESTON, Michael J. (University of Colorado, Boulder) AIDS-IMAGERY IN DISCUSSIONS OF COMPUTER VIRUSES. The computer virus is not life-threatening, but computer-threatening, but like the AIDS virus it is invisible and difficult for many to understand. Both viruses have given

rise to folklore, with computer viruses frequently linked metaphorically to AIDS.

RIETI, Barbara (Memorial University of Newfoundland) THE "BLAST" AND OTHER AFFLICTIONS IN NEWFOUNDLAND FAIRY TRADITION. In Newfoundland, the "blast" is a fairy-inflicted injury from which strange foreign matter, such as fishbones, hair, or twigs, emerges. Legends and memorates from fieldwork and from the Memorial University Archive are examined in relationship to other fairy traditions.

SHIOKAWA, Kaneko (University of Pennsylvania) "THIS IS MY STORY AND IT'S ALL TRUE!" PERSONAL EXPERIENCE NARRATIVES AS SPIRITUAL AND COMMUNAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY. Memorates, or *Teikenjitsuwu* ("experienced real story"), especially narratives of supernatural experiences, constitute an important means in the Japanese speech community for assessing and expressing personal, familial, and communal identity.

STEKERT, Ellen J. (University of Minnesota) RECONSTRUCTED "TEXTS"; RECONSIDERED "TRUTHS." A performance of a ghost legend collected 30 years ago is placed in personal, situations, and cultural contexts, revealing multiple "meanings" apparent neither during the collecting nor during subsequent analysis in the 1960s. The analysis offers a model for recovery of information from previously "item-oriented" collectanea.

VICTOR, Jeffrey S. (Jamestown Community College) A RUMOR-PANIC ABOUT A DANGEROUS SATANIC CULT IN WESTERN NEW YORK. Analysis of a rumor-panic about a dangerous satanic cult that swept the rural areas of three states in spring 1988. These rumors offer insight into collective anxieties about social change in American culture.

WALKER, Pam (Ohio State University) DEATH AND THE INEXPLICABLE: A GENRE? When people talk about the deaths of their loved ones, with special regard to "psychic" experiences, there is an over-all structure consistent with this type of personal experience narrative.

WICKETT, Elizabeth (University of Pennsylvania) THE SPIRIT IN THE BODY. Living saints (or sheikh's) in Egypt, believed to be divinely empowered during their lifetime and venerated after death, can manifest their spiritual powers in miracles. The ability to vanish and reappear simultaneously in two places is one bodily manifestation of divinely-empowered spirits.

JUST IN!

LEGEND AND LIFE

DOG KILLS INFANT IN CRIB. A 13-year-old Siberian husky named Bandit apparently took a 6-day-old baby girl out of its crib and mauled it to death, authorities in Florence Township, New Jersey said. The baby, the couple's first, was brought home on Friday, 19 January, and "showered with affection." They noted at the time that their husky, who was being forced to stay outside more often, showed signs of being jealous. On Sunday afternoon, the father noticed the dog roaming around the house and went to check on the baby, who had been left sleeping in the crib. He found her dead on the nursery floor from a broken neck. The dog was destroyed by animal control agents at the family's request. [Mike Franolich, "Infant girl is killed by dog in N.J.," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (23 January 1990):2B; "Killer dog destroyed," AP Release, (25 January 1990). Cf. Brunvand 1984:17.]

BLACK BABY. Early in 1985, a husband suffering from terminal cancer donated some of his sperm to Ident Labs, a New York City sperm bank, so that his childless wife might eventually be able to conceive his child. The wife had herself artificially inseminated and succeeded in bearing a

daughter in December 1986. However, the child was born black, even though both husband and wife were white. Tests proved that the daughter was not genetically linked to the dead husband, and the wife is now suing the lab and her doctor for accidentally mixing up the sperm samples. The lab denies wrongdoing and claims that none of its samples have ever been given to the wrong person. [Barbara Kantrowitz, et al., "Not the Right Father," Newsweek (19 March 1990):50-51. In Finland Leea Virtanen found at least two contemporary legends describing complex accidents that led to black babies born to white parents; see her Varastettu Isoäiti (The Stolen Grandmother) (Helsinki 1987), pp. 47-48.]

FETUS FARMING. After finding that their 17-year-old daughter was suffering from leukemia and needed a bone marrow transplant from a compatible donor, Abe and Mary Ayala chose to conceive a baby to serve as the source of the bone marrow cells. Tests conducted in February showed that the fetus, due to be delivered in April, will be compatible with the Ayalas' daughter. Doctors said that appropriate cells can be extracted from the baby's umbilical cord blood at the time of birth, and that the baby faced little risk even if blood marrow were extracted directly from its body. But the decision provoked sharp reaction from some observers. Medical ethics expert Philip Boyle commented, "It's outrageous that people would go to this length. . . . [The decision means] we're willing to treat people like objects, and I don't think we ought to do that." He feared that the precedent would lead to "fetus farming," or using infants as organ donors, or encourage women to conceive babies that would be aborted so that fetal brain tissue could be used to treat Parkinson's disease patients. ["Unborn sister girl's last hope," AP release, 17 February 1990. See Véronique Campion-Vincent, "The Baby-Parts Story" (above).]

SUPERHERO SEXUAL ACCIDENTS.

An item in Ann Landers's column of 30 January 1990 read:

DEAR ANN: After reading your recent column on how bondage enhances people's sex lives, I knew I had to share this true story.

It seems a couple sitting on their back porch enjoying a lovely summer evening were startled by bloodcurdling screams for help coming from their neighbor's home. After dialing 911 and arming themselves with a baseball bat, the couple proceeded to their neighbors' house to assist in any way they could. As luck would have it, the front door was unlocked so they walked right in. They followed the frantic calls for help to an upstairs bedroom, where they found the neighbor lady stark naked and tied hand and foot to her bed. On the floor lay her husband, unconscious, wearing a Batman cape and mask.

It became apparent that the couple was into both bondage and fantasies. Mr. Batman had attempted to leap from the dresser onto the bed. In the process he bumped his head on the ceiling fan and went out like a light. The couple untied Mrs. Batman, revived Mr. Batman and took him to the hospital, where he was treated for a superficial head injury and released.

This little episode certainly gives new meaning to the term "safe sex."

-- A Minnesota Reader

Jan Brunvand, in a United Press column of 13 November, had described this legend as "Superhero Hijinks," noting that Paul Smith had included it in his Book of Nastier Legends (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986). Brunvand also

encountered it in New Zealand in 1988; since then it has cropped up across the US, usually with the male wearing a Superman costume. Naama Zahavi-Ely, of the Yale Computer Center, recalled hearing the same story in early October 1989 from friends in Richmond, VA, who assured him that it had happened just down the block in an "upscale yuppie neighborhood." I heard that it happened just up Route 93 in Nanticoke, and that the wife had to summon help by dialing 911 with her big toe.

The "Batman" version was apparently given wide currency in the US when radio columnist Paul Harvey used it last summer during one of his syndicated "news" wrap-ups. He got the story from a Fort Worth radio personality, Betty Ann Stout, who had used it early in July on one of her programs. Attempts to trace her sources produced a typical FOAF chain. [Bud Kennedy, "Holy folklore! Who is this guy?" Fort Worth Star-Telegram (6 August 1989). Courtesy Sylvia Grider.]

The legend is like a number of hilarious sexual accidents documented by Brunvand and others. In summer 1981, Sandy Deal (now at the University of Alaska) heard in Virginia Beach, VA, of a couple who handcuffed themselves together, then accidentally got hung up on a chandelier or ceiling beam when somehow the key slipped to the floor. G. Legman also notes other well-travelled jocular stories in which couples engaging in unorthodox sex are exposed by accident. In the most popular (current since the 1940s), a naked couple playing "whammy" run across the room toward each other; they miss, the man falls out a window, and the woman gets stuck on a doorknob (13.1.5; No Laughing Matter, pp. 453-54).

EYE ON SATANISM

CARDINAL O'CONNOR ON ROCK MUSIC. During his weekly sermon at St. Patrick's Cathedral on 4 March, John Cardinal O'Connor of New York City warned Catholics that listening to "heavy metal" rock music may cause demonic possession and suicide. He observed that "diabolically instigated violence is on the rise," and that police "experts" now regularly meet to monitor the increase in cult crimes. Rock music, the cardinal warned, can provoke interest in such violent cults, and some "can help trap people--especially teen-agers." He singled out Ozzy Osbourne's "Suicide Solution" as one especially dangerous song. Osbourne, who had previously been unsuccessfully sued by a teenage suicide's parents over this song, expressed shock and anger over the Cardinal's remarks and argued that the song did not encourage suicide but criticized alcohol abuse. He argued that his stage acts were nothing more than an expression of "Halloween" and offered to discuss the matter directly with O'Connor, ending his message, "you can call me any time. God bless you."

Cardinal O'Connor's sermon also described Black Masses, in which robed teenagers conduct occult rituals, singing and dancing in cemeteries before undressing and engaging in perverse group sex. After the Mass, he acknowledged that at least two exorcisms have been authorized in within the archdiocese of New York during the past year, but declined to give details. Church officials said that records of such exorcisms were routinely kept secret, but "demonologist" Ed Warren claimed to have been present for at least one of them. An unwed mother who had listened to heavy-metal rock and practiced satanism was the victim. During the exorcism, Warren said, "The furniture levitated, she spoke in a deep gruff voice, and the exorcist was attacked by the woman, so that (several people, including nuns) had to hold her down."

The Cardinal's remarks were seen as part of the Vatican's renewed emphasis on the importance of belief in Satan. Last year, Pope John Paul II installed ten new exorcists in Rome

and Turin to deal with an apparent rise in satanism there, and a book by Magr. Carraldo Balducci on how to detect demonic possession became a best-seller in Italy in 1989. Church officials, however, stressed that genuine demonic possession was rare and that exorcisms were authorized only when mental or medical illnesses had been ruled out. Magr. Balducci noted that out of 1,000 cases in which exorcisms were sought, only five proved to be true victims of Satan. The Rev. James LeBar, the New York Archdiocese's consultant on cults, said that church officials looked for "superhuman powers, including levitation, along with clairvoyance or knowledge of hidden sins, and the ability to speak in languages unknown to the victim" as true signs of possession. Linda Stevens, "The Devil's Music: O'Connor: Some rock turns kids to devil worship," New York Post (5 March 1990):3; Peter Steinfeld, "Surge in Satanic Activity Alarms O'Connor," New York Times (6 March 1990):B1, B6; Kevin McCoy, "Cardinal's comments stir exorcism debate," New York Daily News (6 March 1990) (courtesy Phillips Stevens, Jr.); Newsweek (19 March 1990):15.]

MORE RUMOR-PANICS. In rural villages east of Albuquerque, NM, elementary schools and day-care centers spread the rumor that a cult planned to abduct and murder a "blonde, blue-eyed" child on Halloween. In several areas, satanic graffiti provoked concern. In several eastern Tennessee counties, animal mutilation and ritual sacrifice of human fetuses were blamed on cults, while specialists in teenage drug abuse claimed that satanism frequently accompanied addiction. When three teens murdered another near Joplin, Missouri, many "experts" identified the crime as a "cult sacrifice." [News releases collected by Jeffrey A. Victor.]

Police near Cocoa Beach blamed church vandalism on satanic worship: churches were painted with phrases like "Island cult lives," "Death to the Methodists," and "Redrumdog" ["Murder God" spelled backward]. On an island used as a "party spot" near a local high school, police located an inverted cross and trees colored with the same paint used in the vandalism. Local teens explained that the spot was used for war games, in which participants threw paint balls at each other, but a local detective continued the investigation: "They could have paint wars out there too, I don't doubt that, but some of the markings indicate satanic type graffiti." ["Police check on satanic reports" and "Detective: island markings are satanic; Teens: No, it's just paint ball games," [Cocoa, FL] Florida Today (30 December and 31 December 1989):2B, 2B. Courtesy Rich Tyce.]

HERE COMES THE BEAST. The British Driving, Vehicle and Licensing Center agreed on 2 February to stop distributing car license plates containing the number 666 after numerous motorists complained that the plates had brought them bad luck. Jeff Mumford, senior executive officer of the Center's policy branch, cited a number of cases in which motorists blamed the plates for misfortune. In one case, "a lady . . . claimed the car actually took hold of her and she couldn't control it. It reversed, mounted the doorstep and squashed her son's scooter. She said she stopped it only in time to prevent it crashing into the kitchen." In other cases, a North Wales man had his house robbed, his car wrecked by a garbage truck, and his water supply contaminated, within a week of receiving the plate. A mother complained that her "quiet, home-loving boy" changed into a murderer after his job made him drive a van with a 666 plate. British TV also reported that after another man bought a car with such a plate, he lost his family, home, and business.

Mumford said that the Center would not recall the thousands of 666 plates now in circulation, but he said the center would consider "sympathetically" complaints that the

plate had caused motorists distress. A similar dispute arose in Davidson County, Tennessee in 1988, when the officials tried to distribute license plates with the number on it. During the same year, after retiring from the White House, Ronald Reagan changed the number of his private residence in California from 666 to 668 St. Cloud Drive. [Marcus Eliason, "No more 'Number of the Beast' on license plates," AP release, 3 February 1990.]

Elsewhere, Mikhail Gorbachev has been plagued by persistent rumors connecting him with the Antichrist. His name derives from a word that means "hunchback," and the prominent stain on his forehead is popularly assumed to be a mark of sin. A series of five-pointed red stars put up shortly before Gorbachev's accession are interpreted by the Orthodox as satanic symbols, and many comment on the coincidence between the name Chernobyl (or "Wormwood") and the star of the same name that Revelation 8:11 says will poison the waters of the world before the Antichrist comes.

A related complex of beliefs blames the troubles of the world, and of Russia in particular, on "intellectual Jews" who secretly control events. One sign of this, according to one rumor, was displayed during the recent summit meeting between Gorbachev and Reagan. Banners everywhere displayed the two leaders' names side by side, and people noticed that the last letters of the one put with the first letters of the other spelled out "evrei" (Gorbach(ev Rei)gan), or "Jews," thereby revealing their central role in the summit. [Courtesy Colin Credle, Brown University.]

NOT ALL CULTS ARE SATANIC. Some colleges have begun programs warning students against fundamentalist Christian groups like the Maranatha Christian Fellowship that attract young people and then use them in aggressive recruiting and fund-raising activities. The Cult Awareness Network has received many complaints from families and friends of Maranatha members, who have witnessed radical personality changes, falling grades, and frequent arguments that family members are not "being Christian enough." A survey of student-affairs administrators showed that students who earlier might have been drawn to groups like the Hare Krishnas now are being attracted to fundamentalist churches that often use "cult-like" practices to retain them. Experts claimed that "cults deceive people when they try to recruit them and then trap them psychologically, making it extremely difficult for someone to leave. . . . any group that relies on such practices should be classified as a cult--regardless of its ideology or religious beliefs." [Tanya Gazdik, "Some Colleges Warn Students That Cult-Like Methods Are Being Used by Christian Fundamentalist Groups," The Chronicle of Higher Education (15 November 1989):1, A42.]

A Dallas, Texas, prosecutor announced in January that he would seek a grand jury indictment against Terri Hoffman, a local mystical leader, after four of her followers committed suicide. Two of these, David and Glenda Goodman, were found dead of self-inflicted gunshot wounds in November, beside two spiral-bound notebooks in which they connected their suicides to Ms. Hoffman's philosophy, a mix of ancient mythology and metaphysics. The notebooks indicated that by killing themselves, the Goodmans hoped to "be able to come and go from the physical world" as Hoffman claimed she could do. Their bank accounts showed that they had given Hoffman \$110,000 in donations and had thought about leaving their home to her as well.

Others of her followers died suddenly after being told they had terminal illnesses, although autopsies showed no signs of this. Assistant District Attorney Cecil Emerson was unsure whether Hoffman could be charged with murder by "mind control": "It's never entered anyone's mind that you could

put together a case like this." Still, he believed that Ms. Hoffman would eventually be charged, if not with murder, at least with theft. [Evan Ramstad, "Eight deaths prompt probe of housewife-turned-guru," AP release, 4 February 1990.]

EXORCIST CONVICTED OF CHILD-ABUSE MURDER. On 20 February 1990, Mary Lee Nicholson was found guilty of encouraging a Milton, Florida, mother to starve her 4-year-old daughter to death while trying to drive off six demonic spirits that were possessing her. The mother, Darlene Jackson, agreed to testify against Nicholson as part of a plea-bargain agreement in which she pled guilty to third-degree murder.

Jackson, who holds a master's degree from the University of South Carolina, was teaching in the New York City public schools when a member of her church suggested that her daughter was acting in a rebellious way and might be under the influence of evil spirits. After a series of "weird dreams," Jackson contacted Nicholson, a "woman of God," in September 1986 for advice. Nicholson called her (collect) daily, advised her to distance herself from friends and family who were "not true Christians," and offered suggestions on how to rid the girl of demons. Meanwhile Jackson gave her at least \$20,000 in donations and named her as beneficiary of a \$100,000 life insurance policy.

In July, Jackson went to visit the evangelist in Milton, expecting to stay only a short time. But Nicholson, finding the daughter "defiant," put the two virtually under house arrest, advising the mother to pray, anoint the child with holy oil, and punish her when she disobeyed, either by beating her or refusing her food and drink. She also asked Jackson and her daughter to wear black and sleep under black blankets that symbolized death.

When Kimberly died of starvation on 8 February 1987, she weighed only 28½ pounds, and a hospital attendant said she "looked like one of those Ethiopian children . . . seen on television." The prosecuting attorney, satisfied with the first degree murder verdict delivered against Nicholson, commented, "These cases were like no other I had tried and unlike any other I have ever heard of. . . . I don't recall ever hearing of cases [going to trial] involving satanic or ritual sacrifices." [Santa Rosa Press Gazette, issues of 6 March, 9 March, 13 March, 16 March, 28 March 1989, 15 February, 19 February, 22 February, and 26 February 1990. Courtesy Carmen Paige, Santa Rosa Press Gazette.]

MISCELLANY

RELIGIOUS LEGENDS. Recently, during Bible study at the Conyngham, PA, Lutheran Church that I attend, I heard a series of narratives that supposedly illustrate the trials of Christian churches in the Soviet Union. In one, a congregation that meets secretly in believers' houses becomes aware that one of its members is a government agent--but no one knows who. So, instead of announcing in which house the next service would be held, the minister simply asks each believer to pray for guidance before coming to the next service. The next Sunday, all the members spontaneously show up at the same house--all, that is, but one.

In another story, a secret meeting is suddenly interrupted by two soldiers carrying automatic rifles. "We have orders to kill all the Christians at this meeting," they say. "Everyone else may leave." Many of the worshippers race for the exits and disappear into the night, but a few choose to stay and await their fate. After a tense pause, the soldiers lower their weapons, and stand them against the wall. "We wanted to make sure that we were with the right Christians," they explain as they join the others in worship.

CENSUS-TAKING LEGENDS. As the US Census Bureau sets up to take its 1990 count, a number of stories are being publicized that represent allegedly authentic events that occurred during previous censuses. In one, a census-taker helping jail inmates fill out the required forms was accidentally put behind bars when the prison guard shift changed. In another, a farmer plowing his field refuses to stop, so "each time the tractor came around the farmer was shouted a question. Two hours later the form was completed, but the census-taker had a sunburn and a sore throat." Others have employees saving deathly ill senior citizens or going to extremities to interview a person trying to break the world record for being buried alive. [Randolph E. Schmidt, "Census Bureau hanging out 'help wanted' sign," AP release, 5 February 1990.]

Doubtless many of these anecdotes are legendary. My mother (an infallible source of information) told me that she had heard a true story about a census-taker who visited a cabin deep in the mountains. There she found a large family, and when he asked the mother for the children's names, she proudly replied that she had named every one out of the Bible. After duly recording John, Andrew, Zachariah, Jeremiah, Nahum, Abinadab, and several others, the employee came to the baby in the crib. "And this one is named 'Pizzum Sieve,'" the mother said. When the census-taker looked puzzled, she brought out the family Bible and opened it triumphantly to "Psalm CIV." This sounds suspiciously like a joke, but my mother (ca. 1960) insisted it was authentic.

Similarly, a colleague of mine at the University of Virginia (ca. 1972) was certain that there really had been a case in Norfolk, VA, in which a young black woman gave her daughter's name to a census-taker as "Famally." When asked why she had chosen such an odd name, the woman frowned and said that the hospital hadn't given her any choice--when she got the baby back, that was the name on the bracelet around her wrist. She showed it, and indeed it said in block letters: "FEMALE."

CONTEMPORARY LEGEND PARAPHERNALIA. In the Signals catalog (274 Filmore Ave. E, St. Paul, MN 55107), we find a "thermochromic Bermuda Triangle mug" for sale. It features a map of the dread area, with a ship located in the middle of the "triangle." When you fill it with hot liquid, the ship disappears! Ten dollars--and handwashing is recommended (presumably because if it's put into a dishwasher, the whole mug may vanish). [Courtesy Sylvia Grider.]

To help finance scientific expeditions to the apparent site of a crashed UFO near Roswell, New Mexico, the Center for UFO Studies is selling a commemorative t-shirt showing a flying saucer half-embedded in a desert landscape, observed by a skeptical rattlesnake. The shirt is available in light blue or gold (sizes small to extra large) for \$12 USD from CUFOS, 2457 W. Peterson, Chicago, Illinois 60659.

Citybooks (2223 Municipal Building, New York, NY 10007), a source for official New York City sanitation department badges and other collectanea, offers a series of t-shirts and sweatshirts featuring the "mascot" of the Dept. of Environmental Protection--an albino alligator emerging from a sewer (wearing sunglasses, of course). T-shirts cost \$7 (sweatshirts cost \$16). [Courtesy Sylvia Grider.]

After a mystery assailant disturbed the Homestead, FL, area by robbing passers, then biting their little fingers, a local establishment sold "Biting Bandit" T-shirts for \$5 apiece. ["Bandit keeps putting the bite on victims," Knight-Ridder release, 28 January 1990.]

Also seen: an advertisement for Philip Morris's new low-tar cigarette Merit that begins: "What do the Loch Ness Monster, Bigfoot and a great-tasting ultra light have in common? You've heard about them, but you don't really

believe they exist. Well, here's an actual unretouched photo of one of 'em. . . ."

HAVE YOU HEARD?

KILLER BEES AND DEADLY FOOD ADDITIVES. Carsten Bregenhøj writes: Lately there have been articles in the local newspaper--the [Vasa, Finland] Vesabladet--about the lazy but aggressive African honeybee imported to South America. According to the rumors, the swarms are killing all other bees on their way North and occasionally kill cattle and people as well. The US Army is supposedly on the alert at the Mexican border.

A more interesting case, however, is the fake list of food additives, or "E-number list," now circulating in Europe. This is a hybrid between xeroxlore and modern legend. The E-numbers are a standard for food additives adapted to the Common Market. Food additives are supposed to be mentioned on the food packages both by the E-number and the chemical's official name. (Two work in English discuss the subject: Michael F. Jacobsen, Eaters' Digest [New York: Anchor Books, 1976], and Ruth Winther, A Consumer's Dictionary of Food Additives [New York: Crown Publ., 1972].)

The E-number lists now circulating supposedly originated in France, where it was ascribed to the famous cancer clinic, l'Hopital de Villejuif. They list a variety of numbers as being supposedly linked to cancer, intestinal disturbances, increased cholesterol, and kidney stones, among other ailments. A common link is the warning that E 330 is the most dangerous of all, and the flyer often specifically warns against brands of lemon-flavored drinks containing it. [Another source in Spain tells me that E 330 is nothing more than citric acid, found naturally in lemons and oranges and commonly added to fruit drinks --Ed.]

The E-number lists show wide variations in which chemicals are mentioned and which effects they are supposed to have. Most varied, however, are the introductions to the lists. They are not just copied, they are recreated. The problem with these lists is that they are both incorrect and dangerous. Harmless additives are given as problematic, and some notoriously harmful chemicals are given as useful and recommended. It is interesting that the Health Authorities in Denmark observed the phenomenon before folklorists did. A Danish report on the problem (including five examples of the list) was published in May 1987 by the Ministry of Environment. But newly published books on Scandinavian xeroxlore do not include the E-lists.

Please send information on killer bees and/or E-number lists to Carsten Bregenhøj, Ostrobothnian Archives of Traditional Culture, Handelsplanaden 23A, SF-65100 Vasa, FINLAND.

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS

SATANISM. The Committee for Scientific Examination of Religion, a skeptical organization consisting of scientists and other scholars, has issued a report attacking satanic "experts" and arguing that the fear of cults has done more harm than practicing satanists have. Put together by Shawn Carlson and Gerald Larue, with Gerry O'Sullivan, April A. Masche, and D. Hudson Frew, the report is titled Satanism in America: How the Devil Got Much More Than His Due (El Cerrito, CA: Gaia Press, 1989). It summarizes the history of cult panics, quoting many of the influential publications and examining the backgrounds of many of the most active "experts." The volume also includes objective summaries of the Matamoros "cult" murders and the controversy over day

care scandals like the McMartin Case.

The value of the book is enhanced by a useful list of scholars in various fields doing reliable work on satanism and associated rumors, followed by an equally useful list of "non-experts" whose work falls in line with the extremists. Three important essays follow in appendices, Robert Hicks's "Satanic Cults: A Skeptical View of the Law Enforcement Approach"; Kenneth V. Lanning's "Satanic, Occult, Ritualistic Crime: A Law Enforcement Perspective"; and Michael Stackpole's "The Truth about Role-Playing Games."

The book, which is updated between printings, costs \$12.95 + \$1.50 postage/handling and may be ordered directly from Shawn Carlson at P.O. Box 466, El Cerrito, CA 94530-0466.

SATANIC CHILD ABUSE CLAIMS. Kenneth V. Lanning has also published a more specific study of the history and substance behind bizarre child abuse cases that allegedly involve sacrifices and blood-drinking. Intended for law enforcement agents and social service professionals investigating such claims, the booklet summarizes what is known about documented, convicted child abusers and child pornography rings. Based on this data, Lanning makes cautious judgments about how much, if any, of the "satanic day care" allegations may be based on truth. He suggests terming such groups "multidimensional child sex rings" to avoid the religious slanting implicit in "satanism" and provides protocols for investigating such cases without producing the massive contamination of witnesses that damaged the McMartin case. The booklet includes a short list of suggested readings, including works by both folklorists and sexual abuse specialists. It is available free of charge in single copies from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 550, Arlington, VA 22201, USA.

NEW BRUNVAND COLLECTION. Jan Harold Brunvand's latest collection of urban legends and their backgrounds, Curses! Broiled Again: The Hottest Urban Legends Going (New York: Norton, 1989) contains additional information on some of the legends mentioned in previous issues. Among these are:

"Curses! Broiled Again!" [The Tanning Booth Death], FN 13:2, 15:5.

"Halloween Sadists" [The Razor Blades in the Apple], FN 12:2, 16:9.

"Blue Star Acid" [Mickey Mouse LSD], FN 12:2, 13:5, 14:3-4, 15:6, 16:1-4.

"Postcards for Little Buddy," FN 16:10.

"White Slavery," FN 12:1, 16:5.

Many other legends included in this book provide more detail on the cultural fears expressed in contemporary legends: fear of ethnics, nude fantasies, ironic coincidences. While most of the texts included come from printed sources or were written in by correspondents, Brunvand often gives the dynamics of the rumors in detail, providing especially useful comments on the media's role in spreading them.

The cover was awarded the "Kiss Me Deadly" award as the most lurid artwork on a folklore publication in 1989.

HORROR STORIES AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS. A fruitful direction in research has examined legends in terms of larger social constructions of contemporary problems. Images of Issues: Typifying Contemporary Social Problems, edited by Joel Best (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1989), is a collection of essays on of social problems in the US and other countries. Many of the essays, while not directly related to legends, discuss much of the evidence used to "prove" such legends' reliability and many of the "horror stories" that function like legends in the popular press. The collection includes: John M. Johnson, "Horror Stories and the Construction of Child Abuse" (5-19).

Joel Best, "Dark Figures and Child Victims: Statistical

Claims About Missing Children" (21-37).

Edward Albert, "AIDS and the Press: The Creation and Transformation of a Social Problem" (39-54).

Herman Gray, "Popular Music as a Social Problem: A Social History of Claims Against Popular Music" (143-58).

Other topics discussed in separate essays are elder abuse, dyslexia, infertility, "crack," smoking, drunk driving, wife abuse, urinalysis, and immigration. The essay also includes a summary of debate over the social construction theory of social problems.

MARIAN KEECH ON AIDS. An intriguing series of ten paper-bound volumes has been issued by American West Distributors (6992 El Camino Real #104-335, Carlsbad, CA 92009 USA). Allegedly received by short-wave radio and transcribed verbatim by one "Dharma," these are the official warnings from Ashtar, Natonn, Esu Jesus Emmanuel Senanda (a.k.a. Jesus of Nazareth), and other extraterrestrials concerning the last days of Earth. The manuscript's origin is unclear (it was prepared on a microcomputer and printed out handsomely on a laser printer). But internal references connect the material with previous sets of apocalypses received through automatic writing by a woman identified as "Marian Keach" in the sociological study When Prophecy Fails.

Folklorists may be most intrigued by volume six, AIDS: The Last Great Plague. Mixing journalistic and pseudo-scientific sources, the extraterrestrials explain that it was the World Health Organization that spread this disease through contaminated smallpox vaccine. The genuine extent of the disease is being hushed up by world governments, as is the fact that it is primarily spread by the Asiatic Tiger Mosquito, "which in fact, was intentionally introduced into America specifically to spread the disease" (41). Fortunately, since viruses are crystals, the ET's reveal that they can be destroyed by irradiating them with the correct sound frequency.

Regrettably, they conclude, the aliens are bound to be blamed for AIDS, adding insult to the injury of having the bodies of their murdered space cadets impounded in military hangars. The volume, which also includes an extraterrestrial view of the Santa Cruz earthquake of 17 October, is a fascinating example of intellectual bricolage, fabricating folk religion out of a network of contemporary legends and popular science. Other volumes give more details on crashed UFOs in USAF facilities, Jewish plots to control the world's finances, and satanic cults. One volume contains Jesus Christ's autobiography, co-authored by Judas Iscariot. All are \$10 USD apiece and may be ordered from the publisher or from Arcturus Book Service (P.O. Box 831383, Stone Mountain, GA 30083-0023).

CROP CIRCLES. Fortean Times No. 53 (Winter 1989/90) contains a symposium on the crop circle phenomenon, mysterious symmetrical swirls that appear overnight in British cropfields. The articles include:

Bob Skinner, "The Crop Circle Phenomenon" (32-37) [general history].

Bob Skinner, "The Mowing Devil" (38-39) [reprint and discussion of a 1678 pamphlet].

John Michell, "Quarrels & Calamities of the Cereologists" (42-48) [review of recent books].

Ralph Moyes, "Is Whitehall Up to Something?" (49-51) [discussion of the phenomena in Parliament].

Terence Meaden, "A Note on Observed Frequencies of Occurrence of Circles in British Cornfields" (52-53) [has the phenomenon increased since 1980?].

Hilary Evans, "The Crop Circle Paradox" (54-57) [sociology of the popular response].

Bob Rickard, "Clutching at Straws: Whirls, Winds, Witches

and Fairies" (58-69) [parallels in older folklore].

This issue also includes shorter pieces, including early variants of "The Kangaroo Thief" (see Brunvand 1986:24), more on the South Carolina "Lizard Man," an incident in which a British couple found a dead mouse in a milk bottle, and a variety of mystery assailant cases in which pedestrians were pelted with eggs, pumpkins, or cabbages. (A Leytonstone man was killed by a turnip thrown from a passing car.) A retrospective look through FI's files gathers cases in which a sudden blow to the head restored a person's speech, hearing, sight, or hair growth.

Subscriptions to FI cost 8 UK pounds (9 UK pounds or 16 USD overseas); back issues of 31-53 are 2 UKP (4 USD) each. USA and Canadian dollar cheques & MOs are acceptable; subscribers in other overseas countries should try to remit in UKP or USD. Address: Fortean Times, 20 Paul Street, Frome, Somerset BA11 1DX, UK.

FI also plans to reprint issues 26-30 in a 304 pp. paper-bound format. Prepublication price is £10 or \$20. Order from: Fortean Times, 96 Mansfield Road, London NW3 2HX, UK.

MORE ON RUSSIAN UFO LANDING. Those interested in hearing more of the official and unofficial response to the Voronezh incident, in which a group of children claimed to have witnessed a UFO landing, can find useful collections of information in FI 53, pp. 20-21 (which gives additional examples of paranormal reports from the Soviet Union) and in UFO 5:1 (January/February 1990):4,20-30. The latter surveys American and Soviet ufologists' interpretations of the account and is illustrated with several of the children's drawings of the saucer and its occupants. UFO is the publication of California UFO, which is also compiling an information packet on the event. Subscriptions are \$18 USD (\$26 USD foreign) and back issues, including this one, are \$4.25 apiece. Address: California UFO, 1800 S. Robertson Blvd., Box 355, Los Angeles, CA 90035 USA.

BIGFOOT IN OHIO. Although most widely known accounts of man-like apes in North America come from the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, in fact BHM's [Big Hairy Monsters] have been spotted across the U.S., and researchers have gathered a sizeable number of close sightings in Eastern Ohio and Western Pennsylvania. Many of these remain in private files or exist in hard-to-locate news clippings. Don Keating has gathered together some of this rare material into a privately published booklet on The Eastern Ohio Sasquatch. This reprints material relating to 31 incidents or groups of sightings, dating from 1954 to January 1989. Sources vary from ephemeral news releases in rural papers to tape-recorded interviews, transcribed with a feel for the informant's way of evaluating the sighting. The booklet, based on a dot-matrix home computer print-out, is sometimes difficult to read, but it also includes a selection of drawings made by the witnesses. It is available from the author for \$9.00 USD postpaid (P.O. Box 205, Newcomerstown, OH 43832-0205). Keating is interested in hearing about Bigfoot sightings anywhere in the world, and publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, Bigfoot News, which costs \$13.00 per year.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

We are always on the lookout for publications on any topic relevant to contemporary legends, especially those in journals or from publishing houses not usually read by academics in the US and Great Britain. Please forward offprints (if convenient) to Bill Ellis, Editor, FM, Penn State--Hazleton, Hazleton, PA 18201 USA. For publications in foreign languages, English abstracts would be appreciated. Items starred (*) are housed in a file in the Editor's

office and can be made available to qualified scholars for reference. Books and articles from major publishers or standard folklore journals are not normally starred.

- * Alexander, David. "Giving the Devil More Than His Due." The Humanist 50:2 (March/April 1990):5-14, 34. [Skeptical attack on satan-hunting "experts."]
- * Alexander, John B. "Defining the Boundaries." International UFO Reporter 15:1 (January/February 1990):15-18. [Parallels in studies of near-death experience and alien abductions.]
- * Arts, Steven A. "The Airship Scare and War Hysteria." International UFO Reporter 15:1 (January/February 1990):14, 24. [The 1896 panic over unexplained "airships" over the US was probably sparked by fears over impending war with Spain.]
- * Bartholomew, Robert E. "The Airship Hysteria of 1896-97." Skeptical Inquirer 14:2 (Winter 1990):171-81.
- * Blake, Ian. "A Sugar-Coated Theory." The Gate 5:4 (April 1990):9-10. [Link between overindulging on sweets and being contacted by aliens.]
- * Brennan, Father Joseph. The Kingdom of Darkness. Lafayette, LA: Acadian House Publishing, 1989. [Catholic priest's description of the underworld of satanic cults and advice to parents on how to detect them. Also published in shortened form as "Father Brennan's Battle with the Satanic Underground," Acadiana Profile 14:1 (September 1989):28-34.]
- * Brodu, J. L. Traduire debugging sans bug. Paris: Pogonip, 1986. [Brief account of the computer term "bug" and how it came to be translated into French.]
- * Bullard, Thomas E. "How to Make an Alien." International UFO Reporter 14:6 (November/December 1989):10-16. [The "folkloric solution" to UFO encounters--equating them with earlier folk conceptions of outlandish beings--is simplistic and invalid.]
- * Clark, Jerome. "An Extraordinary Decade," International UFO Reporter 14:6 (November/December 1989):3+.
- [Retrospective of UFO research in 1980s.]
- * ----- "The Thickets of Magonia." International UFO Reporter 15:1 (January/February 1990):4-11. [Critique of Jacques Vallee's Confrontations.]
- * Coughlin, Ellen K. "Legends With a Contemporary Twist: Weird Tales Inspire a Growing Body of Folklore Research." Chronicle of Higher Education (17 January 1990):A6, A8. [General discussion of recent research in North America.]
- * Dumars, Denise. "Haunts and Horrors." The Gate 5:3 (Jan. 1990):10-11. [Summaries of news accounts dealing mainly with poltergeist activity.]
- Fine, Gary Alan. "Mercantile Legends and the World Economy: Dangerous Imports from the Third World." Western Folklore 48 (1989): 153-62.
- * Gordon, Stan. "More on Project Moon dust." The Gate 5:3 (Jan. 1990):7-9. [USAF apparently investigated the crash of a UFO near Kecksburg, PA, in December 1965.]
- * Kaczmarek, Dale. "Hauntings and Ghosts! The Search for Answers." The Gate 5:4 (April 1990):5-6. [Procedures used by the Ghost Research Society to investigate reports of hauntings.]
- Klass, Philip J. "New Evidence of MJ-12 Hoax." Skeptical Inquirer 14:2 (Winter 1990):135-40.
- * Kottmeyer, Martin. "Entirely Unprejudiced." Magonia 35 (January 1990):3-10. [Parallels to abduction experiences are common in earlier science fiction comics and movies.]
- Klanciczay, Gábor. "Legends as Life Strategies for Aspirant Saints in the Later Middle Ages." Journal of Folklore Research 26 (1989):151-71.
- * Long, Greg. "Machinelike Underground Sounds and UFO Phenomena." International UFO Reporter 14:6 (November/

- December 1989):17-21, 24. [List of anomalous phenomena associated with subterranean noises.]
- * Meurger, Michel. De l'ogre au rat blanc: l'insolite alimentaire dans le rumeur. Paris: Pogonip, 1988. [Brief study of "weirdness in foodstuff" in folklore, popular 19th-century novels, and contemporary legend.]
- * Nilsen, Don L. F. "Contemporary Legend: The Definition of a Genre." Kansas English 75 (1989): 5-9. [Brief discussion of the stories' main characteristics, contrasting them with those of the tall tale.]
- * O'Brien, Edward. "Supernatural Events in the Modern World." The Gate 5:4 (April 1990):2-4. [Discussion of poltergeists and demonic possessions.]
- * Ramos, Octavio, Jr. "Southwest Haunts." The Gate 5:3 (Jan. 1990):2-3. [Literary versions of "La Llorona" and "Wolf Child."]
- * Rutkowski, Chris. "The Canadian UFO Wave of 1989." International UFO Reporter 14:6 (November/December 1989):7-9.
- * Schmitt, Don, and Kevin D. Randle. "Roswell, July 9, 1947." International UFO Reporter 14:6 (November/December 1989):4+. [USAF apparently did investigate a mysterious craft that crashed in New Mexico on this date.]
- * Stillings, Dennis. "'The American Way': A Cock and Bullard Story." Magonia 35 (January 1990):14-18. [Attack on US credulity and interest in alien abductions, with special emphasis on Thomas E. Bullard.]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS SOUGHT. A number of scholars in the Third World and in Eastern European countries have expressed interest in joining ISCLR and receiving its publications. But paying the subscription rates in "hard" currency is a problem for many of these people. Thus the ISCLR Council has agreed to admit a small number of scholars from these regions as "corresponding members." The usual dues will be forgiven, in exchange for regular columns on active contemporary legends and legend research in the member's home country. We would like to hear from any scholars who would be willing to participate under these conditions.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES. The following members are hooked up to the various electronic mail networks in North America and Europe, and they would be interested in hearing from each other or any other member who corresponds in this manner.

Shirley Arora - ILX3ARO at UCLAMVS.BITNET
 Carol J. Brown - CJB9F2F at PANAM.BITNET
 Jan Harold Brunvand - JANHBRUN at UTAHCCA.BITNET
 Keith Cunningham - CASEY at NAUVAX.BITNET
 Anne Davis - ENG_AAD at SHSU
 Bill Ellis - WCE2 at PSUVN.BITNET
 William Fox - FOX at AMY.SKIDMORE.EDU
 Mark Glazer - MG68E8 at PANAM.BITNET
 John Lindow - LINDOW at GARNET.BERKELEY.EDU
 Dick Sweterlitsch - RSWETRL at UVMVM.BITNET
 Any others? Please say "Yo!"

NEXT ISSUE. FOAFable News #18 will contain a review of Russian research into 19th-century contemporary legends by Dionizjusz Czubala, an account of legends attached to the four horses (or "quadriga") atop the Brandenburg Gate by Sigrid Schmidt, and a summary of the popular furor caused in the 1930s by the "Hungarian Suicide Song" by Bill Ellis. Our regular columns will report on the steady progress of the Mickey Mouse LSD xeroxlore legend (now in Spain and Austria) and survey more mysterious assailants. Plus (if the world holds true to its nature) more on satanism, sex, and UFOs.

FOAFtale News is the newsletter of the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research. ISCLR was formed to build worldwide links among legend scholars. It encourages study of so-called "modern" and "urban" legends, and also of any legend that is circulating actively. We invite all who have an interest in this research area to join us. Members receive this newsletter, and ISCLR also prepares an annual book-length publication including the best in contemporary legend research.

To join, send a check made out to "ISCLR" for \$18 USD to Mark Glazer, Vice President, Department of Behavioral Science, Texas University--Panamerican, Edinburg, TX 78539, USA, or for £10 UK pounds sterling to Sandy Hobbs, Treasurer, Department of Applied Social Studies, Paisley College of Technology, High St., Paisley, Renfrewshire, Scotland PA1 2BE. Institutions wishing to receive FOAFtale News may affiliate themselves with ISCLR for the same price.

FOAFtale News is now indexed in the MLA Bibliography. Please send queries, clippings, notices, and short research reports (up to 3000 words) to Bill Ellis, Editor, Penn State--Hazleton Campus, Hazleton, PA 18201, USA. I can now accept material on IBM-compatible 3 1/2 inch diskettes (please include information on what software you used). Telephone: 717-450-3026 or 717-788-2021. E-mail: WCE2 at PSUVM.BITNET.

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ed, adored, and glorified,
in the whole world,
forever and ever. Amen.
Say this prayer six times
a day for nine straight
days and publicize it, and
any petition you desire,
God will grant it. Thank
You St. Anthony. A.Z.