

BEWARE!!!*THERE IS A NEW GANG Initiation!*-----
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR CONTEMPORARY LEGEND RESEARCH

MONGOLIAN CONTEMPORARY LEGENDS:

Field Research Report, Part Three***Legends about Almas, the Abominable Snowman******Dionizjusz Czubała** *ul. Ostrogórska 33/285, 41-200*
Sosnowiec POLAND

"The Wild Man" or the "Snowman" is called in Mongolia *Almas*. The *Almas* myth is common in this country. Most of my interlocutors has informed me with profound conviction that he lives in the inaccessible regions of Mongolia. A skeptical attitude was demonstrated mainly by students and journalists. All my interviewees have heard of the *Almas* encounters and all descriptions of the character were similar: supposedly it is a human-like creature two meters tall and quite hairy. He walks on two feet leaving behind him half-meter long foot-prints. He is extremely strong and exerts a very intense smell. He does not like water, lives a lonely life in the mountains and as a rule avoids contact with humans.

The myth about existence of *Almas* is deeply rooted in the collective awareness of people in Mongolia. Recent resurrection of the myth may be attributable to worldwide fascination with the mysterious figure of the mountain hermit. The Mongolians I questioned about the subject frequently spoke of foreign "scientific" expeditions searching for *Almas* or even any traces of his existence and their offers of great rewards for the capture of *Almas*. In the view of some of my interlocutors the subject of *Almas* is officially forbidden. Others hold that the state administration encourages the searches and the nomads, or hunters who give accounts of their encounters with *Almas* make the headlines in national papers and are eligible for high prizes, though it is not clear who funds the awards.

This old traditional legendary motif is being updated and attested by putting it into the setting of contemporary realm and by defining the time of events. Encounters with *Almas* are thus said to have taken place "during the Communist rule", that "the authorities in *Ulan Bator*" were informed, or that "a lama who went underground to escape persecution and lived under the disguise of an ordinary nomadic shepherd to hide his profession predicted the encounters and revealed them to a girl". Time is defined by saying: "it was in 1965", "a few years ago", or "it was not so long ago".

Credibility is further confirmed by indirect qualification: "there are people in Mongolia who have seen such a man", "there lives a man who has seen him", "I have seen pictures of this boy (alleged son of *Almas*), he's grown up", or about other offspring of *Almas*: "he's studying to be a lama", "he's an artist in our theater", "he's the greatest wrestler in our aimak" or just plain and simple "this man lives".

Another attempt at attestation of the motif is quoting a Mongolian academician who confirmed existence of *Almas*, reference to a book about *Almas* or to a skin of *Almas* kept under the custody of an old monastery in the Gobi Desert. Contemporary *Almas* myths often have the character kidnap a woman or a girl for reproductive purposes, or when "the wild man" is of feminine sex, it is a boy, "a Mongolian", "a student from the school of lamas", or "a lama". Here are some examples:

Almas often marry simple Mongolian women. There was a case like that—I heard about it a couple of years ago. An *Almas* could not find himself a partner. To ensure offspring, he set his eyes on some Mongolian girl. He sneaked up to the *yurta* (dwelling) and kidnapped the girl. An investigation ensued. She then told how it happened but she was already with the baby (pregnant).

Half-man half Yeti? —I asked.

Yes, yes. (Reported by Tuya)

My translator and guide, Dr Monhjargal offered his commentary:

It is not a myth. There are people in Mongolia who have seen such a man. You certainly know a Mongolian scholar, Rinchen, Biambyn Rinchen? He observed *Almas* and as long as he lived he claimed *Almas* were part of this world. Mongolia has a vast territory but there are few people. There are many uninhabited areas and a lot of room for *Almas*. It can be so. Just so. It is said *Almas* are found in the mountains. In Nepal they refer to *Almas* as "Snow Man", you call him Yeti and for us *Almas* means "a wild man." (Reported by Monhjargal)

[*Biambyn Rinchin published an article in Russian on his research: "Almas—Mongol'skiy Rodich Snezhnogo Cheloveka" [The Almas—Mongolian Relative of the (Abominable) Snowman], *Sovremennaiia Mongoliia* [Contemporary Mongolia] 5 (1958):34-38.—Ed.]

I recorded an almost identical variant in Ulan Bator:

One Almas kidnapped a woman and had a baby with her. The woman did not have any hair on her body so he kept licking her until she was all covered with hair because his saliva causes hair to grow. The woman tried to run away many times but Almas would not let her. Finally she jumped into the water. And he fears water. He ran after her carrying the baby in his hands. When he saw she wouldn't come back he grabbed the baby by the feet and tore it up in two. Terrible! That's how I heard it." (Reported by Nima)

A slightly different version was given by another woman:

There was this case: a girl was out with the sheep and a lama was passing by. Under the Communist rule, the lama was an ordinary nomad and tended to his herd. But people knew who the lama was and invited him to their homes. Sometimes he would travel very far. This one was coming from far away and the girl didn't know him. He stopped by and told her: 'you will have an experience in your life that none of us have ever had. Just keep your courage. Don't let it abandon you.' The lama left and she kept thinking about what he had told her.

When she turned sixteen—girls marry here at this age—she was kidnapped by an Almas. He took her to the mountains and guarded her. She had to live with him. She got pregnant with him. She had a baby. But all that time she missed her loved ones. Almas was terribly strong but did not harm her or the baby, only he wouldn't let them go. Twice she managed to get so close to the people that she could see their yurtas but each time he caught up with them and took them back into the mountains.

One day she took the baby and left and somehow he did not go after them. She returned home. And her son has grown to be the greatest wrestler in the aimak. Only, after Almas, he is quite hairy. (Reported by a woman aged about 40)

In addition to numerous variants about kidnapped women there are many tales about men being kidnapped:

There is this story about the wild man but it is also true: there was the Almas-woman. For an unknown reason she kidnapped a Mongolian man. Maybe she did not have a partner? She kidnapped him into the mountains. She wanted to have a baby with him.

They lived together for some time. A baby was born and the man wanted to return to the people but she would not let him. The Almas don't like water. When he found out about it he ran away from her. He

jumped into the river and was running through it. She ran along the water but was afraid to get into the water. And so she ran after him with the baby. When he finally got across the water she got so angry that she tore the head off the baby. Apparently such a wild man is capable of love!

That's what really happened. The man is alive. He lived in the wild, even grew some hair on his back. They said it grew into a mane that big (*demonstrates*). (Reported by Tuya 2)

An account about a lama school student kidnapping:

There lived a family in the mountains and they had a son. He went to the lama school. Once, he was going on a visit to his parents when he met an Almas. It was an Almas-woman. But, was she huge! Compared to her he was tiny. The Almas woman kidnapped him into the mountains. She took him very, very far and they lived together.

After four months she became pregnant. She gave birth to a boy. For some time they continued to live together. Then the lama returned with the son to the people. I saw the pictures of the boy. He's now fully grown up. He's strong and healthy and both live normally. (Reported by Bilega)

An account of kidnapping of an old lama:

Not so long ago, the following happened. A sixty-year old lama for forty years observed a large Almas. The Almas watched him but said nothing. Lama told people that he observed every day the same Almas. Then the lama disappeared. People were now certain that the Almas killed him and dragged him away somewhere. Panic started. Time passed but neither the Almas nor the lama were seen again.

It turned out that the Almas was a woman. She set her eyes on the old lama and took him to the mountains. Apparently, she could not find a true Almas for her partner and the time came for her to have a baby so she took him to a safe place and got herself pregnant. The old lama brought the child up with the mother. He taught the child to speak. He told him about Buddha. The boy was growing up fast. When the boy was old enough, the Almas woman took to the mountains and the lama and the boy returned to people and the boy is studying to become a lama. (Reported by Nima)

A group of students listening to their colleague's accounts of Almas displayed a joking attitude, as in the following:

A Mongolian went to the mountains and ran into an Almas woman. She took him and they lived together.

One of the students: *They simply got married!*
[The whole group erupts into laughter.]

When she was leaving the cave, she blocked the entrance with a big boulder so that he couldn't move it.

And run away! [The students laugh again.]

Yes, so that he wouldn't run away. They always walked together. They had a baby. But one day he ran away from the Almas woman. Here in the mountains, rivers are very fast. He jumped into the water and ran away. See, he had been thinking of his wife every day. She was all alone in the yurt! How did she live? What did she think? When he returned he told about how he lived. He wanted to teach that Almas woman to talk. He wanted to roast meat over the fire but she was scared of fire and wouldn't let him start a fire. When he disobeyed she beat him. Many times he got a nasty beating from her. (Reported by a student)

Some contemporarily living Mongolians are said to have come from the Almas. Supposedly they are lamas, wrestlers and also artists—in a sense they are all extraordinary people. That is the second motif in the stories about the Almas. An example:

In our theater—I was told in Ulan Bator—there is this wonderful artist. I have admired him ever since I was still a child. He is very famous. He is a son of an Almas woman. He is wonderfully built, healthy and strong. As kids, we always wanted to be like him. I can remember so many of the parts he played. He always plays this strong character and always wins. But that he is a son of an Almas woman, we have learned only recently because he himself wrote this. Until now it was prohibited to write such things. The government did not permit anything to be written about the Almas. Communists said: "all this fuss and publicity, we don't need this, that's stupidity." (Reported by a man aged about 30)

Another type of stories are short accounts, sometimes with additional comments, of people's encounters with Almas. Examples:

One nomad was riding through the Altai Mountains, because that happened in the Altai. Suddenly his horse stopped and didn't want to go on. There are places in our country where animals stop and a horse can stand still for three days, as if it were sleeping. It won't move by itself. You have to take it and pull it out of the place. So that nomad thought that this was one of such places. He dismounted the horse, and pulled it. The horse made one step and stopped again.

The man looked to his side and saw something huge and dark lying there. He thought, maybe it was a black cow? He walked up and saw that this was an Almas lying there. He jumped on the horse and ran home like crazy. There he got off the horse and lost consciousness. It was only a few days later, that

people learned he had met an Almas.

When the authorities found out about it, they reported it to Ulan Bator and the government sent in their representatives. They asked where it had happened and ordered the man to take them there. So he took them there. It turned out only some traces were left. Wolves ate the entire Almas, they even bit the bones. Nothing was left. Because he had been lying dead. The nomad didn't know about it and ran away. He didn't want to be dragged to a cave. Then wolves came and ate him." (Reported by Chuka)

Foreign hunters were hunting goats in the Gobi Desert. Their guide was an excellent hunter. He saw an Almas and showed him to those people. All together, several people saw the Almas. It was in 1965. This was the most recent evidenced encounter with Almas. I know it from a book. There is a Mongolian book about Almas and I must have read about it there.

Now they are not found in our country but there is no doubt they used to live here. People saw them. After all, in an old monastery in the Gobi Desert there is an Almas hide, even today. They killed him before the revolution. Or perhaps he just died and lamas kept him? (Reported by an intellectual)

From some of my interviewees I could not obtain clear legend form stories about Almas. Their information, however, attest to the fact that they are heartily familiar with the subject:

People still have doubts concerning Almas while there have been so many encounters with them. Only the government would not send an expedition into the Altai. When this issue is raised, their answer is: this is silliness, these are myths and there are more important things in Mongolia than Almas.

Almas live high up in the mountains where neither nomads nor hunters can reach. A special expedition is needed but the government does not understand this. Occasionally he can be sighted walking along the slope of the mountain or running up and away. Usually he avoids people. You can see him through field glasses. (Reported by a medical technician)

The handful of legends about Almas related in the present work could provide an opportune basis for contrasting two kinds of myth-making: authentic folklore strongly based in a national culture versus the mass media for which "the Snow Man" is but a seasonal curiosity. This, however would call for a more comprehensive data base.

=====

*Translated from Polish by Janusz Petrykowski, Penn State University, University Park, PA. This translation was funded by a Research Development Grant from the College of Liberal Arts, Penn State.

=====

Editor's Note: Thanks to the interest ape-men have received since the 1960s in both Russia and the United States, some additional material on the *Almas* is available in English. Cryptozoologist Ivan T. Sanderson summarized a few reports from Mongolia, including an account of the *almas*-child who became a lama, in his *Abominable Snowmen: Legend Come to Life* (Philadelphia: Chilton, 1961):318-320. More recent *Almas* research is surveyed by Janet and Colin Bord in *The Evidence for Bigfoot and Other Man-Beasts* (Wellingborough: Aquarian Press, 1984):44-59, and by Jerome Clark in *Encyclopedia of Strange and Unexplained Physical Phenomena* (Detroit: Gale, 1993):5-6.

Russian cryptozoologists prefer *almas* as a term for ape-men and use it to report sighting in the Caucasus Mountains and Siberia, as well as from Mongolia. Antonio Huneeus translates 3 popular articles on such research in *A Study Guide to UFOs, Psychic & Paranormal Phenomena in the U.S.S.R.* (New Brunswick, NJ: Abelard Publications, 1991):85-94; these articles are also summarized by Dr. Max Oppenheimer, Jr., in "The Siberian Snowman," *Strange Magazine* 9 [Spring-Summer'92]:42-43.

THE APE-MATE ABDUCTION: A SURVEY

Bill Ellis PSU—Hazleton, Hazleton, PA 18201-1291 USA

Two of Dr. Czubala's *almas* narratives involve an ape-man who abducts a human of the opposite sex as a mate. They have a child or children, which are destroyed when the human escapes back to civilization. Although neglected by the standard motif-indices, this narrative is a migratory legend previously reported from European and Middle Eastern sources. Rudolph Altrocchi proved the story's traditionality in *Sleuthing in the Stacks* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U Pr., 1944):95-101. As he noted, the legend influenced Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Tarzan of the Apes* (1914), in which Jane meets the heroic wildman when he rescues her from the evil ape Terkoz, who has abducted her for a mate. In a letter to Altrocchi, Burroughs admitted that he had once read a "story about a sailor" who was shipwrecked on the coast of Africa. Altrocchi sums up this story: "During this forced sojourn in the jungle, a she-ape, which he had tamed, became so enamored of him that when he was finally rescued, she followed him into the surf and hurled her baby after him" (95).

Altrocchi tried unsuccessfully to trace Burrough's story, but found several other versions of this plot,

including an oral legend recalled by a Mrs. E.R. Burnett of North Adams, Massachusetts, whose French-Canadian family had preserved it for at least 100 years, and a Persian folktale version preserved in a manuscript dated 1830 and published by Auguste Bricteux, in *Contes Persans* (Liège: Vaillant-Carmanne, 1910), Tale 9, p. 270 ff. After Altrocchi's study, oral variants were found in Maine by Richard Dorson (*American Folklore* [Chicago: U of Chicago Pr., 1959]:130-131 and *Folktales Told around the World* [Chicago: U of Chicago Pr., 1975]:485-487) and

in East Kentucky by Leonard Roberts (*South from Hell-fer-Sartin* [Lexington: U of Kentucky Pr., 1955]: 162; *Western Folklore* 16 [1957]:48-51; *Sang Branch Settlers* [Austin: U Texas Pr., 1974]:289-290.)

The earliest version Altrocchi could find appeared in book 1, chapter 10 of Francesco Maria Guazzo's anti-witchcraft tract, *Compendium Maleficarum*, published in 1608. Guazzo's narrative, which he attributes to "the Chronicles of Portugal," reads:

A woman was deported for some crime to a desert island and there left, and was at once surrounded by a chattering crowd of apes, of which there were many in that place. Then one of them, larger than the rest, for whom they all made way, came and took her gently by the hand and led her into a big cave, where he and some other apes brought her a plentiful variety of fruit and nuts and roots, and signed to her to eat. Finally she was forced into foul sin with the ape, and so continued for many days until she gave birth to two children by the animal. The wretched woman lived in this way for some years, until God took pity upon her and sent a ship there from Portugal, from which some sailors came ashore to fetch water from a spring which was near her cave. It happened that the ape was not at hand; so the woman ran up to the men, whose like she had not seen for so long, and throwing herself at their feet implored them to set her free from her criminal and disastrous servitude. They consented, having pity on her misfortune, and she embarked upon the ship with them. But behold, the ape then appeared calling with extravagant gestures and groans to his wife, who was not his wife; and when he saw the sails set for departure, he quickly ran and held out one of her children to the mother, threatening to drown it, if she did not come back. And he was not slow to carry out his threat. Then he ran back to the cave and as quickly came again to the shore with the other child, which he likewise threatened and drowned. After this, in his fury, he swam after the ship until he was overcome by the waves. This story became the talk of all Portugal; and the woman was condemned by the King of Lisbon to be burned; but certain men petitioned for her, and her sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. [Trans. E. A. Ashwin. London: John Rodker, 1929.]

Fabio Picasso has translated another early version, this one recorded in 1735 from Venezuela by Abbot Salvador Gili. It concerns "El Salvaje" (the Savage, or Wild Man), a man-beast seen in the Orinoco valleys:

He is covered with hair from head to foot; he is very libidinous and often kidnaps human women. Don Juan Ignacio Sanchez, an honest well-known man from San Carlos, Llanos de Caracas, told me about a woman kidnapped by El Salvaje and carried into the savanna. She was forced for a long time to live with the hairy man against her will, and she would have lived there forever if some lost hunters had not found her. The woman was alone in a treetop when she saw the group and called to them at the top of her voice. she told the

hunters that El Salvaje, who was aggressively jealous, did not permit her to leave the tree hut. She had two children by the creature and ate the food he robbed, such as hens and calves, but found it unpleasant to live with him. Finally, she asked them to come rescue her when El Salvaje was to be out hunting. The men went to the nearest village where they assembled volunteers among her relatives and friends. When El Salvaje was away, they went to the hut and took the woman back home. But, El Salvaje, carrying the children, caught up with the group and, by groaning, asked her to go back with him. The Spaniards took their guns and aimed at him. Then, the hairy man tore the children to pieces and ran away through the forest.

[“More on the Mono Grande Mystery,” *Strange Magazine* 9 (Spring-Summer’92):41.]

The story has since been reported several times from Central America. Sanderson reprints one from Guatemala that originally appeared in *The Museum Journal* (U Penn) 6:3 (Sept.1915) (*Abominable Snowmen*:160-162), and Mark Sanborne summarizes a similar version told him by a Mayan guide in “On the Train of the Duende and Sisimite of Belize,” *Strange Magazine* 11 (Spring-Summer 1993):55. Meg Craig has recently collected a legend from Belize featuring the *duende*, a supernatural figure more kin to the fairy than to the ape-man. The narrative, too, seems a hybrid of the ape-mate story and fairy kidnap legend: it concerns a girl named Rosalita who was abducted and later seen with “a child who was half-human, half-duende.” She is freed, but mourns for the child, fearing that Duende would use the child to revenge himself.

“One evening one of the men came running through the village with a large package wrapped in banana leaves, and everyone crowded around him to see what he was carrying. He unwrapped it, and immediately everyone saw what Duende had done. Half the body of a young girl was before them—the human half—and it appeared that the father had kept the hairy half. They took the body to the doctor and were astonished to see that as soon as they put the body down, it became whole. A beautiful young girl sat upright on the table, and the only signs that indicated she was not completely normal were her deep green eyes and a strange tuft of hair on her forehead.” [*Characters & Caricatures in Belizean Folklore* (Belize: Belize UNESCO Commission, 1991):31-32.]

All these stories could be traced to the legend that was “the talk of all Portugal” around 1600. But the variants located by Dr. Czubala suggest that the legend was also current in Asian tradition and may have entered European lore when Spain and Portugal opened up Far Eastern trade contacts. A more extensive historical and cultural analysis of this legend type seems called for.

JUST IN!

“LIGHTS OUT” GANG INITIATION. Spread by word of mouth, photocopy, fax, electronic mail, and media accounts, rumors of gang violence circulated widely throughout the United States in August, September, and

October. Fliers warned of a initiation involving gang members who drive around at night with their car lights off or on high beam. When other motorists flash their high beams in response, the gang members supposedly shoot at them or follow them home and murder them. The rumor attracted attention as early as 13 August, when Memphis, Tennessee, officials held a press conference to refute warnings circulating via fax in the area during the previous week. [Rob Johnson and Lawrence Buser, “Officials Deny Faxing Gang Warnings,” [Memphis, TN] *Commercial Appeal* (14 Aug.93), C; Jan Harold Brunvand]

By the beginning of Sept., the rumor had shown up in other cities. In Chicago, the local FBI office warned the city police department in a teletype dated 1 Sept. that the Black Gangster Disciple Nation, an Illinois gang, intended to carry out gang initiations. Faxed warnings soon appeared at banks, radio stations, schools, and businesses. A typed flier circulating in Chicago in early Sept. provides additional details:

BEWARE!!

There is a new GANG INITIATION!!

This new initiation of murder is brought about by Gang Members driving around at night with their car lights off. When you flash your car lights to signal them that their lights are out, the Gang Members take it literally as “LIGHTS OUT,” so they follow you to your destination and kill you! That’s their initiation.

Two families have already fallen victim to this initiation ritual. Be aware and inform your families and friends.

DO NOT FLASH YOUR CAR LIGHTS FOR ANYONE!!

[C: Sue Forslev.]

Responding to the Chicago rumors, Jan Harold Brunvand commented, “People like the idea that there are organized conspiracies of bad people who are the cause of some of our modern problems.” He related the “lights out” rumor to earlier stories about “Ankle Slashers at the Mall,” in which gang initiates hide under cars and slash women’s ankles as they return from shopping [Mary Schmich, “This Rumor Relies on Fax, Not Facts,” *Chicago Tribune* (15 Sept.93), C; Sue Forslev; on ankle slashers, see *Baby Train*:134-38, and *FN* 24:11, 25:11-12, 29:10-11]. The “lights out” rumor also recalls concerns over random violence during the spate of Los Angeles freeway shootings in 1987 [see Joel Best’s articles, “Bad Guys and Random Violence” *Contemporary Legend* 1 (1991):107-21, and “Road Warriors” on ‘Hair-Trigger Highways’: Cultural Resources and the Media’s Construction of the 1987 Freeway Shootings Problem,” *Sociological Inquiry* 61 (1991):327-45].

A later warning, dated 1 October and faxed to businesses in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, blames the Chicago gangs:

Recently, I received some information through the State Police that I want to pass on to you. I've been told that this information is FACTUAL, not heresay [sic].

A gang from the Chicago area has been filtering into Pennsylvania recruiting members. As a form of initiation and/or display of power, they ride around at night with either no lights on or their high-beams on. When people flash their high-beams to them to bring this to their attention, the gang members shoot at the people who flashed.

This is such a serious threat that Security in several State agencies have been meeting with employees to pass this information around.

[C: Ruth Runion-Slear.]

BLOOD INITIATION WEEKEND. By the end of Sept., a variation of the "lights out" rumor warned that Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 25 and 26, was "Blood Initiation Weekend," during which gangs, including the well-known Bloods gang, would be out in full force. A faxed warning dated 23 Sept. was distributed to employees at the University of California, Irvine:

NOTICE TO STAFF

Per a fax received by the Sheriff's Department, the following is for your information. This has not been confirmed, but please be aware of the following:

Sacramento Police Dept., Grady Harn saw a national alert poster for this weekend, September 25-26, 1993. Police Depts across the nation are being warned that this is "blood" initiation weekend. Their intent is to have all new bloods nationwide drive around on Saturday and Sunday nights with their headlights off. In order to be accepted into the gang, they have to shoot and kill all individuals in the first auto that does a courtesy flash to warn them that their lights are off.

Be cautious if encountering any autos with lights off this weekend.

[C: Balaji V. Ramanathan.]

With the rumored Blood Initiation Weekend approaching, electronic mail and fax machines carried the rumor across the country. In Pittsburgh, Penn., for instance, police received notices about the alleged initiation from police departments in Oklahoma and California. The city school district alerted its 5,000 employees about the rumor, and workers at the University of Pittsburgh heard about it via e-mail. No incidents relating to the gang rumor were reported during the weekend [Matthew P. Smith, "Violent Initiation a Rumor," *Pittsburgh Press* (25 Sept.93):D-1, D-5, "Gang Rite Rumor without Merit," *Pittsburgh Press* (27 Sept.93):B-4, C: Henry Koretzky]. Similarly, some hotels in Baltimore, Maryland, notified employees after receiving faxes. One valet expressed concern over the alleged initiation

planned by the Bloods, who are based in Los Angeles. "I've heard stories that they are trying to expand across the country," said valet Robert Huebner, "so [the warning] is easy to believe" [Traci A. Johnson, "Two Hotels Heed Gang's Warning of Car Shootings," [Baltimore] *Sun* (27 Sept.93):3B].

Throughout the panic, officials expressed concern that the widespread media accounts of the rumor would result in copycat cases [see, for instance, Kim Boatman, "Cops Try to Arrest Rumor of Gang Rite," *San Jose [CA] Mercury News* (18 Sept.93), C: Phil Gustafson; "Big Fax Attack," *Newsweek* (4 Oct.93):8]. In an incident on Oct. 2, police in Wichita, Kansas, suggested that a drive-by shooting resulted from the wide publicity given to the gang initiation rumors. An occupant of a pickup truck running without lights shot at a woman who flashed her lights. Luckily, the shot missed the woman and her car ["Drive-by Shots Linked to Hoax," *Buffalo [NY] News* (6 Oct.93):A8, C: Daniel Case, alt.folklore.urban].

One journalist also speculated that the "lights out" rumors derived from a shooting death last year in which two Stockton, Calif., teenagers opened fire on a car after its driver indicated that the teenagers' car lights were off [Jennifer Lenhart, "'92 Case May Have Spurred Gang Story," *Houston Chronicle* (24 Sept.93):A21; cf. Patt Morrison, "Dodge City," *Los Angeles Times Magazine* (25 Oct.92):9].

THE KILLER IN THE BACKSEAT. In Phoenix, Arizona, Lee Boyle reported another initiation tale: "A woman fills her gas tank at a self-serve station. When she goes to the cashier's booth to pay, the cashier warns her that somebody has gotten into the backseat of her car. He advises her to fumble with her purse to stall while he calls the police. The police arrive and arrest a teenager who confesses that, as part of his gang initiation, he must sneak into the cars of two women at gas stations in order to rape and kill them" [alt. folklore.urban, 25 Sept.93]. According to other a.f.u. readers, this variation of "The Killer in the Backseat" was also making the rounds in California and North Carolina. Although some versions of this legend have a following motorist flashing his lights at the woman's car to keep the killer at bay, this detail apparently wasn't present in the variants circulating during the "lights out" panic [see Brunvand, *Vanishing Hitchhiker*:52-53, *Mexican Pet*:58-59.] [AEM]

EYE ON SATANISM

SRA CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON DC. A Georgia organization called "The National Criminal Justice Task Force" announced a "National Conference on Crimes Against Children" for 19-21 September in the Ramada Renaissance Techworld. The announced theme was "Sexual Exploitation of Children," but the cover letter began by mentioning Roland Summit, Bennet Braun, and Colin Ross, three leading proponents for satanic ritual abuse as the cause of multiple personality disorder. The letter advertised Edwin Meese III, US Attorney General under Ronald Reagan, as one participant, and added that the

conference would include meetings with John Hogan, Chief Assistant to Clinton's present Attorney General, Janet Reno. Reno and Hogan were central in prosecuting the 1985 Miami "Country Walk" preschool child abuse case, in which Francisco Fuster, a Cuban immigrant, was convicted largely on the basis of his Honduran wife's confessions. This affair, now reinterpreted as "ritualistic" in nature, is credited as the first successful prosecution of a SRA case. (For a skeptical view of the affair, see Debbie Nathan, "Revisiting Country Walk," *Issues in Child Abuse Accusations* 5:1 (1993):1-11.)

Other listed speakers were Carl Raschke, author of *Painted Black*, a popular attack on satanic crime, and Ken Wooden, the telejournalist who produced the influential 1985 *20/20* expose, "The Devil Worshipers." The cover letters added that 100 members of Congress had been targeted for lunch- and dinner briefings and promised unidentified "special congressional guest speakers." [BE]

UTAH TASK FORCE ON RITUAL ABUSE. Despite growing skepticism, Utah State Attorney General Jan Graham defended a two-year, \$250,000 special investigation into claims of ritual child abuse, even though it had not yet led to a single prosecution. "If these reports are true—frankly, if 2 percent of them are true—then it sure is something we need to do something about....If at the end of two years we haven't filed a report, it still was a good idea." The investigation stemmed from a May 1992 report by a subcommittee of the Governor's Commission for Women and Families, co-chaired by Noemi Mattis and D. Corydon Hammond, head of the University of Utah's sex-therapy clinic. The report described CIA-sponsored acts of cannibalism, murder, and sexual torture committed by satanists or pseudo-satanists, who induce multiple personality disorder in surviving victims to prevent them from informing. It convinced former Gov. Norm Bangerter to approve the special funding, earmarked for child abuse but in fact intended for SRA claims. Asst. Attorney General Rob Parrish, a member of the original subcommittee, took over the investigation, which has processed 22 of 40 reports without result.

Atty. General Graham dismissed claims that some investigators or therapists instilled false memories of abuse: "I believe that based on more than belief....I believe that based on reports from many experts in the field of child abuse, prosecutors like Rob [Parrish] and many others." The testimony of child victims was especially convincing, and while imaginative children might make up stories in some cases, she argued that implying that they lied about ritual abuse was "an extremely destructive myth....I don't think children fabricate stories about mommy and daddy hurting them."

The director of the state Division of Occupational and Professional Licencing said it was investigating complaints that around 10 therapists may have used questionable techniques. It was considering more definite standards for treating patients claiming sexual abuse, noting that some therapists may "have been misled, are acting incompetently, or are purposefully advancing their own agendas." [Patty Henetz, AP, 4

Apr.93. C:Jan Harold Brunvand.]

Dr. Hammond, meanwhile, backed off from his "Dr. Green" theory of SRA (*FN* 27:6, 29:9), saying to a *Salt Lake Tribune* reporter that he did not necessarily believe or intend to promote the claim. "It's simply a hypothesis out there which nobody out there can prove one way or another." Asked about statements he made at the June'92 training session, he admitted, "I was speaking casually and rapidly," adding "I have modified some thing since then. ... There have been some things that have modulated. Because of the controversy over the SRA/MPD link, he said he had suspended his practice in this field and emphasized that he had never included this material in courses he taught at the University of Utah. [Dan Harrie, "Theory Traces Ritual Roots to Nazi Era," *Salt Lake Tribune*, n.d. C: J.H. Brunvand.] [BE]

AND IN THE NETHERLANDS... Peter Burger reports: Recently, satanism has reared its ugly head here. Heretofore, it has not thrived as it has in the US: the first and only Dutch satanic rumor-panic occurred in 1987, when devil-worshippers disguised as clowns allegedly abducted dozens of children from Oude Pekela (see *FN* 19:6). For months the affair captivated the country, but when no evidence apart from the children's' testimony turned up, the case was closed. Two years later, the Evangelische Omroep [Evangelical Broadcasting Corp.] broadcast several documentaries exposing a worldwide satanic conspiracy. Due to their marked fundamentalist slant, they did not cause a stir.

Meanwhile, the SRA rumor was spreading in the community of Multiple Personality Disorder patients and therapists. It reached a wider audience and was given scientific backing by a recent study that was given much media attention: Suzette Boon and Nel Draijer, *Multiple Personality Disorder in the Netherlands* (Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1993). Boon and Draijer conceived their study at the 1987 Conference on Multiple Personality/Dissociative State. Such meetings have been described by Sherrill Mulhern as a major node in the international network of MPD therapists and patients. As a result, Bennett G. Braun, Roberta G. Sachs, and Richard P. Kluft, supporters of the SRA theory, were invited to conduct workshops in the Netherlands.

The study displays a measure of scientific caution, but in media appearances Suzette Boon has taken a firmer stand. On 12 June she stated that a satanic cult practicing human sacrifice is active in the Netherlands. She repeated her claims on the TV news-magazine NOVA (28-92 June) in a segment that also featured two female survivors undergoing therapy, with social workers, child welfare workers, and police officials.

According to Boon, children are being tortured and sexually abused by cultists; they are buried alive in coffins or graves and made to watch while others are tortured. Girls are made to give birth prematurely and sacrifice their babies. Secrecy is ensured by mind control and by the lack of proselytizing (satanists belong to intergenerational networks). And they could be anyone. Boon: "It occurs in all sections of society."

So far, no one has been brought to trial for ritual

abuse in the Netherlands. Police have investigated several cases, but could unearth no evidence. The Ministry of Health has instituted an MPD study group that will organize a conference later this year on ritual child abuse for social workers, police, and legal authorities. The Ministry of Justice will likewise form a study group, concerned exclusively with ritual abuse.

[Bert Bukman, "Satansgekte," *HP/De Tijd* (9 Jul.93): 12-13; Loes de Fauwe, "Ritueel misbruik van kinderen voor satan," *Het Parool* (12 Jun.93); Rob Nanninga, "De strijd tegen ded satanisten," *HN-Magazine* (24 Jul.93): 12-15; Koos Neuvel, "Duivelse fantasieën," *VU-Magazine* (Sept.93):20-27; "Rituele kindermishandeling: gruwel-sprookjes van en voor volwassenen," *Primeur* (6 Jul.93); "rituele mishandeling van kinderen door Justitie en WVC onderzocht," *NRC* (30 Jun.93). Photocopies of these materials are available from Peter Burger, Hogewoerd 49, 2311 HG Leiden, THE NETHERLANDS.]

PENNSYLVANIA PANICS. On the night of 30 June, the caretaker on Sky-View Memorial Park, an active cemetery near Hometown, surprised a group of teens huddled near a mausoleum. The group, composed of both girls and boys, ran off, but the caretaker collared two girls, but released them when one of the boys returned and managed to talk them loose, giving a false address. Afterwards, the caretaker noticed a small metal container that the group had left, which appeared to contain crematory ashes. If the ashes were human remains, local officials told press, that was proof presumptive that the group was a satanic cult holding a ritual. They also noted that rocks had previously been arranged in the form of a pentagram at the same place, and black candle drippings had been found at a nearby public restroom, so police were already suspicious of cult activities.

A local school official who regularly consulted with parents' groups on satanism, said it did not sound like hard-core satanism: such believers would not carry out ceremonies in graveyards for fear of being detected. But it certainly sounded like "dabblers," adding "I don't know what was in the box ... It really depends on what was in that." A local parent agreed: "If [the contents] really are human remains, well, I don't want to think about that." Cemetery officials found no graves opened and determined that the box came from somewhere else. Samples were sent to a state police laboratory for analysis. Oddly, no results were ever announced, despite efforts of local papers to follow up the investigation.

["Contents of box used in ritual to be tested,"

[Harrisburg] *Patriot* (3 Jul.93):A3; Michael Stetz, "Suspected satanic ritual upsets community,"

[Harrisburg] *Patriot* (11 Jul.93):A4. C: Alan Mays]

Dog Mutilation? On 21 Sept., a nurse arriving at a geriatric center in Hazleton found a young German shepherd wandering around wounded and muddy, with a short piece of rope dangling from its neck. The rope was knotted to a stake which witnesses suspected had been used to pin the dog to the ground. The animal was identified and taken to a local veterinarian, who at first was quoted as saying that it had been stabbed twice in the throat with a small knife. It was treated

and returned to its family.

By 23 Sept., two local television stations had announced that "the mutilated body of a German shepherd was found ... and police were investigating whether satanic activity was involved." Local emergency personnel were told to be alert for other incidents that suggested cults, but to "keep quiet about the wounded shepherd for fear that publicity will cause copycat crimes." This factor, however, was news to authorities, who disclaimed any information linking the incident to cults. A state police trooper issued a statement saying "Contrary to reports from local TV the dog was *not* mutilated and is very much alive and doing well. Also *no* evidence of any cult activity was discovered. The vet also requested a retraction: he had found only one small cut or puncture, the cause of which could not be determined. Investigation continues. [Emerson Heffner, "Stabbed dog rescued by nurse, taken home," *Hazleton Standard-Speaker* (24 Sept.93):1,5; "Police probing stabbed shepherd," *Hazleton Standard-Speaker* (25 Sept.93):5.

Hail Lucifer! When Pennsylvania State Attorney General Ernie Preate was inducted into a Masonic lodge on 24 Sept., the Diocese of Scranton immediately announced that he would be excommunicated unless he renounced his membership. Monsignor Neil Van Loon, chancellor of the diocese, backed the decision with a pamphlet, "May a Catholic and other Christians belong to the Masonic Lodge?" This insisted that "the god of Masonry ... is Lucifer" and urged lodge members to repent. The Very Rev. Girard F. Angelo, head of the Hazleton Roman Catholic Deanery, agreed with the decision, saying that Lucifer is "what Masonry is all about.... It's a Satanic thing. That's how the church views it." He noted that lodges were sworn to secrecy and were a "cell of the devil." Other sources, however, noted that local lodges had inducted Catholics without difficulty and denied that meetings involved devil-worship. Attorney General Preate issued a statement saying only that the matter was a "personal matter between him and his church" and that he intended "to continue practicing the principles of his religion." [Bob Salitza, "Diocese awaits word on Preate, Masons," *Hazleton Standard-Speaker* (1 Oct.93):19, 28.[BE]

BULLETIN BOARD

NEH SUMMER SEMINAR ON SOCIAL PROBLEMS. Offered under the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminars for College Teachers program, a 7-week seminar (13 June—29 July 1994) will explore the construction of social problems, the processes by which public issues emerge and evolve. Topics for discussion will include current issues in social problems theory, the rhetoric of social problems claims, and the medicalization of social problems. The constructionist stance is comparative, analyzing social problems across cultures and historical periods. The seminar may interest scholars in sociology, anthropology, history, criminology, communications, journalism, and folklore.

NEH Summer Seminars are intended primarily for individuals teaching undergraduates at 2- and 5-year institutions. Individuals who are not college teachers but who are qualified to carry out the work are also eligible, but not those currently involved in graduate programs. Participants will receive a stipend of \$3,600. Contact: Joel Best, Dept. of Sociology, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale IL 62901-4524; phone: 618-453-7615. Deadline: 1 March 1994.

UPCOMING MEETINGS. ISCLR will hold their 12th International Seminar in Paris, France, on 19-22 July 1994, hosted by the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. For information on registration, submitting abstracts, or proposing special panels, contact Mark Glazer, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Texas—Pan American, Edinburg TX 78539; Phone: 210-381-3551; E-mail: MG6BE8@PANAM1.PANAM.EDU; FAX: 210-381-2177.

Members may also be interested in the 8th International Conference on Traditional Medicine and Folklore, to be held in St. John's Newfoundland, on 18-21 August 1994, sponsored by the Mexican Academy of Traditional Medicine and the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Contact: J. K. Crellin, Faculty of Medicine, Memorial Univ., St. John's, NF A1B 3V6.

THE CUTTING EDGE

BOOKS AND MONOGRAPHS

Sung Koo and Bob Schreck, eds. *Urban Legends #1*. Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Comics, June 1993. 32 pp. \$2.95; \$3.70 Canadian. "Suggested for mature readers." A variety of counterculture cartoonists retell some 25 narratives, many familiar, in graphic form. Versions run 1-2 pages and usually interpret the narratives in a satiric or humorously literal style. In a sinister "Vanishing Hitchhiker," the driver is decapitated in a wreck caused by the revenant, and the second of two tellings of "The Cooked Baby" ends with a method to "re-create" the plot in your own home using a hot dog. [It doesn't work—Ed.] Also included: "Alligators in the Sewers," "The Exploding Cactus," "The Spider in the Hairdo," "Earwigs in the Brain," "The Babysitter and the Caller Upstairs," "The Amusement Park Snake," "The Turkey Neck," and several others, some of local circulation. Write: Dark Horse Comics, Inc., 10956 Main Street, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222 USA.

Patricia A. Turner. *I Heard It Through the Grapevine: Rumor in African-American Culture*. Berkeley: U of California Press, 1993. 260 pp. bibliography, index. \$25 ISBN:0-520-08185-4. An important contribution to legend studies, this work surveys scares and rumors distinctive to US Black communities, many unique to this subculture but paralleled by similar ones in mass culture. Examined are claims that white supremacists taint various foods to sterilize young Blacks or sponsor popular clothing lines. Conspiracy theories attribute crack cocaine, AIDS, and the Atlanta Child Murders to secret government experiments. Turner finds many of these rumors, if factually false, politically valid as ways of expressing more diffuse pressures on a minority

culture. Essential.

JOURNALS AND NEWSLETTERS

Dear Mr Thoms... A "folklore miscellany" focusing on contemporary folklore. In **No. 31 (July 1993)** Bill Scott presents the latest on pelicans said to catch and eat chihuahuas, while David Cornwell and Sandy Hobbs update their reports of killer clowns around Scottish schools. A brief extract from the 1884 *Folk-Lore Journal* relates a rumor active in Germany five years earlier that "all Catholic children with black hair and blue eyes were to be sent out of the country," variously to Russia or Turkey. An e-mail file relates a history of the world allegedly made up of freshman "bloopers." Reviews. Entertaining, well-edited, and useful. Ed. Gillian Bennett; irregular; ca. 6 issues £5; address: 28, Brownsville Road, Stockport SK44PF.

FLS News: The Newsletter of the Folklore Society. Notes and queries plus announcements. **No. 17 (June 1993)** includes two more accounts of the memorable 1964 Folklore Society meeting in which skeptic Rossell Hope Robbins's lecture on witchcraft was protested by Sybil Leek and other Wiccans. Other items give more on "The Witch of Scrapfaggot Green," a poltergeist released by moving a venerated stone, on 666 in auto licence plates, on Halloween customs, LSD tattoos, death from eating hair, other beliefs and legends. Ed. Steve Roud and Cindy Sughrue; 2/yr.; free to members of the Folklore Society, non-members: 2 issues £3.00; address: The Folklore Society, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT.

Fortean Times. International news accounts and reports of anomalous phenomena, often with photographs. **No. 69 (Jun./Jul.93)** features a comparative guide to self-confessed crop circle hoaxers and an interview with abduction researcher David Jacobs. Also surveyed are alleged photos of still-living American MIAs in Vietnamese slave camps and a widespread conspiracy theory focusing on the sale of "red mercury," a mysterious substance said to be crucial to nuclear weapons. Another British fire blamed on the reproduction of "The Crying Boy"; Chilean bleeding statue of Mary; anomalous animals. **No. 70 (Aug./Sept.93)** includes a piece on "Münchhausen's Syndrome," or self-mutilation, and its links with MPD, alien abduction, and other complexes. Long-distance returns by pets and an sea monster corpse found near Vancouver are surveyed. Shorter items record a Swedish flap over women drugged by a mystery assailant, UPC bar-code redemption schemes, an Italian miraculous photo of Jesus in the clouds, a Zimbabwe satanism/ cannibalism flap (cf. *FN* 20:7-8), and tourists who return pieces of Ayers Rock fearing an "aboriginal curse." Extensive reviews, letters. Ed. Bob Rickard and Paul Sieveking; 6/yr.; 6 issues £12.00; £15.00 or \$30.00 overseas; address: FT, 20 Paul Street, Frome, Somerset BA11 1DX UK.

Magonia. Britain's premiere journal for skeptical investigation of UFOs and claims of the paranormal. **No. 46 (June 1993)** features two detailed historical accounts of ufology, one by Peter Rogerson examining the earliest accounts of alien abductions in popular culture, one concluding Martin Kottmeyer's analysis of saucerlore as a

cultural response to the Cold War. Shorter items discuss the growing backlash against the MPD/SRA scenario and the Linda Napolitano case. Reviews, letters. Ed. John Rimmer; 4/yr.; 4 issues £4.00, US \$10, Europe £5.00, other countries £5.50; address: John Dee Cottage, 5 James Terrace, Mortlake Churchyard, London SW14 8HB UK.

Millennial Prophecy Report, formerly *Millennium News* or *Times*, the newsletter of the Millenium Watch Institute, tracking ephemera produced by prophets of various sects, including Christians, New Agers, Jews, UFO cults, hollow-earthers, and so on. **Vol.2:4 (Oct.93)** focuses on UFO-related themes, in which aliens replace traditional and angelic forces. Summaries of recent periodicals describe aliens as often hostile, sapping our body fluids and implanting microchips in our brains to track us and, if necessary, kill us at will. Other scenarios describe the ecological end of the world and the technologically enhanced rise of Antichrist. Ed. Ted Daniels; 10/yr.; \$30/yr; address: PO Box 34021, Philadelphia, PA 19101-4021.

New Jersey Folklife has recently resumed publication after a brief hiatus. **Vol. 15 (1990)** is a special issue on Quaker folklife, with a lead essay by Don Yoder on "The Cultural Impact of Quakerism on Southern New Jersey." Other studies analyze the roots of the Quaker meeting and a community's reactions to World War I. The volume is completed by A 1814 woman's reaction to breast cancer surgery, a study of a Quaker suffragist, and the contemporary reaction of a missionary to being lost at sea off Alaska. **Vol. 16 (1991)** includes an oral history of carousel-making and running, along with other studies of folklife in the area. Essays study slash-and-burn cultivation among Scandinavian immigrants and the vernacular architecture of icehouses. A photo essay on Latino folklife shows religious processions and a local botánica. Ed. William Westerman; 1/yr; address: PO Box 747, New Brunswick NJ 08903.

News of the Weird. Bizarre news item summaries. **No. 23 (9 Jul.93)**: bizarre civil lawsuits filed by convicts, dissatisfied purchasers of x-rated videos, and a man seriously burned by a toilet-seat disinfectant; four ministers exorcise a Florida oak once used as a murder site by a serial killer after robed, hooded figures appear there to scare children; in an initiation rite, a would-be mountain man is shot in the eye with an arrow but suffers no apparent loss of brain function. Ed. Chuck Shepherd; irreg.; 7/\$10, \$11 Canada, \$16 foreign; Address: P.O. Box 8306, St. Petersburg, FL 33738.

Tutte Storie. The newsletter of the Italian center for collecting rumors and contemporary legends. **No. 6 (Jun.93)** includes Marino Niola's discussion of three legends from Naples: the alleged lawsuit brought by a couple engaged in lovemaking whose car was bumped from behind, resulting in the girl's pregnancy (*FN* 18:8); the man who, believing his pocket has been picked, demand's the "thief's" wallet ("The Jogger's Billfold": *Choking Doberman* 188-191; *Baby Train* 265-266); and a huge albino rodent that lives under the local cemetery (cf. *FN* 19:10). Other reports survey "The Bothered Bride" (*Mexican Pet* 134-135) in Italian media versions,

including a TV interview with the alleged bride, and "The Wife Left Behind." After the kidnap-murder of a 4-year-old in Oct.92, it was widely reported to be a "satanic" murder, provoking a blitz of sensational publications. Medical properties of Coca-Cola, French and English abstracts, review of publications. Ed. Paolo Toselli; address: Centro per la Raccolta delle Voci e Leggende Contemporanee (CERAVOLC), Casella Postale 53, 15100 Alessandria ITALY.

View from the Ledge. Ridiculous news items and headlines, many in facsimile. **No. 46 (9 Jul.93)**: An eagle flies off with a small dog near Valdez, Alaska; a cassette with over 500 recorded farts sells for \$9.95; jurors in Arkansas are legally required to believe in God; a hierarchical diagram shows how Satan controls the Jesuits, Illuminati, International Bankers, Masons, and the Mafia ("Criminal Arm of the Vatican"); a flyer provides a comparative "consumer's guide" to the McMartin, Wee Care, and Little Rascals day care centers, all allegedly run by satanists. Ed. Chuck Shepherd; irreg., free with every second copy of *News of the Weird*; Address: P.O. Box 8306, St. Petersburg, FL 33738.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

We are interested in 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 the UK. Forward references or offprints (if convenient) to Alan E. Mays, Heindel Library, Penn State Harrisburg, 777 W. Harrisburg Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057-4898, USA. For work in foreign languages, English abstracts would be appreciated.

Items starred (*) are housed in a file in one of the editors' office and can be made available to qualified scholars for reference. Books and articles from major publishers or standard journals are not normally starred.

- * Achiron, Marilyn. "Soda Jerks?" *People Weekly* (5 Jul.93):34-35. [Pepsi syringe scare.]
- * Alderson, Kate. "Family Accused of Raping Children in Satanic Rituals." [London] *Times* (8 Jun.93):3.
- * Alvarez, Rafael. "UFO Fans Picket against Cosmic Cover-up." *Washington Post* (6 Jul.93):3A. [White House protesters allege a government UFO cover-up.]
- * Bell, Adam. "Midstate Falls Prey to Get-Well Hoax." [Harrisburg, PA] *Patriot* (12 Jul.93):A1, A8. [Craig Shergold.]
- * Bennetts, Leslie. "Nightmares on Main Street." *Vanity Fair* (Jun.93):42ff. [Ritual abuse.]
- * Bütz, Michael R. "The Vampire as a Metaphor for Working with Childhood Abuse." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 63 (1993):426-31.
- * "Cameroon's Snake Man Who Swallows Girls." *New African* 311 (Sept.93):22. [Rumors of a man who turns into a snake and devours women.]
- * Coale, Howard. "Subway Mystery." *New Yorker* (14 Jun.93):33. [A Bible discovered on a subway turnstile turns out to belong to a woman who committed suicide 22 years earlier.]

- Corbin, Alain. *The Village of Cannibals: Rage and Murder in France, 1870*. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992. [Rumors of cannibalism following the murder of a nobleman by a peasant mob.]
- * Darnton, John. "Savage 'Horse Ripper' Panics English Countryside." *New York Times* (24 Jun. 93):A4. [Cf. FN 29:7-8.]
- de Caro, Frank. *The Folktale Cat*. Little Rock, Ark.: August House, 1993. [Collection of cat tales, with a chapter on "The Legendary Cat" that draws from Brunvand's books and other sources for examples of "The Bungled Rescue," "The Flying Kitten," "The Witch Cat," and other legends.]
- * DellaFlora, Anthony. "Kids' Foundations Fear Fallout from Bogus Business-Card Drive." *Albuquerque [NM] Journal* (21 Jul.93):C1. [Craig Shergold.]
- Dyer, Charles H. *World News and Bible Prophecy*. Wheaton, IL: Tynedale Publishers, 1993. [Relates recent world events to biblical prophecies.]
- * Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Todd Gitlin. "Panic Gluttons." *Washington Post* (7 Mar.93):C1, C2. [Terrorism, cults, and other American "mass panics and moralistic fixations."]
- Eicher, Peter. *The Elvis Sightings*. New York: Avon Books, 1993. [Sightings of Elvis Presley since his death.]
- * Elson, John. "And Now, Who Shot R.F.K.?" *Time* (7 Jun.93):45. [Conspiracy theories surrounding the death of Robert Kennedy.]
- * Forrest, Waves. "AIDS: Did It Start in a US War Lab?" *New African* 309 (Jun.93):21.
- * Gilbert, Patrick. "Flier Warning Public of LSD-Soaked Tattoo Dupes Parents, Police." [Baltimore] *Sun* (27 Sept.93):1B, 3B. ["Blue Star Acid" in Maryland.]
- * Hufford, David J. "Commentary: Paranormal Experiences in the General Population." *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 180 (1992):362-68. [Discusses supernatural and paranormal belief in light of Ross and Joshi's article (below).]
- * James, Michael. "Mare Killed in Sexual Mutilation." [Baltimore] *Sun* (7 Oct.93):1B, 4B. [Horse mutilations in Maryland and Virginia.]
- * Jones, Charisse. "A Lesson in 'Be Careful What You Wish.'" *New York Times* (1 Sept.93):A1, B5. [Craig Shergold.]
- Jones, James H. *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*. new and expanded ed. New York: Free Press, 1993. [Documents the mistreatment of African Americans as part of a U.S. government medical experiment, and in a new chapter, "AIDS: Is It Genocide?" (220-241), examines African-American suspicion of governmental involvement in the AIDS epidemic.]
- * Jossi, Frank. "Who Reads Supermarket Tabs?" *American Journalism Review* 15 (Sept.93):14-15. [Interview with Elizabeth Bird.]
- * King, Laura. "Local Pizza Delivery Business Fights Rumors." [University of Arkansas, Fayetteville] *Arkansas Traveler* (4 Aug.93):1, 4. [Domino's Pizza is plagued by rumors that employees ejaculate onto pizzas.]
- * Lagnado, Lucette. "Messiah Wars." *Village Voice* (6 Jul.93):23-28. [Messianic belief among Lubavitcher Jews in New York.]
- * Lambert, Pam, Luchina Fisher, and Barbara Sandler. "Rites of Murder." *People Weekly* (21 Jun.93):43-44. [Three teenagers are charged in the "cultlike" murders of three 8-year-old boys in Arkansas.]
- * Larrabee, John. "Monster Mania: Champ No Chump in Japan." *USA Today* (8 Sept.93):7A. [Japanese interest in Lake Champlain monster.]
- * Lesly, Elizabeth, and Laura Zinn. "The Right Moves, Baby." *Business Week* (5 Jul.93):30-31. [Pepsi syringe scare.]
- * Lipstadt, Deborah. "Academe Must Not Legitimize Denials of the Holocaust." *Chronicle of Higher Education* (28 Jul.93):B1-B2.
- _____. *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*. New York: Free Press, 1993.
- * Magiera, Marcy. "Pepsi Weathers Tampering Hoaxes." *Advertising Age* (21 Jun.93):1, 46.
- * Mayfield, Mark. "Sexual Abuse and Story Time." *USA Today* (24 May.93):6A. [Edenton, N.C., child abuse case; see FN 23:12.]
- * Miller, Annetta, with Daniel Glick and Sherry Keene-Osborn. "The Great Pepsi Panic." *Newsweek* (28 Jun.93):32. [Pepsi syringe scare.]
- * Milbank, Dana. "Huron, Ohio, Wants You to Come See Its Own Sea Monster." *Wall Street Journal* (29 Jul.93):A1, A5. [Lake Erie monster.]
- * Montenyohl, Eric L. "Strategies for the Presentation of Oral Traditions in Print." *Oral Tradition* 8 (1993):159-86.
- Newton, Sarah E. "'The Jell-O Syndrome': Investigating Popular Culture/Foodways." *Western Folklore* 51 (1992):249-67. [Anecdotes and food contamination narratives about the gelatin food product, Jell-O.]
- * O'Reilly, David. "The Devil, You Say." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (18 Jul.93):G1-G6. [Skeptical view of satanism]
- Paredes, Américo. *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border*. Edited with an introduction by Richard Bauman. Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1993. [Reprints "Folk Medicine and the Intercultural Jest," "The Décima on the Texas-Mexican Border: Folksong as an Adjunct to Legend," and other essays.]
- _____. *Uncle Remus con chile*. Houston, Tex.: Arte Público Press, 1993. [Mexican and Texas-Mexican jokes and narratives, with Spanish texts and English notes and introduction.]
- Pendergrast, Mark. *For God, Country, and Coca-Cola: The Unauthorized History of the Great American Soft Drink and the Company That Makes It*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1993. [Coca-Cola contamination and conspiracy rumors: pp. 116, 191, 244-46.]
- * Price, Wayne T. "Snapple Fights Rumor of Racism." *USA Today* (2 Sept.93):2B.
- * Renard, Jean-Bruno. "L'homme sauvage dans l'imagerie contemporaine." *Analele Universitatii Bucuresti* 41 (1992):89-99. [The Abominable Snowman and Bigfoot in

contemporary comic strips and films.]

* Rocca, Tony, and Nigel Hawkes. "Snapping Turtles Put Riviera under Siege." [London] *Times* (17 Aug.93):11. [Miniature turtles, bought as pets during the Ninja turtle craze, are wreaking havoc in lakes and streams after being flushed down toilets.]

* Rosenbaum, Ron. "The Devil in Long Island." *New York Times Magazine* (22 Aug.93):21+. [Satanic murder and other crimes in suburban Long Island.]

* Ross, Colin A., and Shaun Joshi. "Paranormal Experiences in the General Population." *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 180 (1992):357-61.

[Relationship between adult paranormal/extrasensory experiences and childhood physical and sexual abuse.]

* Samon, Katherine Ann. "The 8 Most Incredible Stories You've Ever Heard." *McCall's* (Sept.93):120, 122-23.

[Jan Harold Brunvand, Jack Levin, and Gary Alan Fine on legend and rumor.]

* Sandberg, Jared. "When a Penny Falls from Heaven, Can It Kill a Pedestrian?" *Wall Street Journal* (22 Sept.93):A1, A16. [Discusses alt.folklore.urban, the Usenet computer network discussion group devoted to contemporary legends.]

Senn, Bryan, and John Johnson. *Fantastic Cinema Subject Guide: A Topical Index to 2500 Horror, Science Fiction, and Fantasy Films*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1992. [Topical sections, with brief introductory essays and descriptive notes for each movie: The Abominable Snowman, Aliens, Alligators and Crocodiles, Bigfoot, Demons and Devils, Ghosts, Grave Robbers, Statues Come to Life, Voodoo, and Witches, Warlocks, and Cults.]

Sexton, Rocky. "Cajun and Creole Treasures: Magico-Religious Folk Healing in French Louisiana." *Western Folklore* 51 (1992):237-48.

Shepherd, Chuck. *America's Least Competent Criminals: True Tales of Would-be Outlaws Who Have Botched, Bungled, and Otherwise Haplessly but Hilariously Fumbled Their Crimes*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1993. [Mentions legends, including the photocopy lie detector, pp. 121-122.]

* Siano, Brian. "Dancing with the Fuhrer." *The Humanist* 53 (Sept.-Oct.93):42-44. [Holocaust revisionists.]

Smith, Moira. "The Ritual Humor of Students: Capping at Victoria University, 1902-1988." Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1992.

Tamarkin, Bob. *Rumor Has It: A Curio of Lies, Hoaxes, and Hearsay*. New York: Prentice Hall General Reference, 1993.

* Taub, Diane E., and Lawrence D. Nelson. "Satanism in Contemporary America: Establishment or Underground?" *Sociological Quarterly* 34 (1993):523-41.

* Thomas, Evan, with Patrick Rogers and Adam Wolfberg. "Who Shot JFK?" *Time* (6 Sept.93):14-17. [The release of additional government files on the Kennedy assassination spurs conspiracy theorists.]

* Toufexis, Anastasia. "A Weird Case, Baby? Uh Huh!" *Time* (28 Jun.93):41. [Pepsi tampering scare.]

* Triplett, William. "Visitation Rites." *American Journalism Review* 15 (Sept.93):32-36. [Media treatment

of Virgin Mary sightings and other "mysterious religious events."]

* Udovitch, Mim. "Legend Lite." *Entertainment Weekly* (11 Jun.93):28-30. [Rock star Rod Stewart refutes the rumor that he "had to have his stomach pumped after marathon homosexual oral sex."]

Wedding Nightmares: As Told to the Editors of Bride's Magazine. New York: Plume, 1993. [Versions of "The Bothered Bride," pp. 19-20, and "The Videotaped Theft," pp. 212-13, along with additional "true tales of floral fiascos, ruinous receptions, and other bridal calamities."]

* Wilson, Paul S. "What Chief Seattle Said." *Environmental Law* 22 (1992):1451-68. [Documents a widely quoted but apocryphal Native American speech about the environment.]

Wojcik, Daniel. "Approaching Doomsday: Fatalism in Contemporary American Apocalyptic Beliefs." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1992. [Examines Hal Lindsey's books, Veronica Lueken's Marian apparitions, and fears of nuclear holocaust as part of American apocalypticism.]

Zeitlin, Steven J., Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker. *A Celebration of American Family Folklore: Tales and Traditions from the Smithsonian Collection*. Cambridge, MA: Yellow Moon Press, 1992. [Reprint, with a new introduction, of the work originally published in 1982.]

FOAftale News is the newsletter of the International Society for Contemporary Legend Research. We encourage study of "modern" and "urban" legends, and also of any legend circulating actively.

To join, send a check made out to "ISCLR" for \$18 USD or £10 UK pounds sterling to Paul Smith, Department of Folklore, Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland, CANADA A1C 5S7. Members also receive *Contemporary Legend*, an annual journal with refereed articles and reviews. The 1991 issue (£10 PPD) and institutional subscriptions (£20 UK/EC; £22 elsewhere) are available from Hisarlik Press, 4 Catfield Road, Enfield Lock, Middlesex EN3 6BD, UK (phone/fax +44 992 700 898).

All research notes and articles are copyright by the individual authors, who reserve all rights. For permission to quote or reprint, contact them at the addresses given in the headnotes of the article. *FN* is indexed in the *MLA Bibliography*. Send queries, notices, and short research reports (up to 3000 words) to the General Editor: I can use material on IBM-compatible 3½ inch diskettes. Send clippings, offprints, and bibliographic notices to the News Editor.

General Editor: Bill Ellis, Penn State Hazleton, Hazleton, PA 18201, USA. Member, Council of Editors of Learned Journals. Phone: 717-450-3026 or 717-788-2021. E-mail: WCE2 at PSUVM.BITNET. Fax: 717-450-3182.

News Editor: Alan E. Mays, Penn State Harrisburg, Heindel Library, Penn State Harrisburg, 777 W. Harrisburg Avenue, Middletown, PA 17057-4898, USA; E-mail: AXM22 @ PSUVM.BITNET.