

Introduction to the Final Report

(August 18, 1997)

The biographer's craft seems to be a mysterious combination of data, insight and just plain luck. We have been engaged in a kind of pre-biography task: to secure as much oral history as we can on a particular individual, Alex Tanous, to help frame, fill out, and correct what we already know about his life and profession. Alex was a public figure who engaged in a number of high profile activities. He also wrote (with the help of Harvey Ardman) a book about his own life and special powers. So we start with a profile created in some ways by the main figure in our work. But, like all public figures, Alex's visible persona is incomplete, both representing and obscuring some of what he was as a public and (in important ways) a very private individual. The material we are presenting here will suggest and enrich the image of a man who was much more complex than sometimes thought, even by those who professed to know him well.

One of the main themes in this inchoate work is that Alex was an individual who claimed unusual gifts. He was not just a member of one of the standard professions, and did not achieve success in conventional ways. He was a teacher and healer who moved to the edges of these fields by virtue of the psychic powers that he asserted and used. So we have conducted research on Alex's life within the very real frame of the paranormal and its cognate fields. Polly has concentrated more of her efforts on the views of family, friends and acquaintances, while Fred has talked more with those in the areas of paranormal research and practices. But we have both sought out a mixture of personal and professional views on Alex as a man who defined himself as a psychic.

The material presented here will help those who want to go further in the study of this unusual and interesting person. Among the gratifying results of this research has been the confirmation that Alex really was a good person, and that many people believe that his powers were genuine. These discoveries have made the effort here rewarding even when we were occasionally frustrated in trying to locate, or get agreement from, a few of the individuals we wanted to interview. The work has been a good experience for both of us, and we hope that the materials will contribute to a more complete record of the life of Alex Tanous.

The materials are being presented in two packages. The reasons are direct and benign. First, we are two people working in different parts of the country with different agendas in the research program. It would be unusual, and perhaps even miraculous, if we presented identical packages. Second, our working styles and temperaments are different, which is evident from the two presentations. But we think that this is a good and helpful thing that has expanded the breadth of the research. Third, and probably the controlling factor, the sheer number of pages of these materials would make it awkward to offer the research in a single package. But, having said that, be assured that this project has been a cooperative effort between the two researchers at every stage. We think that the complementary form and content of the research materials bear this observation out. Enjoy.

Polly Bennell

Fred Frohock

Final Report

August 18, 1997

Alex Tanous Life Research Project

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Final Report -- Frohock

*Part One: Life and Profession**

Alex Tanous was an unusual and complex individual. Like most of us he negotiated his life with a variety of shields and mediating devices. These included the familiar distinctions between professional and personal life, and the usual benign compartments that organize relationships among family, friends, acquaintances, professional colleagues, and others. These networks of privacy and access are common fare in any human life, and biographers often try to see through the shields in order to understand the complete person. The interview data we have secured in this project can help anyone choosing to take on such a task. But Alex, unlike most of us, also claimed to possess extraordinary psychic powers. These powers inevitably challenge materialist accounts of human experience and, as a consequence, illuminate Alex's life from a different and uncommon perspective. We are offered large opportunities to study the limits and possibilities of human experience by exploring Alex's professional life as a psychic. This prospect invites us to understand not just Alex's personal life, but his identity and standing in the fields of parapsychology and cognate inquiries. The insistent (though not the only) questions that guide this inquiry are whether Alex's psychic powers were genuine, and if they were, how he used them.

These questions are especially important today since current forms of Western life are apparently incomplete without experiences that exceed the boundaries of naturalism. Beliefs in the supernatural (in the simple sense of beyond nature) range widely across social and economic differences in American society, and in unexpected ways. A Gallup poll published in October 1988 revealed that 50 percent of the American public believes in angels, 46 percent

in extrasensory perception, and 37 percent in devils. The poll reported that college graduates believe in clairvoyance in greater numbers than those who do not go to college at all (by 27 to 15 percent). Another Gallup poll in 1991 expanded these findings. It found that 52 percent of Americans believe in astrology, 46 percent in extrasensory perception, and 42 percent in communication with the dead. The data go beyond beliefs. Opinion polls report that from one-half to three-quarters of the American population claim to have had a psychic experience.

Those who study psychic matters tell us that reports of psychic experiences are inevitably winnowed down to lower percentages when they are investigated. The acceptable range after explaining away the obvious (and sometimes the non-obvious) is more modest: ten to fifteen percent of the population have had a psychic experience for which there is no conventional explanation. Anyone familiar with the size of the American population knows that these lower percentages still cover large numbers of people. The supernatural seems to be a generalizable commodity in American life, suggesting that a recent president's attractions to biblical predictions and astrological readings were yet more proof that he truly did represent the settled convictions of the people he served. The data are also caution lights in assessing claims for psychic powers and experiences. Any phenomenon so clearly embedded in the belief systems of a culture must be examined carefully in order to avoid automatic subscriptions to its authenticity.

One way to begin an exploration of the psychic side of Alex Tanous is to place him in the general contexts of research into psychic phenomena. Those who study psychic experiences today in the United States often approach the phenomena with a scientific temperament, which is one way to honor the caution

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lights and the way that Alex preferred to explain psychic phenomena. The scientific temperament is inclined to categorize, and does so in the fields of paranormal studies by recognizing two main types of psychic ability (psi): extrasensory perception (ESP) and psychokinesis (PK). ESP is the general term for clairvoyance (discerning objective states), telepathy (discerning the thoughts of others), and precognition (seeing the future). PK is mental influence on objects, or thought affecting the external world. These abilities are testable in parapsychology laboratories. Parapsychologists also recognize (but cannot easily test in controlled conditions) claims for ghosts, poltergeists, and other spirit happenings. There are also the less formal (and unsettling) phenomena of out-of-body (OBE) and near-death experiences, for which there are reliable data but disagreement over what these data mean.

These distinctions, like so many others, overlap in both theory and practice. Precognition, for example, may simply be telepathy extended to the future (reading the thoughts of future persons -- a common explanation among psychics for pre-seeing), and clairvoyance may be a reading of the thoughts of those with access to the objective state that is the target of ESP. Any remote viewing may be an out-of-body experience, with the astral body of the subject traveling to the viewing area. These curious overlaps can wreak havoc on controlled experiments by chronically obscuring causal variables, for example the indeterminacy of cause-and-effect resulting from simply not knowing whether the subject of an experiment is engaged in remote viewing or telepathy. But these problems have not yet led to a dismissal of the distinctions. They seem to function as a kind of pragmatic bookkeeping device for researchers to classify psychic powers.

Research on psychic phenomena is predictably controversial, with the

expected divisions between skeptics and believers. But acrimonious disputes are found even among believers in parapsychology. These disputes include the expected methodological differences on research agendas, the concepts and causal chains in psychic events, and the rules of evidence, inference and argument appropriate for research. For example, the exact roles and effects of ESP and PK, and even whether they can be distinct from each other, are topics of considerable disagreement. Also dividing research efforts are the importance and reliability of two contrasting types of evidence. Some researchers use only formal data secured through laboratory experiments. Others urge the use of informal evidence drawn from spontaneous psychic experiences. Unfriendly comments on the competence and common sense of rivals seem to reinforce the divisions among fields of research.

Two striking features of Alex Tanous's standing in these fields appear in the research interviews and literatures. One is that he was utterly indifferent toward the divisions and disputes among practitioners. Patrice Kean (in an informal discussion on August 5, 1997, in the American Society for Psychical Research - ASPR - Library) described Alex as a man of exceeding goodwill, completely outside the petty critiques of rivals. The other is that his gifts seemed to extend across the natural divisions in the field. Not to put the point too finely, but Alex was a psychic who claimed to undergo what we might call robust psychic experiences, meaning those that normally occur, or occur most vividly and fully, outside the strict limits of controlled experiments. He was an individual who claimed the ability to foresee the future on occasion (often spontaneously), read the minds of others, affect the material world through his mental powers, heal organic diseases through psychic intervention, and (one of Alex's main powers) leave his body at will.

He also found lost children, helped the police in solving crimes, tracked ghosts, tried to heal the ill, conducted instructional seminars on psychic skills -- in general, Alex did what psychics do when they exercise their skills in those larger arenas of ordinary life that do not comfortably fit the strict limits of laboratory controls. Yet he was also a willing and frequent participant in some of the more important controlled experiments in recent history.

One of the classic experiments in contemporary psi research involved Alex. [The experiment described here is presented in Karlis Osis and Donna McCormick, "Kinetic Effects at the Ostensible Location of an Out-of-Body Projection During Perceptual Testing," The Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research Vol 74 (July 1980).] The experiment tested the kinetic effects of an astral (spiritual or psychic) body. Alex was placed in an isolated room at the ASPR. He was then asked to leave his body and enter a separate sealed chamber to identify visual targets. Strain-gauge sensors placed in front of the viewing window of the optical image device registered any mechanical effect in the area of the targets. In 197 trials extending over 20 sessions the data show that the strain-gauge sensors were significantly more active when hits (correct identifications) were recorded than when there were misses. Something or someone could be said to have been present when the subject (Alex) was presumably "looking" at the targets. These results were introduced as conforming to a hypothesis that during the experiment the subject was out of his body and somehow in the sealed chamber viewing the targets.

Researchers who use controlled experiments do not like to use psychics as subjects. (This observation was made by a number of the individuals I

interviewed.) There are several explanations for this reluctance. One is that psychics are "wild-cards." They bring too many resources to the table, with the risk that both negative and positive results from experiments are likely to be skewed away from almost any imaginable norm. These distortions are less likely with a random selection of subjects from the general population. A second explanation is that the use of psychics violates a norm endorsed in the early Rhine laboratory: psychic powers are attributes found in the general population, and the most productive ways to study these attributes require test subjects who are ordinary members of human communities, not individuals who are part of the distinguished traditions of shamans, wizards, or - in Alex's case - psychics. Third, the psychic by definition possesses abilities that exceed the range of laboratory testing. For example, if the paranormal cannot succeed in the laboratory, the evidence gathered in informal or uncontrolled situations where psychic events are reported might be taken more seriously. This is an assertion that might not be available to an ordinary test subject. But it is a reasonable claim for a psychic to make, especially if the psychic has demonstrated abilities in non-formal conditions. Fourth, the psychic is harder to control since s/he is deeper within a range of powers that can in principle affect the controls that the researcher places on the experiment. Many claims for psychic experiences require a radical revision of ordinary reality. Once one allows that the laws of physics can be circumvented all bets are off on experimental controls. Finally, note that the negative attitude of laboratory scientists toward psychics is complemented by the reluctance of psychics to undertake controlled experiments. (They do not like to be proved wrong, one respondent told me.)

This tension between psychics and researchers makes it all the more

remarkable that Alex went into experimental conditions with such high energy and enthusiasm. He was (on all reports) eager to participate in any and all controlled experiments, and believed that the best studies of psychic experiences had to be eminently scientific. (Alan Vaughan told me in his interview that Alex was always ready to take on any experiment. Rhea White remembers Alex's professionalism in concentrating on the research. Ingo Swann pays tribute to Alex's dedication to the experiments.) No other psychic may have believed so strongly in science as Alex did. One result of his enthusiasms was the classic experiment at the ASPR (Osis/McCormick, 1980) that many students of psychic phenomena (Michael Grosso, for example) regard as the most palpable and persuasive evidence we have in a controlled setting for an OBE.

Yet, having allowed for science and controlled experimentation, I think that Alex's main contributions to psychic studies must also contain an impressive range of non-experimental events. He always provided spirited arguments and persuasive demonstrations that psychic powers *must* occur also in more comprehensive settings. One of the keys to unlocking Alex's psyche may be in the tension between psychic techniques and scientific methods, for Alex was always trying to merge the two without complete success.

The thought informing all beliefs in psychic or supernatural realities has a metaphorical expression. Human reality occupies a small stage in a theater filled with dramas that can be only partially glimpsed by our powers of sensing and knowing. Scientific inquiry aims to describe and explain a set of visible realities that yield their features to testable statements. The knowable is the natural foundation of scientific inquiry, not realities that are beyond human comprehension. Psychic orientations, by contrast, assume a

larger, and to some degree, invisible reality, and accept the limiting condition that it cannot be fully explained. The assumption in all psychic beliefs and practices is that such alternative realities are the sources for psychic powers. This assumption suggests that the origin and proprietary domain of psychic powers are outside of the dimensions of ordinary reality, and, by definition, beyond the parameters of any controlled experiment.

The expansive nature of psychic events, their tendency to exceed formal parameters, is part of the logic of such experiences. Even more restricted versions of ESP and PK, effective only in micro settings, may not be capable of expression in formal conditions. Like any of a number of human traits, talents and virtues, psychic powers may be organic capacities, products of evolutionary development that contributed to human survival. But like many of these traits their natural homes may be outside the artificial environments of experimental laboratories. The capacity to love, for example, is a genuine human power, widely acknowledged by lay and professional people. Imagine, however, an experiment which introduces two individuals in a laboratory or controlled setting and gives them a certain number of hours (or days) to "fall in love" to test the validity of the experience. It may work. But the failure of such an experiment does not falsify the capacity. Controlled experiments may be unable to examine those variables that occur only or primarily in the non-laboratory settings of ordinary (read: real) life. Psychic powers may be as genuine as the capacity to love, and as unsuitable to formal testing.

Cases of precognition serve as the first examples in Alex's life illustrating these assumptions and observations. One of the claims offered by Alex is that he saw the murder of John Lennon six months before he was killed

at the Dakota Hotel entrance. In the story, Alex was being interviewed by a reporter from NBC Radio on the general subject of predicting the future. After some questions on how prophecy works, the interviewer offered Alex the opportunity to make a prediction on anything then and there. Alex declined, pointing out that he did not make predictions. He claimed to **see** the future, not predict it, and -- note the words here -- the experience for him was always spontaneous, not producible on demand. At that moment, Alex got up from his chair, thinking that the tape recorder was off, and moved over to the window. He gazed at the Dakota Hotel (visible directly across the street from the ASPR library) and the thought of John Lennon being killed just occurred to him. The thought was a burst or "spill" in his mental state, and included the understanding that the murder would be particularly untimely and affect the whole earth.

The second examples are in the area of psychokinesis. In one well-known story Alex claimed to have used his powers to prevent a plane crash. The plane was a commuter flight departing from Bangor, Maine. Alex reported that a voice warned him that an accident was going to occur, but also urged him to board the plane to save the other passengers. On takeoff the plane did not ascend normally and the pilot banked to return to the airport. The plane then started falling slowly and was headed for a crevice in the earth just short of the runway. Alex thought, "let's move this plane," and felt his will keep the plane aloft until it was over the runway where it simply fell straight down. No one was hurt in the accident except Alex, who suffered a mild shoulder injury and some whiplash effects. But Alex believed that had the plane hit the crevice, everyone could have perished.

Notice that these two examples are claims for powers exhibited a)

spontaneously (the precognition case), or b) in emergency conditions (the plane-crash-avoidance case). Whether true accounts or not, the validity of these events cannot be tested in controlled experiments. Alex, even with his commitment to science, recognized the limitations of formal testing. He claimed that he could summon something deep within himself to "read" people and foresee events. He maintained that these powers were always there when he needed them, except in test conditions where the need is artificial. Karlis Osis, in the interview I conducted with him, made exactly the same point: that Alex could not always exhibit his powers in controlled settings because they were more suited for non-laboratory situations.

Alex is on record as seeing reality in both deterministic and holistic terms. No one, he believed, dies before the right time, and no power can change the natural order of events. Like the Stoics, Alex regarded the universe as governed by a deterministic order that we can resist (and in doing so create our own misery), but never alter. He also believed in the existence of a collective consciousness, a kind of inherited mental stratum that is the public resource for psychic abilities. He urged his students to connect to this universal "mind" and allow one's psychic gifts to be nourished by it. Alex rejected most dualities, especially those distinguishing individuals from each other. He favored the synthesis of self with others and with the world. Where many spiritual perspectives settle for differences -- mind-body, self-world, self-other -- Alex recognized the possibility of a seamless web of spiritual connections.

Many psychic practices routinely accept some version of dualism. In extreme form, this is the doctrine that an independent self exists within the body of every human, and that this self is the source of the individual's

identity. The doctrine is compelling in many ways. It explains widespread beliefs and feelings that persons are more than just material bodies. In religions the doctrine leads easily to a belief in spiritual life after physical death. To the healer the possibility that we are composed of mind and body explains health as a harmonious arrangement of the two. For the psychic, however, dualism offers the ultimate payoff: the prospect of parallel experiences, where the essential person, the one true person, can escape the body and roam across worlds that exceed conventional realities.

The divisions of the self that explain out-of-body experiences were part of Alex's orientation to psychic events. In the Osis/McCormick experiment cited earlier, Alex was in a small room across a hall from the room where the targets were located. He recalled a partitioning of himself into what he later labeled Alex I and Alex II. Alex I remained in the room where the experimenters placed him. The instrument of the remote viewing was Alex II, who was free to present himself in the box and see the targets. But Alex II moved in the ethereal or alternative reality presupposed in holistic views of the universe. It is this dimension of reality that Alex explored as the most impressive venue for psychic powers. Alex examined psychic realms with scientific techniques. But he was also (according to Alan Vaughan) a mystic by temperament and religious training.

Were Alex's psychic powers genuine?

If we accept the thought that psychic powers exceed the limitations of controlled experiments, then the question itself must be opened to a wider understanding of evidence. Non-formal evidence for psychic powers begins with testimony from witnesses. I asked the individuals I interviewed whether they believed that Alex's powers were genuine. The answers clustered near the

affirmative side of a scale, and almost never went past uncertainty to a point of denial. The eyewitness testimony of individuals who participated in Alex's seminars are always positive. But even those who work with objective agendas, approaching psychic matters with a healthy immunization of skepticism, are inclined to admit that something was going on with Alex that could not be explained away with materialistic accounts of human experience. Karlis Osis, for example, spent the good part of his career setting up controls to isolate and test the variables of psi and other psychic powers. He regarded Alex as the real thing, and the best subject for OBEs that he had ever worked with or seen. He had no reservations about the reality of Alex's powers, and after a number of years of testing pronounced Alex as "gifted with psychic powers."

Scott Jones, a career academic and intelligence consultant for the U.S. Government, used Alex in the remote viewing experiments for Army intelligence, the C.I.A., and the Secret Service. Jones was always careful to warn his superiors *not* to rely on any single source, including the psychic remote viewings, as the only basis for deciding on the use of scarce government assets. But he was impressed with Alex's abilities to discern states of affairs inaccessible to ordinary inspections. (Jones reported that he very much wanted, but did not have the opportunity, to correlate the remote viewing experiments with the physical and emotional states of the psychics, since Alex would respond with increased energy levels when he was on to something.)

David Johnson, a close friend who had no particular agenda in the psychic world at the time and who was critical of Alex in other ways, was convinced that Alex's psychic gifts were genuine.

These examples represent the general responses of those interviewed. (See the interview data for a more complete look at the opinions.) They

constitute the eyewitness testimony that is the best and only evidence for experiences outside the domain of controlled experiments. Yet I think that this evidence obscures some promising opportunities and uncertainties in any evaluation of Alex's psychic powers. Alan Vaughan had no reservations in attesting to the genuine nature of Alex's psychic gifts. But he cited a telling experiment in the interview. (It is an event described by Alex in Beyond Coincidence.) Alex conducted sessions with volunteers to see lights on a wall. These lights were the "after images" of illuminated objects that naturally follow when lights in a room are turned off. But Alex thought he could make the images move, which (according to Alan) he did in one case of a sailboat "seen" on the wall. But then Alan reports that he asked Alex to stop trying to influence the volunteers and see what would happen. The result was that no one saw the movement when Alex withdrew his influence. Alan believes that Alex's powers in these experiments was to generate a field of consciousness that affected what people saw. The power was over the person, not over the physical objects.

This experiment demonstrates again the problems of causal chains: what is the independent variable bringing about an effect in a psychic event? In this case Alex's mental powers may have been the decisive cause in producing the event. Powers that can influence perceptions and beliefs are considerable powers, not to be denigrated in any way. But they attest to the difficulty of identifying exactly what variables dominate in Alex's obvious array of gifts. He may have been an extraordinary teacher and healer exactly because he could create fields of consciousness within which individuals would see and believe in ways they could not in the absence of this influence. Most people would wish for such powers. But they do suggest different understandings of Alex's

psychic powers than those offered by the respondents. They also indicate the ambiguities in settling on a satisfactory definition of what we mean by genuine psychic powers.

How did Alex use his powers?

Magic, according to The American Heritage Dictionary, is "the art that purports to control or forecast natural events, effects, or forces by invoking the supernatural." Both ESP ("forecast") and PK ("control") fall comfortably under this definition of magic, which is an art present in the earliest human experiences. Paleolithic cave drawings portray magic ceremonies in the hunt. The Ionians of Ancient Greece regarded nature as animated by spirits that could be controlled by spells, divinations, incantations of various sorts. Magic and religion were closely aligned in early human communities. The pre-Christian worlds of Egypt, Greece and Rome were dense with magicians who claimed access to the divine, not to be confused with the moral, and were prepared to provide supernatural powers for a fee. All fundamental theory seeks the codes that can explain experience and provide instruments to control events. The earliest forms of these codes were framed by the magician's invocation of hidden secrets that unlock privileged powers.

Alex exercised a kind of realistic magic, taking a place in that parade of individuals who attempt a non-technological dominion over the environment. One of the simple truths in the human sciences is that we seem destined to attempt dominion over the natural environment. What is curious and more complex is that this destiny seems to fly in the face of original biological failure. Studies of cognitive development indicate that an infant acquires identity as she discovers the resistance of the world to simple wants and intentions. It is arguable that if thoughts truly did have natural kinetic

powers the separation of self and surroundings would not be entirely successful. The differences between thought and act, wish and doing, are commonplace in the modern world. Secular cultures are noted for accepting the truth that simply thinking it so does not make it so. Many of the dazzling machines of Western technology are instruments to extend and translate the non-kinetic nature of thought into practical control over the natural world. Pre-technological civilizations do not have such toys. But they do have magic, and its union with religion, to pursue the primordial dreams of mastery over the natural world. The code presented by magic fulfills the desire to control nature by realizing thoughts through intentions and speech acts. Alex was extending this older belief system while trying to test its efficacy through the controlled experiments of science.

The tensions between science and magic parallel some of the conflicts that the respondents cite in Alex's work. Science became magic's adversary in the modern era. Science is the practice of observation, of explaining relationships among variables drawn initially from the visible worlds of human experience. Modern science originates in the spiritual quest for a deeper code that can explain nature. The great scientists who discovered and created the substantial texts of mathematics and astronomy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were continuing religious inquiries into the laws and principles of fundamental matters. But science shifted the inquiry from intuitive insights and divine texts to observation and empirical laws.

The supernatural in secular societies today was natural in the Greek culture of the ancient world, even when reason was allowed to control inquiries into nature. The sharp dualisms between mind and matter that inform modern science would not dominate Western sensibilities until the thought

experiments that Descartes introduced in the 17th century. Science in the twentieth century is objective in a hard physical sense. The scientific method, in its modern incarnation, assumes that the natural world is matter, not mind, and distinct from the observer. This method of inquiry is the essential form of reasoning used today to **deny** the existence of supernatural realities. Contemporary science, with the use of instruments unavailable and perhaps unimaginable at earlier times in history, has described and explained an objective world free of the spiritual qualities animating nature in early Greek culture. The explanatory code discloses a physical reality.

It is this more materialistic version of science, with its revised understandings of the physical world, that subverted the prospects of a realistic magic. Nature in (roughly) the sixteenth century was redefined with empirical laws that could be discovered and organized by human reason. The secret to sovereignty over the natural world seemed to be in using and eventually controlling this empirical code, not in the magician's prowess. Even the revival of the occult in the West during the nineteenth century did not escape the scientist's skeptical gaze. Every ritual and claim of magic realism - seances, spells, extrasensory perception, and more - are scrutinized today by the powers of modern science. As these powers of observation and testing have entered the professions the assertions of magic have been increasingly marginalized. The organization of the medical profession in the nineteenth century, for example, led to the expulsion of the apothecary (and all supernatural practices) from the ranks of licensed physicians.

The reconciliation of magic and science that Alex attempted provides an assessment of his gifts grounded in both of these traditions. The supernatural powers that promise a mental dominance over nature have always

been dualistic: white and black, good and evil, high and low. The simple powers of the magician, like those of the scientist today, may be morally neutral. But the goals of each practice cannot be. The shaman and modern physician who try to restore health and defeat death are seeking to better the human subject. The sorcerer who casts a spell to paralyze or kill an adversary proposes an evil result from his craft, as does the physician who builds gas chambers for genocide and the scientist who sells technology to terrorists. It was white magic that overlapped with religion in early human communities. In the origins of Christianity, for example, miracle cures were combined with a moral theology to draw followers. The miracle of the loaves and fishes is a familiar intervention to allocate more of the scarce resources of the natural world to believers. Black magic followed a different and underground path. It has represented an assemblage of powers that promise returns indifferent to the parameters of religion or morality, and often hostile to our better impulses. Its parallel today is science for bad ends.

Here the judgment is easy. Alex is squarely in the tradition of white magic and good science. Every respondent was able to tell stories of Alex's good works. These good works extend from acts of simple kindnesses (such as Rhea White's brief tale of Alex opening the door to the ASPR on the day that she had left her keys at home) to the honoring of commitments to friends and family (including the many stories of Alex as the good uncle in the family and the homage paid to Alex by friends such as Scott Jones who remember his loyalty in times of conflict) to extended assistance to those in need (like the help Alex provided to the patients whom Dr. Schwinge treated) to the extension of unqualified support and encouragement to everyone he met (in seminars, college courses, controlled experiments, personal and professional

relations). I think it fair to say that Alex was a good person who did good things.

His psychic efforts were also aimed at good ends. These efforts include assistance to local, state and federal authorities in securing reasonable goals and solving what appeared to be intractable problems; *much* helpful advice to those who sought his help on personal and professional problems; acts of healing and therapy, and mental rejuvenation for many who were at dead ends in their lives. These purposes are moral even when compensated, and Alex seemed to do good things on many occasions for nothing except to do them. So far as I can tell, everyone who came into his orbit received some benefit (and that is an observation that can be made about few lives). The magic that Alex wielded was white magic at the highest levels.

The only generalizable complaint that I heard about Alex in the interviews was that he spread himself too thin: he tried to do too much for too many people. We should all hear such complaints about our lives.

*I have used material in this section from an interview that I conducted with Alex Tanous on December 7, 1989. That interview was of course not a part of this research project, but I have found it helpful in organizing these closing observations on the research to revisit the thoughts that Alex shared with me. The tape and transcription of my interview with Alex are part of the resources in the Foundation Library.

Part Two: Field Research

list of conversations, contacts and interviews
(asterisk indicates that the conversation was not taped)

Andy Bambrick

Dr. Elaine Schwinge

Karen Tanous

Karlís Osis

Scott Jones (2)

Arthur Fine

David Johnson

Don Galloway (in England)*

Patrice Kean (one taped, others informal)

Colette Malenfant

Colette Long

Nolan Tanous

Thomas Tanous

Richard Broughton*

Loretta Devau (brief)

Joanne MaMahon*

Alan Vaughan

Rhea White (brief)

Ingo Swann* (interview, but not taped at Swann's request)

Michael Grosso

Daniel Benor*

Joyce Goodrich*

Alex, I have found, was not on personal terms with many individuals who work in the fields of parapsychology and psychic experiences. Both Don Galloway (a well-known psychic who lives and works in England) and Richard Broughton (a research scientist at the Institute for Parapsychology in Durham, N.C -- the continuation of the Rhine Laboratory) told me that they never met Alex. Both of these individuals have used Alex's experimental data in their work, however. Broughton, for example, cites the work Alex did in ghost investigations and the Osis/McCormick experiment in his book, Parapsychology: The Controversial Science. Galloway also reported to me that he has kept his extensive correspondence with Alex. I asked him if he would provide a copy of this correspondence for the Foundation and he said he would consider this. (I followed up this conversation with a letter -- enclosed -- and will call Galloway again when he returns from a trip he was beginning just about the time we talked.) Daniel Benor, known for holistic healing, reported to me that he never met Alex (though knew of him). Also, some individuals in the field (alas) knew Alex only in passing. Rhea White, for example, is head of the Exceptional Human Experience Network. She was the librarian at the ASPR from 1965 to 1980, which covers the years when Alex was doing many of the OBE experiments with Osis. She remembers Alex from those times, but can offer only pleasant and anecdotal memories from her contact with him (see the interview annotation and tape). Similarly, Joyce Goodrich met Alex at the ASPR in when she was visiting on her own healing projects. She recalls Alex in good and generous terms, but, except for pleasantries, did not talk to him (see annotations).

I also spoke with individuals (in London) at the Society for Psychical Research, the Psychic Reference Board, and Psychic World Publishing. No one

at these organizations seems to have any information on Alex, though Steven Harris at the Psychic Reference Board found newspaper clippings on Alex and agreed to send copies to me (they have arrived and are attached). I have also spoken with Janet Thomas at the Edgar Cayce Foundation, Joann McMahon at the Parapsychology Foundation (in NYC), and other individuals (in addition to Patrice Kean) at the ASPR. Ms. Thomas told me that there is no record that Alex ever visited the Edgar Cayce Foundation (which does not mean that the testimony of others, such as Scott Jones, that he was there is false -- the records could be incomplete). In addition, I tried to track the individuals Alex listed in the Prologue to his unpublished book, Contact: Didier Terracina, MD (Columbia Presbyterian Hospital), Ted Wolfe (New York Medical Center -- I tried both the Cornell and NYU branches), Carl Kirsh, MD (Energy Research Group), and Wilbur Franklin and Sherry Speeth at Kent State. Only Wilbur Franklin was on any directory. He was a physicist at Kent State who died in April 1978. Franklin achieved his doctorate, by the way, at -- surprise, surprise -- Syracuse University, in 1964 (which predates even my long history at the University). The other individuals were not known in the listed institutions. The conversation with Joanne McMahon, however, was very helpful. It occurred (it was not taped) at the Parapsychology Foundation on August 5, 1997, and occupied most of the afternoon. Ms. McMahon assisted me in identifying individuals and articles that can help us understand Alex's standing in psychic fields.

In my last visit (August 6, 1997) to the ASPR I explored the boxes of records on the top floor. In one box I found signed statements by Mark Murphy and Ruth Lemin that they had seen Alex's body double on November 14, 1973. I have called the phone numbers on the statements (to their homes and, in the

case of Ms. Levin, also to a business office, in Ohio). Ms. Lemin is not at these numbers, and no one with whom I spoke (including heads of personnel at business numbers and the local newspaper, the *News Herald*) can trace her. Mark Murphy returned my call but has no memory of the experience, or of Alex. He told me that he had a fiancée at the time who was interested in psychic matters, and she may have induced him to sign some such statement. He recalls Ruth Lemin and thinks she may have moved to Florida some time ago.

There are other individuals I have not found (yet), of whom the most important is (of course) Elsworth DeMerchant. I also have a list of individuals who did not return my phone calls and/or answer my letters, or did not answer the phone, and/or indicated when I tried to contact them that they were not interested in cooperating in the research project in any way that would be productive. Donna McCormick heads this list. As I have said before, she is one of the critical figures in the experiments that Osis did with Alex, and would have been able to make important contributions to the research. I am still prepared to interview her if she changes her mind. Also included on this negative list are Andree Bernier and (of lesser importance) Bethel Shirley.

promissory notes: likely future interviews

Andrea Tanous

Stanley Krippner

promissory notes: possible future interviews

Katherine Fair Donnelly

Jane Roberts

Vera Feldman

Janet Mitchell

Jule Eisenbud

Nancy Myer (nee Czetl)

Elsworth DeMerchant

The following interviews were done by Professor Fred M. Frohock, Researcher who worked on a collection of oral history of the life of Dr. Alexander Tanous. This was done for the Alex Tanous Foundation.

- **Dr. Elaine Schwinge – January 26, 1997**
- **Andy Bambrick – January 31, 1997**
- **Karen Tanous – January 31, 1997**
- **Karlis Osis – February 10, 1997**
- **Patrice Kean – February 28, 1997**
- **Scott Jones (1) – March 19, 1997**
- **Arthur Fine – March 30, 1997**
- **Colette Malenfant – April 12, 1997**
- **David Johnson – April 12, 1997**
- **Colette Long – April 13, 1997**
- **Nolan Tanous – April 15, 1997**
- **Thomas Tanous – April 17, 1997**
- **Scott Jones (2) – August 1, 1997**
- **Alan Vaughan – August 8, 1997**
- **Rhea White – August 8, 1997**
- **Ingo Swann – August 11, 1997**
- **Michael Grosso – August 11, 1997**
- **Joyce Goodrich – August 14, 1997**

annotations on interviews -- unless noted, the interviews here are on tape

Dr. Elaine Schwinge -- January 26, 1997

Recollections of work with Alex in therapy sessions with her patients from (roughly) 1983 to 1989. Reports that Alex was well liked by both the patients and staffs, and had unexplained insights into her patients' illnesses and lives. These insights went beyond the most ambitious expectations of empathy and seemed to Dr. Schwinge to demonstrate genuine psychic powers. Said that Alex used auras to diagnose maladies, and that he taught her to see these phenomena. Also reported in general terms on her trip to Egypt with Alex and a group of friends. Many dates are uncertain in Dr. Schwinge's memory. She said that she would try to find the time to review her files and report on cases to me in a later interview. Urged that I interview two others: Andy Bambrick and Don Galloway (a psychic who lives in England).

Andy Bambrick -- January 31, 1997

Bambrick related some of his experiences as a therapist when Alex was present in his sessions. Also believes that Alex had genuine psychic powers in excess of his considerable empathetic skills. The interviewee was regrettably succinct and reluctant to expand on his brief observations. Most of his comments were redundant with those offered by Dr. Schwinge. I also left open the possibility of a later call to revisit this territory. Note that the audio level for Bambrick's voice is very poor. Technicians at the Newhouse School have enhanced the audio.

Karen Tanous -- January 31, 1997

Tanous told of her childhood experiences with Alex. Remembers him as a loving uncle who played games with the children in the family. She reports that his tricks did not always work (he couldn't always find the lost or hidden object), which she attributes to the often-told maxim that psychic powers sometimes cannot be summoned successfully for those who are close to the one with the powers. (I thought of the old observation about a prophet not being without honor except in his own home and his own country, etc.) Karen regarded Alex as a guide to members of the family, offering advice and assistance. Her memories are that he was a good and spiritual person (not a magician simpliciter), and that his psychic powers were real. Regrets expressed: that she did not spend more time with him when she was an adult.

Karlis Osis -- February 10, 1997

In several earlier (non-taped) phone conversations Dr. Osis had expressed concerns that he is too old to remember much, and suggested that "Scott" Jones is an important figure for recollections of Alex's government work. But in this, the first of what I anticipate will be several interviews with him, he was quite helpful. He told me how he met Alex, and how Alex was obviously gifted with psychic powers. Dr. Osis admitted that these powers did not always work, especially in controlled experiments (which he described as limitations on the powers), but that they were impressive nevertheless. Dr. Osis stressed Alex's out-of-body experiences. He pointed out that these OBEs occurred well before such experiences became widely discussed. He also talked about Alex's abilities to discern a spiritual presence, which he (Alex) used to find and expel ghosts in haunted houses (stories here). Dr. Osis remembers

Alex as a sympathetic person who reveled in his psychic gifts and pursued a success line with them (as a public figure). In conclusion Dr. Osis confirmed that in his view Alex was not only the genuine article but the most impressive psychic that he (Dr. Osis) had ever known. We agreed to talk again. These projected sessions are to include a visit to his home where I will conduct a more extensive personal interview.

Patrice Kean -- February 28, 1997 -- Face-to-face interview at the ASPR (NYC)

Theme Statements: Anecdotal and theoretical summaries of the ASPR experiments and insights into Alex's personality. Very favorable impressions of Alex and vivid memories of his ASPR visits. Kean placed Alex very effectively in the larger psychic community, commented on his standing in this community, and provided a number of excellent theoretical insights into the range and limitations of Alex's psychic powers. (See Polly's comments and listen to my tape.)

Scott Jones (1) -- March 19, 1997

Theme Statements: Jones met Alex when he invited him to speak (in 1976) at Casper College in Casper, Wyoming. Later, in 1978, Jones helped coordinate a group of psychics invited by the federal government to do intelligence work (which Jones reports is still going on). Alex, according to Jones, was the leader of this group. The interview largely consists of Jones relating his experiences with Alex (and the other psychics) in their efforts at "remote viewing." He recalls Alex as a teacher as well as a psychic, in the direct sense that he (Alex) was always trying to help others develop their own psychic powers. Problems occurred in validating intelligence "findings" and

forging cooperation among sectors of the intelligence community. Alex used OBEs in his intelligence work.

E: Alex worked on the Iranian hostage situation, trying to locate the hostages.

1984: Alex helped the Secret Service with C.A.T case, one involving an individual who wrote threatening letters to President Reagan over a two-year period. Use of psychic powers: Alex was able to provide a psychological profile, a description of the individual, and a place where he lived by picking up images/data from an object.

Arthur Fine -- March 30, 1997

Theme Statements: Fine as a friend who met Alex in the service (US military) when Alex was doing public relations work for the army. Fine and Alex got together and wrote songs (Alex doing the lyrics). One memorable number was a "swing" song: "The Merry-Go-Round Waltz." Alex met Debbie Reynolds, Eddie Fisher, and Elizabeth Taylor. Fine claims to have known Alex quite well. Mentions brother (of Alex) who disappeared at sea, of Massachusetts.

M: Songs that Alex wrote in military with Fine: "Is It Right or Wrong" and "I'm Very Much In Love." Alex also produced/wrote in New York: "The Joke Is On You," "Let Me Be A Boy Again," "The Rio de Janeiro Samba," (with others). Fine said that he would send me copies of this material.

Colette Malenfant -- April 12, 1997

Theme Statements: Malenfant knew Alex as a teacher (she was in several of his classes) and as a friend. Dates: 1980/81 until Alex's death. Malenfant relates her painful bankruptcy, and extolls Alex as a seer and confidant who restored her confidence (before *and* after his death). Tells story of Alex giving her a gold bird on a chain that he brought back from Egypt. Malenfant regards the bird as a surrogate for Alex. A medium has assured her that Alex remains close to her (Malenfant). Remembers Alex as humble: he would urge people to go to the doctor, and then would try to heal them only when conventional medicine failed. Alex was a teacher who could energize a class through instruction and prayer. He had the powers of prediction and the ability to comfort.

E: In 1982 a girl was killed in Quebec City. Alex helped the police in the search for her killer.

1990: Alex visited Malenfant in Florida. He had health problems. Was sick, throwing up.

David Johnson -- April 12, 1997

Theme Statements: Claims to have been one of Alex's closest friends, from 1985 until Alex's death. Johnson saw Alex as a kind of *idiot savant* who had real psychic gifts but needed help from friends and family to negotiate the practical sides of life. Alex could paint, had perfect pitch, but could not read well. (Read by "psychic scanning.") Remembers Alex as a very complex person who lacked confidence, but could give people confidence. Alex had

strong religious beliefs, positive beliefs, but probably overrated himself. Others, however, believed in Alex so completely that they wouldn't do anything without consulting him (e.g., C. Malenfant). Alex's French was "abysmal," his PhD was from a mail-order catalog, and things like this made him vulnerable to critiques from prominent skeptics. But Johnson regarded his psychic powers as genuine.

E: 1985 trip to London (David J. and Alex). There, at Guild Hall, Alex located a lost painting for a woman.

Alex had a heart attack in 1987, which he ignored while he traveled to Japan. By the time he returned and sought treatment his heart had been damaged badly.

Trips: China in summer 1985. To Egypt in summer 1986. To California in first part of 1986 (to see David Viscot, a psychiatrist who knew Alex).

Johnson mentions a Virginia (no surname recalled) who knew Alex, an heiress of the Oneida Company, came up to visit Alex when he was dying.

Colette Long -- April 13, 1997

Theme Statements: Long was a student in Alex's weekend courses in Quebec and Maine. She recalls the emphasis that Alex placed on the development of the will in each person.. Saw world as a war of minds where the strongest will would survive (triumph?). Also emphasis on removing guilt and fear from one's psychic landscape. Alex would require each student to write out a script of his/her life, then (of course) try to live this script. He would also use regression techniques, a form of group therapy in which individuals would have

to disclose painful experiences in order to secure release. Long was impressed, saw Alex as a seer and a healer.

Nolan Tanous -- April 15, 1997 -- phone interview

Theme Statements: Alex Tanous as the essential "good uncle" who used his psychic gifts to entertain and help the family. Nolan saw Alex socially for his (Nolan's) entire life. He remembers Alex as a kind and concerned uncle who did card tricks, found missing items, and generally entertained at family gatherings. He was revered by the young children in the Tanous family. Nolan admits that he was the skeptic, especially in his teen years, but he became more sympathetic and understanding of Alex when he (Nolan) became an adult.

E: When Nolan was 8 or 9 years old Alex took all of the children into a room, turned off the light, and proceeded to move the residual light (the "glow" that remains when a room is plunged into darkness) around the room. Very impressive, from Nolan's point of view.

Once Alex had an intestinal disorder and recovered at Nolan's family house.
(Dates?)

At end of the decade of the 1970s Alex predicted 3 days of darkness (recorded in Beyond Coincidence).

Thomas Tanous -- April 17, 1997

Theme Statements: Alex as the older brother (by eleven years) who was for Tom a kind of surrogate father. They roomed together at Boston College, and

graduated together (1959). Tom as the septic until he picked up Alex at the airport in the late 1960s and saw in his suitcase a collection of articles testifying to Alex's powers and a nice set of checks/moneys for his performances. Tom believes that Alex had a complete range of psychic powers, from parlor tricks to psychic diagnosis of health problems, to clairvoyance, and more. Tom also regards these powers as extensions of Alex's Catholicism (no conflict with the Church). Alex as early head of the family, a position later ceded to (the first) Nolan Tanous.

E: Alex at Stonehill Seminary, 1954-57. History major at Boston College. MA at Boston College in philosophy, 1960. MA (Tom thinks in philosophy) at Fordham in 1963. PhD from school in Indiana. Then teacher in Maine and public development of psychic powers.

Alex: brief military service (a few months) at end of World War II. Alex discharged for health reasons.

Military service again for Alex in 1950, and this was the time that he did the PR work (and met Arthur Fine).

When David Tanous was to marry Esther (September 1956) Alex saw that David was going to die (which he did -- from cancer -- in September 1957).

Alex helped police find both the body of a murdered boy and his killer in Maine, mid 1970s.

Tom (and Esther) speculate that Alex may have been having an OBE at the moment of his death, with the unhappy result that his astral body may be "trapped" and cannot be released to the eternal light.

Tom describes possession of Joseph Tanous by Alex.

Scott Jones (2) -- August 1, 1997

Theme Statements: Jones surveyed and read from some correspondence that he had with Alex leading up to the remote viewing experiences in government intelligence. The main observations were on the machinations of the Federal Government (primarily military intelligence and the C.I.A.) and Alex's roles in the remote viewing project. Jones recalls Alex (and these memories are supported by the letters) as loyal and supportive.

Alex as encouraging Jones to embark on a program of applied psychic phenomena in the intelligence work he was starting for a research institute. Jones invited Alex (letter on August 4, 1978) to join this project (remote viewing) and Alex agreed in a return letter.

E: Incident where Alex "saw through" a representative from Army Intelligence who presented himself as a member of the CIA in trying to enlist *just* Alex and not Scott in an intelligence project.

M: A January 1981 letter from Alex on the Iranian hostage situation assessing the prospects for the hostages.

Jones used a type of consensus among the psychics on the project, while factoring in Alex's intensity. Jones discussing the problems of confirmation, and the need to correlate physical responses of psychics to accuracy in "seeing" phenomena.

Jones admits that he was worried over the aplomb with which intelligence operatives were willing to use government assets using only single-source inputs, including the psychic projections of Jones's group.

Jones had an agreement with Alex that the first to die would try to communicate with the other after "passing over." But Jones says that he has had no direct contact with Alex since he died, though others have reported messages to him (and these messages emphasize Alex's overriding concerns now with healing and medical research).

Alan Vaughan -- August 8, 1997

Theme Statements: Vaughan met Alex in 1971. He recalls with particular vividness the light experiments that Alex would conduct. These consisted of viewing the after images of objects that appear on a wall after the lights are turned out in a room. Alex claimed to be able to move the images through psychokinesis. But Vaughan believed that Alex was influencing what people saw by generating field of consciousness. The proof of this was that the people saw nothing when Alex (at Vaughan's suggestion) withdrew his influence.

Vaughan believes that Alex's powers were genuine.

It was commendable (according to Vaughan) that Alex was willing to be a subject in controlled experiments. Alex was so confident of his powers that he was "up for anything" in the way of testing.

Saw Alex as a luminous, compassionate and deeply religious person, both scientist (with a strong intellectual curiosity) and mystic. One of the kindest persons that Vaughan ever knew. A very harmonious and balanced person who was able to integrate his psychic orientations with his religious convictions. One way he reached this balance was in dealing with conflicts publicly on his radio show.

E: The prediction of three days of darkness (which was reported in the National Inquirer) was drawn up (Vaughan believes) from Alex's religious training.

Alex as one who demystified magic. Able to defuse the diabolic face of psychic powers by popularizing them and doing good things with his powers.

Alex sent Vaughan the manuscript copy of Beyond Coincidence, which for Vaughan was testimony to Alex's desire for accuracy in his work.

Rhea White -- August 8, 1997 (not taped)

Theme Statements: Knew Alex only in passing, as an acquaintance, when she worked as the librarian at the ASPR in the years 1965 to 1980. Said that she could always tell that Alex was in the building when she smelled good food cooking somewhere upstairs. Impressions of him as very nice, polite, self-

contained, organized in the good sense of being devoted to the business at hand (the research experiments).

E: Mentions the time that Alex let her into the ASPR building when she left her keys at home. This story seems to be an important gauge for her of Alex's thoughtfulness.

Describes Alex's kindness. Said that she has never met anyone who had a bad thing to say about Alex or his psychic powers.

Ingo Swann -- August 11, 1997 (not taped)

Theme Statements: Swann met Alex 4-5 times when they were both working as subjects at the ASPR. Said that he invited Alex to his house several times before he accepted. Then they talked, mainly gossip about other psychics. Felt that Alex did not much like him, but he (Swann) liked and admired Alex. Reported that Alex was generally aloof from other psychics.

The admirable thing about Alex was his willingness to continue with the research, to do the controlled experiments again and again. Alex loved to work on the research and was diligent about staying within the strict controls that Osis set for the work. Osis as a visionary, and only researcher that Alex worked with.

Swann shocked and saddened when Alex passed away. Alex, Swann said, really tried.

Swann presumed that Alex's psychic powers were authentic, though Swann resists the use of labels and even the term "psychic."

Michael Grosso -- August 11, 1997

Theme Statements: Met Alex at the ASPR. Impressed with his presence, his "penetrating eyes." Grosso regards the experiments that Osis conducted with Alex as quite serious and important. They were in part efforts to discriminate between ESP and a veridical OBE. The critical Osis/McCormick experiment indicated some presence in front of the viewing target. Yet (which Grosso finds puzzling) the experiment has never been replicated.

The possibility of strong dualism (Alex I and Alex II) suggests evidence for life after death (in the survival of the inner spirit self).

Osis as part of an older and venerable tradition in psychic research, in which one looks for the gifted few to use in experiments. Alex as one of the gifted, and so part of the best traditions of research into psychic phenomena.

Cannot be certain of the authenticity of Alex's powers beyond Osis's papers, which Grosso regards as important contributions.

Contrasts between the seriousness of Alex's efforts as testing to the New Age "channelers" who prefer to act as prophets, giving advice without any interest in testing their powers.

E: When Grosso first met Alex he (Grosso) was aware of Alex's ability to

predict death from a handshake. So Grosso (trying for caution) embraced Alex instead. Alex immediately said "I sense death," which to Grosso's relief was not his own but some woman that Alex described. It sounded like Grosso's own mother but Grosso reports in the interview that his mother still lives at an advanced age. (Grosso related a part of this story in the lead to his article, "Nine Reasons to Fear the Paranormal" -- attached here.)

Joyce Goodrich -- August 14, 1997 (not taped)

Theme Statements: Met Alex at the ASPR during the years when he was engaged in the Osis experiments and she was developing the LeShan methods of holistic/psychic healing. Only casual conversations. Remembers Alex as a very serious, caring person. Definitely gifted and a facilitator of research even though his psychic gifts were spontaneous. Goodrich believes that gifted psychics will join in controlled experiments if they find the right gifted researcher (who will not nullify their powers). Osis was just such a person for Alex.

★ January 15, 1997

Dr. Karlis Osis
10 Douglas Road
Glen Ridge, New Jersey 17028

Dear Dr. Osis:

I am doing research for the Tanous foundation on the life of Alex Tanous. It would be very helpful if you would allow me to interview you about your professional and personal experiences with Alex. I can travel to your home, or to any other location that is convenient for you, at a mutually agreeable date.

I will call shortly to discuss this possibility with you.

Cordially,

Fred M. Frohock
Professor

January 19, 1997

Donna McCormick
20 Stagecoach Road
Selden, New York 11784

Dear Ms. McCormick:

I am doing research for the Tanous foundation on the life of Alex Tanous. It would be very helpful if you would allow me to interview you about your professional and personal experiences with Alex. I can travel to your home, or to any other location that is convenient for you, at a mutually agreeable date.

I have tried to call you on a couple of occasions this past week. My luck has not been good. I hope I am not being too aggressive when I tell you that I will try again this coming week.

Cordially,

Fred M. Frohock
Professor

February 3, 1997

Dr. Karlis Osis
10 Douglas Road
Glen Ridge, New Jersey 17028

Dear Dr. Osis:

Enclosed is a rough inventory of the items that I hope we can use to organize our discussion this Saturday (February 8). I do not expect to cover every item on this list. Please consider the inventory an informal guide for our talk, not a controlling structure. My thought is that we can proceed in the manner of a relaxed conversation between friends, and simply explore your memories of Alex Tanous.

Is 3 pm a good time for my visit? I will call you before leaving for NYC.

I have also included a copy of one of my books to introduce myself to you.

Cordially,

Fred M. Frohock

home: (315) 469-9335
NYC: (212) 889-5168 (my daughter's apartment)

March 25, 1997

Arthur Fine
4236 E. Sells Drive
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Dear Mr. Fine:

I am writing as a follow-up to our phone conversation last week. As I said on the phone I am engaged in a research project on the life of Alex Tanous. This work is supported by the Tanous Foundation and all of the data that we collect will go to the Foundation archives for use by scholars (and others) doing research on Alex's life.

I would like to talk with you about your memories of Alex. The interview should run no longer than thirty minutes. I will call you again shortly to see if we can proceed with this part of the research.

Best regards,

Fred M. Frohock
Professor

July 14, 1997

Don Galloway
Royes Ridge
Plough Hill
Caistor
Lincolnshire LN 7 GUR

Dear Mr. Galloway:

It was good talking to you today. Below is the address where you can send copies of any correspondence between you and Alex Tanous. The Tanous Foundation would also be interested in any other items that can provide information on Alex's life and work.

I will be pleased to pay copying and postage costs for this material. Just send an invoice with the material that you mail to me.

Thank you.

Cordially,

Fred M. Frohock
Professor

4448 Kasson Road
Syracuse, New York 13215
USA

July 28, 1997

Andree Bernier
CEQ
Resources Humaine
1460 Chemin Ste Foy
Ste Foy G1S2N9

Dear Ms. Bernier:

I am doing research on the life of Alex Tanous. It would be very helpful if you would allow me to interview you about your professional and personal experiences with Alex. I conduct the interviews by telephone, and they generally are 30-40 minutes in length.

I hope to hear from you soon. Please call me at the numbers below if that is convenient. I will of course interview you on my own phone account.

Cordially,

Fred M. Frohock
Professor

home: (315) 469-9335
university: (315) 443-3746

August 12, 1997

Elsworth DeMerchant
Compartment 107
Suite 5 SS3
Fredricton, NB
Canada

Dear Mr. DeMerchant:

I am doing research for the Tanous foundation on the life of Alex Tanous. It would be very helpful if you would allow me to interview you about your professional and personal experiences with Alex. I conduct the interviews by telephone, and they generally are 30-40 minutes in length.

I hope to hear from you soon. Please call me at the numbers below if that is convenient. I will of course interview you on my own phone account.

Cordially,

Fred M. Frohock
Professor

home: (315) 469-9335
university: (315) 443-3746

Nine Reasons to Fear the Paranormal

A Commentary by Michael Grosso

(From *The Anomalist*: 4, Autumn, 1996)

I was standing outside the doorway to the American Society for Psychical Research on Manhattan's West Side when Alex Tanous, a well-known psychic (now deceased), approached. Alex, whose eyes were dark and penetrating, apparently had the ability to leave his body at will, and was about to begin a series of experiments with Dr. Karlis Osis.

As I opened the door, Alex smiled and extended his hand. Suddenly I froze, remembering that this psychic was known for something else--an uncanny ability to foretell death. He once told me he got his most accurate death impressions when he shook somebody's hand. Hey! I thought, I don't want to shake this guy's hand. Instead I threw my arms around him, and we embraced. And as we embraced, I thought to myself in rapid succession--"I don't want to believe Alex can do any of these things!" And then, "I don't believe he can!"

I admit that at that moment I suffered a spasm of disbelief in the paranormal. The idea that Alex could leave his body at will, wormhole through space, and maybe snoop on me--worse, that he could divine the onset of death (possibly my death)--left me feeling extremely uncomfortable. In his presence I felt exposed, stripped bare, an uneasy loss of privacy; I felt, in a way, out of control, the victim of an inscrutable power. So I became an instant skeptic, clouded by fear, stiffened with disbelief.

But my experience helped me understand why some people might be repelled and, in fact, sincerely afraid of the paranormal. If they are, I can't really blame them. I can think of more than one good reason to be afraid of the stuff. There is plenty to fear, plenty about the paranormal to induce feelings of uneasiness. All in all, I reckon on nine reasons.

Ray Hyman, a stalwart crusader for Western rationality who likes to play St. George to the Psychic Dragon, is a psychologist from the University of Oregon. Hyman once wrote: "Belief in paranormal phenomena is still growing, and the dangers to our society are real." He urges everyone to do "battle against the irrational." Thus, for Hyman fear of the paranormal is equivalent to fear of the irrational.

Unfortunately, Hyman's battle takes us beyond the paranormal to the ends of existence. For the irrational is everywhere. At bottom, (the Cosmological Argument aside), our very existence on earth is just a brute fact--and in that sense, totally irrational. Only people of religious faith think something else, necessary or meaningful, is at the heart of the cosmic game. "Rationality," in our modern scientific world, consists of the rules we invent in the struggle to tame the wildly contingent jungle of reality. I'm afraid Hyman is fighting a losing battle; for the paranormal just adds some twists and turns to a world intrinsically uncentered, deconstructed, and irrational at its core.

Another critic of the paranormal, James Alcock, has called the ideas of parapsychology "essentially those of magic." If by magic he means belief in the sheer power of mind to directly influence physical reality--then parapsychology does qualify as a science in quest of magic. J. B. Rhine's dice-throwing experiments were attempts in a safe lab setting to demonstrate the power of what witches call spells or theists prayer. Magic, in short, is belief in the unmediated power of intention. It's a belief that might stoke the fires of paranoia, for it would imply we are vulnerable to the sheer intentions of others (including our enemies). One might reasonably prefer, like James Alcock, not to believe in "magic"--not to believe in such strange powers. The world of magic is a frightening world.

But there's more to fear, if there is anything to the paranormal. All sorts of strange entities, thought to be happily banished from the world by science, would return to the fray, newly baptized and certified by parapsychology. Talk of spirits, angels, fairies, phantoms, demons, aliens, and other space-time vagabonds might in fact be based on some nugget of paranormal reality. Instead of a tidy universe, we'd have a multiverse crawling with mind-monsters. Who needs it?

There is also the fear of life after death. The paranormal isn't just implicated with magic (mind on the rampage), it's full of reports that force us to rethink our idea of death. The paranormal preserve includes such things as ghosts, fetches, apparitions, mediums, near-death visions, reincarnation memories, and much more that goes bump in the night. A part of us just doesn't want to be reminded of death--even the unsettling prospect of life after death.

I have a hunch that resistance to the paranormal veils an underlying resistance to the idea of life after death, which is so entangled with religious ideas we thought we outgrew with the rise of science and the European Enlightenment. After all, if there is a psychic factor in nature that somehow escapes the constraints of physical law, it may also be what makes an afterworld possible. If an afterworld, then possibly hell. Who knows?! The hell that spooked me

when I was a kid might, in some strange psychic way, be real. I can already feel my old Sunday-school terrors flaring up. There's an outside chance I might actually go to hell! What could be more frightening? It seems we've hit on another good reason to fear the paranormal.

Another fear, and one I especially sympathize with, is the fear of gnostics or what I call mystic know-it-alls. There have always been people in history who claimed they knew what they knew--flat-out--by gnosis, inspiration, revelation. In short, by paranormal means. Fear of the paranormal is the praiseworthy fear of the mystifying dogmatist, the prophetic con-artist. Scientific certification of the paranormal might give this type of person more intellectual ammunition than might be desirable.

The paranormal might also stir up the fear of fatalism. Suppose Alex could really know the future, (say, that I change my job or move to another state). Wouldn't that wipe out my free will? Not really. Alex, assuming he saw my future, would not then see what I must do but merely what I shall do. The former would impinge on my freedom; the latter wouldn't. Still, logic seems defeated here; for how could anyone see what has yet to occur? The fear now is that our sense of time gets screwed up. Suddenly, backward causation becomes possible; the future casts shadows on the present. This upset in my idea of time leads to my last, and possibly the strongest, reason to fear the paranormal.

The paranormal can pretty forcibly take our world-view by surprise. Catastrophe theorist John Casti may be working on a "science of surprise" (see his book *Complexification*), but extreme surprise can cause anxiety attacks, especially when it involves shock to our basic sense of reality. A universe with minimal surprises is probably a lot easier on the nervous system. In a rapidly changing world such as ours, the paranormal just adds to our general cognitive chaos, and to the instability of our collective mental health. In short, if the paranormal is real it would force us to do cartwheels with our paradigms.

So, totting them up, there are nine reasons to fear the paranormal: loss of privacy, loss of control, the irrational, magic, strange entities, hell, mystic know-it-alls, fatalism, and angst-producing surprise. Of course, these may be motives to disbelieve in the paranormal; but the fact remains--they are not arguments against its existence.

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The 22 Enigma

Terry Alden

When I was 22, odd coincidences began occurring in my life. At first I was not aware that anything unusual was happening. I was not aware of these occurrences for the first few years. It was considerably later, when coincidences involving the number, 22, were happening too often to go unnoticed, and after hearing about the synchronicity principle, the meaningful coincidence, that I discovered I was becoming involved, without quite knowing how or why, in a perplexing and often surprising type of psychic phenomenon. It is the symbolic communication of meaning through a confluence or resonance of apparently external and unconnected events. After this realization, I also looked back in time, recollecting earlier oddities of chance which were not recognized as such during their original occurrence. None, however, could be recalled prior to my 22nd year. But that, too, seemed to be a coincidence because the vast majority of the incidents involved the same number, 22, in one way or another.

My interest and training had always been in scientific fields. I had hardly heard of parapsychology, and had formed no opinion about things like extra-sensory perception, psycho-kinesis or the occult. I knew very little about mystical and spiritual matters. For these reasons, it seems surprising that I was as open-minded as I turned out to be. However, I enjoy probing all aspects of existence, especially the out-of-the-ordinary, and I reject nothing as impossible *a priori* merely because it flies in the face of normal experience and reason.

Open-mindedness is one thing but gullibility is another. I do not advocate a non-critical acceptance of every claim for the paranormal which is made, including any which I may make. I do believe, however, that there are many strange and normally rare kinds of phenomena in the world which can not be understood rationally but for which there is a basis in fact. Further, certain phenomena may be impossible to accept from a rational standpoint but we still need that mental base to come home to after making any excursions into the irrational, the mysterious and the unknown. The rational mind ideally balances the more free-wheeling, playful irrational function of the human psyche and of the Cosmos ultimately as well.

It was, somewhat ironically, the long-time interest in science which contributed most to the attitude of open-mindedness and to the growing conviction that nothing, however incredible or improbable, may be impossible for the Universe. I suspect there is nothing we can imagine in our dreams or fantasies which will ever exceed the **un**liklihood and **un**believability of so-called "reality." What is presently accepted as scientific fact is so bizarre and far-fetched that science-fiction or the occult seems almost trite and familiar by comparison.

For example, what fiction, mystical or scientific, could be more far-fetched and unexpected than human conception, gestation and birth? The most routinely observed phenomena in Nature are bizarre in the extreme by any fair standard of judgement. If we can accept that a human being begins life as a microscopic cell which somehow contains the equivalent of a vast library of information, why is it so much more difficult, for instance, to accept that supposedly random events can produce apparently well-ordered results under the right conditions, as in the case of reading Tarot cards?

It is true that Tarot readings are not repeatable and require subjective judgement and interpretation. They do not produce accurate results 100% of the time either. The study of cellular biology is much more objective, reproducible and, therefore, scientifically provable than Tarot divination. But I have seen the Tarot reflect real situations accurately often enough that I

believe something more than mere chance is at work although I might never be able to prove or explain it. However, the point I'm trying to make is only that if we take the Tarot concept arbitrarily as valid and real, whether it is or isn't, it would be no more astonishing and "unreal" than so many other concepts which we routinely take for granted.

Physical reality is stranger than fiction. We accept that an invisible force exists which causes two magnets to either attract or repel each other when brought close together. We can't see it with our eyes but we know it's there because we can feel it. We can feel it, measure it and do various experiments with it so we believe in magnetism as a credible scientific fact. And yet it isn't obvious to me that there should be invisible forces which can produce noticeable effects at a distance without solid physical contacts or connections of some kind. Why is magnetism any less incredible and, dare I say it, magical simply because we have learned to use it and can describe how, if not why, it exists and functions as it does?

Can we truly believe, apparently without great effort, that our bodies are composed of trillions of cells each containing the complete blueprint of the whole? Or that these cells are, in turn, composed of astronomical numbers of incredibly smaller molecular, atomic and subatomic constituents? Or that some of the heavier trace elements in the body had to have been cooked up in explosions of stars at various times in the distant cosmic past? Or that our planet, which seems so big and so important to us, is but an insignificant speck of dust in comparison with the Sun and the vastness of space. Or that the Sun, too, is little more than a grain of sand swirling with billions of others around the nucleus of the galaxy? Or that our galaxy, in which we live well out in the suburbs, is one of countless others in the Universe?

We accept the idea that matter and energy are different but interchangeable forms of the same thing. Intuitively obvious, isn't it? In the detonation of a nuclear bomb only the minutest fraction of the total mass of fissile/fusible material is converted into energy, the much greater part being converted not into energy but an almost equal mass of new material elements. Therefore, if every particle of matter in just one human body were converted all at once and completely into energy, the resulting explosion would probably shatter the planet and reverberate throughout the solar system and beyond. That concept is scientific but, in this reporter's estimation, as incredible, unacceptable and unbelievable as anything in occultism or the paranormal.

Despite all of this and so much more, the moment the discussion turns to psychic phenomena or the paranormal, most scientists want to discredit and ridicule any and all such reports, without investigating or knowing anything about the subject. Pontifically they insist that such things can not exist except as some form of deception or delusion. Scientists should know better than most people how incredible the world really is and be less dogmatic about what is impossible, especially when they haven't taken the time to know what they're talking about.

I am reminded of a story told about Sir Isaac Newton. Both Newton and Kepler before him believed in astrology. Kepler cast horoscopes and interpreted them. The two men helped lay the foundations of modern physical science and yet they had strong mystical beliefs and interests. Kepler had an atrocious life and his involvement with astrology is usually excused and dismissed by scientists today as an unfortunate necessity for economic survival. However, that excuse can not exonerate Sir Isaac from such heresy because he was quite well-healed, revered by society and under no pressure of an economic or ideological nature.

In a conversation with Newton, Sir Edmund Halley, the astronomer who first predicted the return of the famous comet which now bears his name, chided Newton for his belief in the pseudo-science of astrology. Newton's somewhat indignant reply is a classic: "I have studied it, Mr. Halley; you have not."

It seems that Isaac Newton may have studied a great many strange things. I recall seeing a program on television some time back and reading somewhere that a large collection of Newton's papers have never been published. These were written in the latter part of his life, if I remember correctly. Apparently his heirs will not allow them to be published or even seen. They have been under lock and key since his death. There is the inference that they contain material considered so unacceptable and embarrassing to the scientific priesthood of his day and ours that to allow publication would tarnish Newton's shining reputation. If they're willing to censor Newton, they're willing to do anything to control what they think is appropriate for people to know and believe, just as the Church did in the Middle Ages.

The attitude of open-mindedness which I adopted in the earliest days of my study of parapsychology and the occult is similar to the attitude one adopts when viewing a play or reading a novel. It is the willing suspension of disbelief. When an acquaintance offered to read Tarot cards for me the first time, I decided to approach it with a give-it-a-chance attitude, to see if anything interesting might happen. Now I realize that the belief factor is critical in all areas of parapsychology because any phenomenon produced by the powers of the mind is unavoidably influenced by mental attitudes and beliefs. In religious parlance this can be seen as the power of faith or of belief itself.

I don't remember anything about the reading now except one card which turned up in the middle of the so-called "Celtic Cross" spread. It was the card called "The Fool" and it seemed to symbolize my ignorance and search for understanding. I knew that I would have to study the Tarot to get anything out of it and I was intrigued enough by this first symbolic offering to want to know more about its meaning.

I bought some books and began researching the complex of meanings and associations of the figure which I discovered encompasses and represents the Tarot as a whole. I was soon doing my own readings using this card to symbolize myself. I also discovered that The Fool is the chief of the 22 cards known as the Major Trumps or Major Arcana and that its number can be taken as 0 or 22. As I was 22 years old at the time and living on the 22nd floor of an apartment building, the repetition of the number would later be recognized as significant and the associated beginning of my occult investigations would come to be dated from the first appearance of The Fool. At about the same time, my mother, in another city, moved to a house on 22nd Street, by a further coincidence, the same one where I reside as this is being written many years later.

There are various forms of psychic ability, telepathy or ESP, psychokinesis, mediumship, clairvoyance, divination or prophecy, astral travel and so on. Most of these I had at least heard of by the time I became interested. But I had not yet heard of synchronicity, the term coined by the eminent Swiss psychologist, Dr. Carl Gustav Jung, to indicate the meaningful coincidence. It had never occurred to me that coincidences could be anything beyond merely accidental meetings in time of independent events. Even after I became acquainted with the term and the concept I did not immediately connect synchronicity with psychic phenomena nor think of it as something which might involve numbers. And finally I had thought of coincidence, meaningful or otherwise, as a perception which any person might have at any time but only occasionally, not on a continual basis.

I can not recall precisely when I first became aware that the number, 22, was turning up much more frequently in chance encounters than it had a right to under the known laws of probability and statistics. After my first reading I started collecting many of the Tarot decks which were available. I wanted to compare the symbolism of the various interpretations and I also found them attractive as art-forms. It was probably a few years after the initial reading that I came across a deck which I believe is called "The New Tarot." The symbolism of the cards is considerably

different from the more traditional versions such as the well-known deck designed by A. E. Waite.

"The New Tarot" was described as an evolved form of Tarot symbolism for the New Age and the designs for the cards were developed in consultation with a Ouija-board. It is in this deck that The Fool, now called "The Nameless One," is assigned the number, 22, instead of the usual number, 0. I found this deck and its psychological interpretation of the symbols to be very compelling. Some of the major cards are assigned letters as well as numbers and, as chance would have it, the first two cards described form my initials. I think it must have been the discovery of this Tarot, in concert with a rapidly expanding number of incidents in which the number, 22, caught my attention in one way or another, that slowly forced me to wonder what was going on.

It was uncanny and not a little disturbing at first. The number seemed to follow me wherever I went. It would be on subway cars, busses and taxis in which I was riding or which crossed my path. It was on licence plates, ticket stubs, grocery receipts, street addresses and clocks. Of course, there were other numbers as well but the 22 came up too often, far more often than could possibly be attributed to a normal statistical distribution of numbers in my private or social environment.

I know that many will say this is the work of an overactive imagination or that I'm simply fabricating the story. Another explanation is that, for one reason or another, people sometimes become obsessed by something, in this case a number, and then see it everywhere while ignoring everything else which does not support the obsession. I might have made the same attribution prior to my 22nd year.

The terrible part is that it is totally unprovable to anyone who hasn't had similar experiences. I do not ask to be believed for that reason. I am writing about it now only because I think there is something worth investigating, because a few others have reported similar perceptions and because I believe more and more people are going to develop the awareness of synchronicity as time goes on. It is for these people, in particular, that I am providing this account. Perhaps they will not feel as alone and uncomfortable as I did until it was possible to put this strange type of phenomenon into some kind of context.

For ten years I said virtually nothing to anyone about it. Day after day the 22s were evident only to me. The form of 22-synchronicity which has always occurred most frequently involves clocks, especially, but not not limited to, digital clocks and watches. Again, much more often than could be expected by chance, I have an uncanny knack for glancing at clocks when they are reading 22 minutes after the hour.

As long as a 22 is prominent, I tend to spot it. The time might be 12:21, 2:02 or 2:20, for example, but mostly 22 minutes after the hour. I have frequently sat watching television for many hours at a stretch and, without the slightest premeditation, happened to glance at a digital clock at 22 minutes after the hour, every hour consecutively, and not at other times. Sometimes the glances are motivated unconsciously. Sometimes I want to know the time. It doesn't seem to matter. The instances when a 22 appears occur three or four times more frequently than all others combined.

It was this kind of numerical synchronicity with clocks combined with the study of Tarot and the association of The Fool/Nameless One with the number, 22, which sensitized me to what I have come to call, The 22 Enigma. It was an unsettling feeling which this inspired. It was at once fascinating and frightening. I wondered why this was happening and what it might portend. There was nothing I could do to either stop or ignore it. I could only continue studying in the slim hope of finding an answer some day.

I familiarized myself with Jung's paper: "On Synchronicity, An Acausal Connecting Principle." The paper provided a certain degree of reassurance that phenomena of the kind are not unknown or delusional. I might not be going crazy after all. But it didn't explain why a specific number is usually involved or why the frequency of occurrence is so high. Jung's examples of synchronicity are of the more familiar, one-of-a-kind, type. It is true that Dr. Jung was a psychiatrist and his knowledge of the subject came, in large part, from discussions with his patients. However, he did not seem to regard synchronicity as a form of insanity but rather as something more in the nature of a psychic event.

The typical "meaningful coincidence" can be understood through a simple and often repeated hypothetical case. A woman has purchased a new dress in her favorite color and left it with the store for alteration. On the day that the dress is delivered she discovers that the store has made a mistake. Instead of the dress she ordered they have sent her the same style but in black and not the color she ordered. The same day a telegram arrives informing her of her mother's death.

Just a coincidence? Perhaps. But it is a coincidence which seems meaningful and connected to the news of the death. Now the woman needs a new dress for the funeral, indeed, the very one sent by 'mistake.' The problem is that there is no causal mechanism which can account for the connection. Neither the store nor the woman knew in advance of her loss. This is the reason why Jung thought of synchronicity as a non-causal linking principle. The only agency which could have "caused" the store to make the error would have to have been some kind of telepathic or psychic power operating sub-consciously.

Obviously synchronicity of the type in the illustration could never occur on a frequent basis. It is an extremely rare and, indeed, unique event incapable of exact repetition. Only the woman herself would perceive the meaningful connection so it is also a very personal and subjective event. Coincidences, whether perceived in the mind of a beholder as meaningful and connected or not, happen to just about everybody at one time or another. It is perfectly natural.

If the 22-synchronicities occurred only as occasional unique and unrelated events, the phenomenon would probably have gone unnoticed. However, having them occur in various forms, some repeatable frequently like the clock type and numerous others impossible to duplicate, increases the feeling that there must be a very significant meaning. And when a particular number is involved which weaves most of the incidents into a single fabric on a continuing basis over a time-span now in excess of fifteen years, the effort to find an explanation takes on the intensity of a crusade.

About ten years after the coincidences began I came across a book like no other I have ever read. I was awestruck with amazement. For the first time I had a reference to precisely the same phenomenon which had dogged me for so long. The author described coincidences which he and others have experienced of exactly the same kind as mine, involving a number. True, the number was 23, not 22, but close enough that I knew I had at last discovered something of major importance in my quest.

I could scarcely put the book down to eat or sleep. Many readers will be familiar with it. The title is *Cosmic Trigger: The Final Secret Of The Illuminati* and the author is Robert Anton Wilson. Wilson's earlier work, the three-volume novel, *Illuminatus*, written in collaboration with Robert J. Shea, is a classic in the field of surrealistic or occult fiction. In *Cosmic Trigger* the 23-synchronicities are collectively referred to as "The 23 Enigma." For this reason I chose "The 22 Enigma" to indicate this exactly corresponding phenomenon.

Wilson's book itself was a massive dose of synchronicity which left me 'spaced out' for months. It contained a discussion of every far-out theory and concept which had intrigued me in the

previous decade. It mentioned the works of every philosopher and scientist whose ideas I had studied over the same period. Everything which interests me most was there assembled in an overwhelming synthesis. The resonance is so great it seems like a book I might have written myself. The only non-resonant element was the difference in the two numbers, a matter on which I can only speculate. I do not feel that this invalidates a comparison of my experiences of synchronicity with his, however. In every other respect they are so similar as to be perfectly parallel, if not identical. Wilson did not report coincidences between his number, 23, and times observed on clocks but, this too, is a minor point.

Concerning the possible meaning and significance of the phenomena as related in *Cosmic Trigger*, I knew that something interesting might be involved but I could hardly have dreamed anything so astonishing as the thesis Wilson puts together. He connects the 23-enigma with the Illuminati, "...the secret, invisible society that has been playing head trips with mankind since the beginning of time." Continuing from the back cover of the book,

"Relating his own observations to the works of Leary, Gurdjieff, Castaneda, and Crowley, he makes a case not easily dismissed that men are being contacted and experimented upon by more intelligent beings who share the universe with us -- and always did."

About a year before this discovery I came across a book entitled *The Sirius Mystery*, written by Robert K. G. Temple. In it the author expounds his theory that our planet has had visitors from the system of the bright star, Sirius, also known as the Dog Star. I was researching this for a planetarium production when I had the thought that telepathy would be much more suitable for interstellar communications than radio and would also be much easier than coming here physically in space ships.

The only significant advantage of radio is that the directionality of the signal would make it possible to identify the star system of origin. With telepathy the source is indeterminate in any provable way. I had heard of experiments in which telepathy had been found to be independent of time and space (or distance). This is obviously just the thing for interstellar communications.

At the time when I found Wilson's book I had no clear ideas about the Illuminati and, therefore, it was another coincidence when I read that members of this secret society are said to be in telepathic contact with advanced beings in the star system of Sirius. They use the number, 23, and also the eye-in-the-pyramid design of traditional occultism (or the Eye of Horus in ancient Egyptian symbolism) as their mystical seal and emblem.

Wilson relates synchronicity to modern theoretical physics by associating it with the Quantum Inseparability Principle and its extension, The Bootstrap Theory. The former holds that every particle in the Universe affects every other particle everywhere. The latter contends that everything causes everything, every which way in time. These are termed "non-local" models in modern physics and such models are not restricted by the speed-of-light limit. They allow, for example, the future to determine the present as much as the past.

Wilson continues (p. 32, *Cosmic Trigger*),

"Non-local theories, like Jung's synchronicity, take us out of the Newtonian action-reaction machine and bring us eerily close to the logic of the *I Ching* and Taoism, in which the seemingly random tossing of three coins may reveal an archetypal pattern of both personal and cosmological significance. With that kind of rationale (or rationalization) I accepted the 23 enigma as a signal that I should attempt to decipher."

Wilson repeats Dr. Jung's suggestion that synchronicity is "a sign that one is approaching a

high-energy area of the collective unconscious." I would add my impression that the 22-synchronicities I have observed often connect with impressive and meaningful events and situations. There seems to be a strong psychological impact involved.

Perhaps signals of this kind are used to attract attention, to presage some major event about to transpire or to identify an important piece of information to be received. Wilson calls the 23-coincidences intuitive signals to be deciphered. He refers to them as messages from the Holy Guardian Angel, Higher Intelligence or the extraterrestrial from Sirius. They strike me as very similar to dream symbols. Possibly they can be decoded in a manner similar to dreams. He also provides the following additional insight (p. 18, *Cosmic Trigger*):

"Many other scientists have agreed with Carl Jung's opinion that the number of startling coincidences in "the Net" increases sharply around anybody who becomes involved in depth psychology or in any investigation that extends the perimeter of consciousness. Arthur Koestler has written about this at length, in both *The Roots Of Coincidence* and *The Challenge Of Chance*. Dr. John Lilly has whimsically suggested that consciousness research activates the agents of "Cosmic Coincidence Control Center." Let us hope he is joking." He adds further (p. 35, *Cosmic Trigger*):

"We shall see, as we advance, that the peculiar entities in charge of Dr. Lilly's hypothetical "Cosmic Coincidence Control Center" pay special attention to those who pay attention to them."

I have wondered a great deal about the difference in the numbers. The number, 22, has connections with the Tarot which have been mentioned. There are 22 Major Trumps corresponding to the 22 letters of the Hebrew and certain so-called 'magical' alphabets. This is associated with the 22 paths of the Tree of Life in the Cabala. There is also a connection between the number, 22, and circles. The Tarot trumps represent a full cycle of manifestation which can be arranged in a circle and the irrational number, pi, was approximated in ancient times by the fraction, 22/7. The number, 23, as far as I am aware, does not have a corresponding background of mystical association and mathematical significance. It is a prime number, but that's about it.

Of course, there is no law which states that the Illuminati may not choose any number arbitrarily for a signature symbol or that synchronicity may not occur in relation to any number. Regardless of how well-connected the number, 22, may seem to me, I really have no idea why my coincidences have centered around this number and not some other. I did not choose it in any conscious sense. It just kept turning up.

I don't know why I haven't heard of numerical synchronicity with numbers other than 22 or 23 either. I've claimed that this type of synchronicity may be less common than the infrequent one-of-a-kind type. However, even if it is more widespread than that, observers will probably not be quick to advertize the fact until more is understood and published about the subject. I doubt very much that I would have written this if *Cosmic Trigger* had not come to my attention.

The only "explanation" which seems possible is either that the 22 is, in some sense, preparatory for the 23, because it precedes it mathematically, or that there are at least two and possibly more "psychic channels" to which human minds may become attuned or resonant. I tend to favor the psychic channel theory because neither Wilson nor those whom he mentions in the book as having had similar experiences report any prior 22-related stage. They seem utterly unaware that any number besides 23 might be associated with this perplexing mystery. They also have certain tremendous advantages over me. There are several of them who have perceived and reported on the 23-enigma and they are all very well-known. By contrast, so far I seem to be a cult of one in reporting the 22-synchronicities. For these reasons I feel it is incumbent upon me to do my utmost to try to establish the 22 enigma as a parallel phenomenon for which there is an equal

"validity" and range of "evidence."

In executing this difficult task I do not wish to bore the reader with the total volume of 22-coincidences which have occurred. On the other hand a few isolated examples would mean nothing and I must offer a sufficiently large and interesting selection to optimize the chances of being believed and taken seriously. In doing so I have only my own observations to draw upon. Wilson, it seems, combined his experiences with those of several others in relating his version of the phenomenon.

The methodology which I have adopted, therefore, is to select a representative cross-section of 22-data. I have focussed mainly on incidents which were the most revealing and had the greatest emotional impact for me as well as those closest to coincidences published in *Cosmic Trigger*. I shall quote several of Wilson's examples of 23-data and then counterpoint each with one or more examples from my collection of 22s.

Before I became aware of the 22-enigma I probably would not have believed very strongly in a pattern of coincidence like that described by Wilson, although I might have done my best to maintain an open mind. But while I might not be insulted to be thought of as a person with a vivid imagination, it is nevertheless my sincere belief that my imagination is not good enough that I could have invented the story of synchronicity which I am about to relate. As far as I am concerned, reality is more incredible than imagination anyway, as I will continue to try to convince the reader. I offer it because I believe there is a genuine psychic phenomenon involved in this which should be better studied and understood. I also wish to support others who have had or will have similar experiences.

Wilson explains that he was first introduced to the 23 enigma by William S. Burroughs whom he met around 1966 and describes as "the greatest prose stylist since James Joyce." Here is Burroughs' story of the 23-mystery as reported by Wilson (pp. 30, 31, *Cosmic Trigger*):

"In the early '60s in Tangier, Burroughs knew a certain Captain Clark who ran a ferry from Tangier to Spain. One day, Clark said to Burroughs that he'd been running the ferry 23 years without an accident. That very day, the ferry sank, killing Clark and everybody aboard.

"In the evening, Burroughs was thinking about this when he turned on the radio. The first newscast told about the crash of an Eastern Airlines plane on the New York-Miami route. The pilot was another Captain Clark and the flight was listed as Flight 23:

"Aha! Now you understand the line, "Captain Clark welcomes you aboard," which appears, always with sinister overtones, in various of Burroughs' surrealistic novels."

On the same topic, boating mishaps, here's my offering, a very famous one connected to a string of 22s. The *R. M. S. Titanic*, on its maiden voyage to New York, was traveling at a speed of 22 knots as it struck the iceberg. After visiting and photographing the wreckage in 1987, it is not clear whether, in fact, the *Titanic* struck an iceberg or was fatally damaged by an explosion and fire in a coal storage area. The *Titanic* was carrying a reported 2200 passengers and sank at 2:20 a.m. on the fateful day. Here we have not one but three significant 22s involved in probably the best-known passenger-ship tragedy in history.

I have always felt, intuitively and non-rationally, that calling the ship unsinkable somehow had something to do with its colossal bad luck. There is a Fate-tempting arrogance about calling any ship unsinkable.

One of the survivors, a lady who was only a child at the time, told in an interview contained in a recent movie about the *Titanic* of the terrible fear and foreboding which her mother expressed

prior to the voyage. The lady's mother did not know why she felt this way about going on the boat until her husband, in an attempt to reassure her, told her that the ship would be the *Titanic* and everybody said it was unsinkable. Then she knew why she was afraid. To say such a thing went against God; I believe that was the way she put it.

The unsinkable ship which sank the first time out seems to have been accursed. Does the 22-enigma have something to do with the punishment of pride and arrogance? Is it always associated with negative situations or merely with significant events, good or evil, which cause a sensation? Number 22 is connected with another curious set of coincidences involving King Tut and a possible curse.

The *Titanic* happened to be carrying an Egyptian mummy, according to writer, Philipp Vandenberg (p. 196, *The Curse Of The Pharaohs*). He claims that, because of its great value, it was placed in a storage room directly behind the command bridge of the ship, with the implication it somehow played a role in the ship's fatal destiny. The mummy, he states, was that of a prophetess of the time of Tut's predecessor, Akhenaten. There is, therefore, a possibility that she had been a person known to Tut during his childhood. Her grave was found in the ruins of Akhetaten, Akhenaten's city. A temple had also been built there for her. It is known as the "Temple of the Eyes." The owner was a Lord Canterville who was simply taking his mummy to New York.

The number, 22, seems associated with recent landmark events in Egyptology. The French scholar, Champollion, discovered how to read hieroglyphic writing by deciphering the Rosetta Stone in 1822. One-hundred years later, in 1922, after many years of searching, Howard Carter made the greatest archaeological discovery of modern times, the virtually intact tomb of the boy-king, Pharaoh Tutankhamen.

Tut was also unlucky. He died young and lived during an artistically brilliant but politically acrimonious time in Egyptian history, the so-called Amarna Period of the "heretic pharaoh," Akhenaten. Tutankhamen's age at death is estimated at around nineteen years. Could it have been twenty-two? Given the limits of accuracy, a few years either way would not be out of the question.

An extensive x-ray survey of the mummy conducted by a Liverpool Professor of Anatomy named Ronald Harrison established that Tut died unnaturally due to complications resulting from a wound on the left side of his skull. The wound is attributed to a fall or blow, leaving open the question of how it happened, through foul play, in combat or by accident.

Tut author, Arnold Brackman, a former correspondent for the United Press, reproduces certain remarks made by Herbert Winlock, a director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (p. 167, *The Search For The Gold Of Tutankhamen*). Winlock notes that 22 persons were present at the official opening of the burial chamber of the tomb (February 17, 1923) and 22 again when the lid of the sarcophagus was raised (February 12, 1924).

Archaeologist, Howard Carter, had a pet canary which residents of the region believed had mystically led its owner to the tomb. The bird was said to have brought Carter good luck and they dubbed Tut's grave "the Tomb of the Bird," according to Brackman (p. 83, op. cit.). Therefore, when, shortly after the discovery, the bird was swallowed by a cobra which had entered its cage, the incident was seen as a bad omen. The cobra was also a symbol of kingship in ancient times. Thus it was held that the cobra from the crown of the king avenged itself on the bird for giving away the secret location of the tomb.

A few months after the discovery, in April, 1923, the man who had financed the work, the Earl of

Carnarvon, died. Lord Carnarvon had been bitten on the cheek by a mosquito a short time before but had thought little of it. He had also nicked the scab from the bite while shaving. Mosquito bites, even in Egypt, are not usually fatal but this one became infected and Carnarvon died of a resulting case of blood-poisoning. At the exact moment of his death, a general power failure extinguished the lights in the City of Cairo. His son also reported later the coincidence that Carnarvon's pet dog, back in England, had suddenly begun to howl and died the same night.

The events surrounding the Earl's death ignited the rampant speculation which became "The Curse Of King Tut" or "The Curse Of The Pharaohs." They also inspired the numerous horror-movies about mummies coming back to life and running amuck with which we are so familiar today.

There were reports that Carter found a clay tablet in the tomb on which the curse was written but he always denied this. If he was hiding something, he did it to stave off the superstition which he knew very well would only jeopardize the progress of his work. However, Carter himself professed to give no credence to such things.

The wording of the alleged curse translates as, "Death follows on swift wings those who disturb the pharaoh's peace." Royal threats of this type were common and standard warnings to tomb-robbers and probably to intruders generally. Whether Carter found such an inscription or not, his denial certainly did little good. Rumors about the curse spread as fast as the official news of the discovery itself.

Three years after the tomb was opened, Carter had carefully dismantled the several protective shrines which enclosed the massive, carved, yellow quartzite sarcophagus. Within this he had found and opened the three Osiriform coffins, each successive one a little smaller and nested within the former. The innermost coffin, of immense weight, was another incredible surprise. It was entirely wrought in solid gold and tipped the scales at a hefty 2,448 and 1/8 pounds! That's more than a "long-ton" (2240 lbs) of pure gold bullion. At the current market price of about \$500 per ounce troy, the intrinsic value of the third coffin is over \$17.8 million.

Within the final coffin lay Tut's mummy covered at the head and shoulders by the magnificent Gold Portrait Mask (also called the Funerary Mask), unquestionably the most famous and widely depicted artifact from the tomb. (I thought I had a reference to the weight of the mask being around 22 lbs; however, it was not found when searched for and the precise weight may be unpublished in the popular press.) As he removed the decaying linen wrappings, he found 22 objects placed about the neck of the mummy, an iron amulet, representing a neck-support, behind the head plus 21 other symbolical collars and amulets.

He also found a rounded depression, resembling a small scar or scab, on the left cheek of the mummy just in front of the ear lobe. When the Portrait Mask was later x-rayed in Paris, another Tut writer, Barry Wynne, claims (pp. 196-8, *Behind The Mask Of Tutankhamen*) that a slight irregularity in the thickness of gold was found on one cheek and nowhere else. The claim is that the position of the irregularity on the mask corresponds to the position of the depression on the mummy's cheek and also to the spot where the mosquito stung Lord Carnarvon.

While Howard Carter, Lord Carnarvon's children and a friend of Carter's who slept in the tomb for many years to guard the treasures at night seemed immune to the curse, there were many connected in one way or another with the discovery who did die prematurely, sometimes simultaneously or serially with others and usually with strong coincidental overtones.

There was also a widespread belief in the curse among collectors of ancient artifacts and other members of the public. The British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and

probably several others received barrages of unsolicited gifts of Egyptian antiquities during this time as fearful collectors hastened to avoid any possible retribution from the realm of the irrational. The numerous premature, accidental or self-inflicted deaths of persons connected with the discovery heightened the fear as King Tut seemed to be taking his revenge.

The total number of curse victims, over the seven-year period from 1922 to 1929, according to Vandenberg (p. 28, op. cit.), is 22. However, Brackman (p. 165, op. cit.) claims only 21 by 1935. The count obviously depends on the subjective determination of who was or was not closely enough connected with the discovery and who did or did not die unnaturally and prematurely enough to be considered a victim. Moreover, deaths were still being associated with the curse at least as late as the sixties, these connected with the moving of the treasures for various exhibitions around the world. In the decade during which the four chambers of the tomb were being emptied, 22 fatalities linked to Tutankhamen would be about the number reported in the press. The speculation on the curse, however, does not appear to have met its own demise as yet and the total to date may be even higher.

Whatever the number may be, the element of coincidence in many of the cases was pronounced. Indeed, it was the sense of synchronicity which, more than any other factor, led to the idea of a curse in the first place and to the labelling of its victims as such. A few examples will suffice to demonstrate this.

The death of Lord Carnarvon has been cited. As we have seen, the coincidences in his case include the simultaneous power failure in Cairo and death of his pet dog in England. Further coincidence is evident in the cause of death being an insect bite in the same location on his left cheek as the scab on Tut's mummy and the imperfection on the Portrait Mask. Incredibly, another coincidence is found in the death, in 1929, of Lord Carnarvon's wife, Lady Carnarvon, who is also said to have died as the result of an insect bite. And one of Lord Carnarvon's half-brothers died during a bout of temporary insanity, according to Brackman, after visiting the tomb.

The theory of the curse was well established by 1930 due to a spectacular series of deaths which rivalled in reality the sensationalism of the fictionalized horror-movies it spawned. In the year that Lady Carnarvon died, a man who had acted as Howard Carter's personal secretary following the discovery, Richard Bethell, died at an early age. He was found slumped over in a chair at the fashionable Mayfair Club in London, according to Brackman, the cause of death never determined. In the absence of any other discovered cause, circulatory collapse (heart attack) was usually assumed. He died in November, 1929, seven years after the November, 1922 discovery to a close approximation.

A few months later, Bethell's father, Lord Westbury, committed suicide in a leap from the window of his seventh-story apartment in St. James's Court, near Buckingham Palace. He had frequently been heard to mutter, 'the curse of the pharaohs', according to a Universal News Service report in February, 1930 quoted by Wynne, as this had presumably been preying upon his mind in connection with the sudden death of his son. In a last letter which helped to promote belief in the mummy's curse he wrote: "I cannot stand the horror any longer and I am going to make my exit."

More bizarre and horrible still, as Lord Westbury's hearse was on its way to a crematorium (he had insisted on cremation to avoid embalming because of the association with mummification), the vehicle struck and killed an eight-year-old boy who had somehow run out in front of it. Brackman also claims that at this same time a custodian in the department of Egyptian antiquities at the British Museum died on the operating table in a London hospital.

Evidently the curse could claim "victims" who had never even been in Egypt! Two more cases of

this type involve persons who were scheduled to examine Tut's mummy but died before reaching the tomb. The first was that of Sir Archibald Douglas Reid, a noted radiologist, whom Brackman says "...died of an unknown illness shortly after he signed an agreement with Cairo's department of antiquities to X-ray Tutankhamen's body." Wynne claims that another X-ray expert by the name of Frederick Raleigh also died before reaching the tomb. R. G. Harrison, the Professor of Anatomy from Liverpool who eventually, around 1968, did X-ray the mummy and found the cause of death to be the fracture on the left side of the skull, reported that his research team was beset by "strange happenings" while in Egypt. During their work a person connected with the team died and the lights again went out in the City of Cairo.

Merely acquiescing to a decision by higher authority to disturb Tut or his treasures might prove fatal. The clear indication of this is another late case which occurred in 1966. At this time the French government wanted to exhibit some of the treasures in Paris. It was to be the first exhibition outside of Egypt. The Egyptian Director of Antiquities, Mohammed Ibrahim, strongly objected to the proposed exhibition but was forced to consent because President Nasser had already agreed to it and had officially denounced the curse as a myth the previous year. A few days later, Ibrahim's daughter was critically injured in an automobile accident.

This was followed by a dream in which Ibrahim saw that he would also have a serious accident if he did not block plans for the exhibition. He tried to have the decision to send the treasures abroad rescinded. However, in a meeting with French officials, he was persuaded to ignore his dream and the "superstition" of the curse as unscientific. As he left the meeting he was hit by a car and died two days later of a fractured skull.

The foregoing examples of 22-synchronicity in history are so negative that this seems a good place to insert something a little more hopeful. Wilson reports a story originally told to Arthur Koestler and published in his book, *The Challenge Of Chance*. It originated with a University of Chicago law professor by the name of Hans Seisel. When he was living in Austria, Seisel, his mother and her parents all had addresses with 23s in them. On a visit to Monte Carlo, Seisel's mother purchased a book in which the heroine wins a great deal of money betting on number 23 at roulette. She played the same number and won on the second try.

I phoned Professor Seisel at the University and asked him about the story. He did not know that it had been reprinted in Wilson's book but remembered giving it to Koestler. Of course, he denied any mystery or enigma. It's just random chance, nothing more. Coincidences, however unusual they may seem, are natural and happen all the time.

I was going to save the parallel story for the movie category but I have only one which has something to do with roulette. Who can forget the scene from the movie, "Casablanca," in which Rick, played by Humphrey Bogart, helps a young couple from Bulgaria to escape the Nazis? They have spent most of their money and cannot afford the bribe for an exit visa. The desperate woman has already made a sex-pact with Captain Renault for the visa, unknown to her husband who is busy losing their remaining funds at the roulette table. Rick steps in and asks him if he has tried number 22. While he looks on the man wins twice on the same number.

Let's go to the movie category next. Wilson offers this example (p. 32, *Cosmic Trigger*):

"Once the Numerologist went to see the Academy Award film, "Charly," with a friend who was particularly dubious about this 23 obsession. The story of the film concerns a low-grade moron (IQ around 70) who is transformed by neuro-surgery into a superhuman genius (IQ 200+). In the crucial operation scene, the number on the operating room is visible, and it is, of course, 23. The friend sat bolt upright."

I wish that Wilson had also noticed the number on the door of Big Brother's chamber of fear in the movie of George Orwell's *1984*. It is, of course, 22. The number is also found on the magician's door in the movie, "Dr. Strange," and on the eccentric Mr. Twain's gate in the spoof of detective mysteries, "Murder By Death." In the film, "War Games", the percentage of NORAD missile launch personnel who refused to obey the order to start World War III is given as 22%. The sequel to Hitchcock's "Psycho", "Psycho II", is said to take place 22 years after the original story. The futuristic movie, "Soylent Green," is set in the year 2022. "The Return of Maxwell Smart," has agent 22 as Max's assistant. The diameter of the Red Spot on Jupiter is given as 22,000 miles in the movie, "2010." In the "Buck Rogers" television series, the serial number of the robot, "Tweedy," is 2223T, combining the two numbers. Peter Tompkins's book, *Secrets of the Great Pyramid*, has 22 chapters. "The Revelation of John" has 22 sections, and on and on.

The number turns up in movies so much more often than could be attributed to chance alone that I will hazard the speculation that it is the favorite number of writers. I don't know why this is true, I simply believe that it is. I can't prove it statistically but, if a person watches for 22s in movies and on television, I think it will be evident that writers have a clear, possibly subconscious, preference for using this number in excess of all others. I used to record every 22 I saw or heard in a movie. Before long I gave up the practice when I realized that the task of cataloging them would be overwhelming.

The preference is equally evident in advertizing where the digits are so often found in telephone numbers that companies want the public to remember easily. Who could fail to notice how often the last four digits are chosen to be 2200? I'm willing to bet that if this could be checked with the phone company, it would be found that the first choice of companies asking for special numbers is 2200, and, if that is not available in a particular exchange (the first three digits), then 2222 or some other, easily remembered, repetition of digits where at least one of the pairs is 22. Television commercials use it a great deal too. I just saw one for Wheaties which featured a small boy winning at basketball wearing a jersey numbered 22.

While on the subject of the liking writers seem to have for 22, I must mention the most famous usage of all in the book title which itself has become nothing less than an idiom of the English language. It seems to me that Wilson and Shea's *Illuminatus* has a spiritual predecessor in the best-selling novel of lunatic paranoid fiction by Joseph Heller. I am, of course, referring to *Catch-22*.

As I was writing the first draft of this article and arrived at the section concerning *Catch-22*, an incredible coincidence occurred. Without the slightest foreknowledge of the impending event, I discovered from various reports in the electronic and print media that Heller's book would soon be 25 years old and that a big party was being given in celebration by the U. S. Air Force. A short while later I also happened to catch Heller's appearance with Johnny Carson on "The Tonight Show." I'd like to ask Mr. Heller if he had any particular reason for choosing the number for his title.

I had never seen or heard of a movie made from the novel until the writing of this article. The movie, "Catch-22," was among the selections available in the first month that I had cable television installed.

An article by journalist, John Blades, entitled "'22' Turns 25," appeared in the Sunday-edition books section of the *Chicago Tribune* on September 28, 1986. It is a most insightful article. Since, by synchronistic association, there may be some resonance between the theme of *Catch 22* and the meaning behind what I have called the 22-enigma, I would like to quote a few paragraphs from the article realizing fully that Heller is probably unaware of any synchronicity concerning the number. It would not surprise me if Heller chose 22 for no particular reason, it came into his

mind out of a clear blue sky.

The Blades article begins with these observations:

"It would be hard to imagine an institution with less reason to celebrate the 25th anniversary of *Catch 22* than the U. S. Air Force. With his seditious humor and anarchic vision, Joseph Heller managed to turn World War II into a bloody "Duck Soup," devastating the military and its leadership as effectively as the Marx Brothers demolished Fredonia." and,

"By all the rules of logic, a novel of such cosmic insubordination ought to be banished from Air Force bases around the world."

Catch-22 is based on Heller's experiences in the Air Corps during World War II. However, he maintains that his scathing satire on the insanity of war and the "mindlessness of the military" (quoting the article) was not directed exclusively at the armed forces and its leadership, but at the "depravities of contemporary life" in general. He claims that the book is not particularly about the "military mentality" but about the civilian mentality of establishment power. The military is a sub-set of this even bigger problem. In Heller's own words,

"It's a civilian world in uniform... You could take these Wall Street mentalities, the people who are being indicted now, and put them in the military, and they would be equally successful and equally reprehensible. The shame is when people like Milo Minderbinder become acceptable."

The Blades article develops Heller's insights further by quoting from the writings of a Professor of English at the University of Michigan, John W. Aldridge:

"Beneath the comic surfaces... Heller was saying something outrageous, unforgivably outrageous, not just about the idiocy of war but about our whole way of life and the system of false values on which it is based.

"The horror he exposed was not confined to the battlefield or the bombing mission but permeated the entire labyrinthine structure of establishment power. It found expression in the most completely inhumane exploitation of the individual for trivial, self-serving ends and the most extreme indifference to the official objectives that supposedly justified the use of power."

The writer of the *Tribune* story says that Aldridge noted further that *Catch-22* was "...not only revolutionary in its treatment of a 'good' war, it anticipated the more extreme derangement of an 'evil' one." Aldridge continued,

"For with the seemingly eternal and mindless escalation of the war in Vietnam, history had at last caught up with the book and caused it to be more and more widely recognized as a deadly accurate metaphorical portrait of the nightmarish conditions in which the country appeared to be engulfed."

The article then quotes Heller in regard to the feedback he received concerning the novel during this later war:

"I've been told more times than I can recall that during the Vietnam War, when sales of the book really soared, officers and enlisted men gave the men replacing them paperback copies of *Catch-22*, and said, 'If you want to know what the war is really about, read this.'"

Joseph Heller struck a nerve. The unforgivably outrageous thing he did was to satirize the System and those whom it serves best, the power elite or Establishment. He did it metaphorically and with humor; black humor, to be sure, but humor nonetheless; and we do not have to take a humorous thing seriously. When President Eisenhower warned the nation of the danger of the

"military-industrial complex," with no humor whatsoever, he wasn't taken seriously either.

That's why the U. S. Air Force can throw a big party for *Catch-22*. It keeps it on the level of a joke and shows that they can take one. The article informs of the fact that the Air Force Academy, "...where the book is still very popular among officers for the way it dramatizes the dehumanizing factors in military life...", is holding a seminar, in conjunction with the celebration, "... on the political, ideological, cultural, theological and, of course, the military implications of *Catch 22*." Nothing changes but everybody has a good time.

When something sounds too good to be true we become suspicious and want to know, "What's the catch?" "Catch-22" is a metaphor suggesting the universal snag or hidden condition buried in the 'fine print' of a contract or in the background of a situation. Frequently employed in connection with regulations handed down by a bureaucracy, the concept becomes something of a 'Murphy's Law' in regard to the dealings of individuals with large corporations and government agencies. The dictionary gives "a tricky or concealed drawback."

Joseph Heller took this idea and created the generic, off-the-shelf, arbitrary, catch-all rule or condition. Reference to a specific regulation is unnecessary. The fictitious "Catch-22" stands in for all purposes and situations.

In its widespread usage in the English language now as an idiom, "Catch-22" has become THE concept describing any situation in which one can't win, no matter how great the effort. It applies especially to legal structures handed down by higher authorities, particularly those of a government or large bureaucracy. Rigged against the little guy and the under-dog, Catch-22 reveals the game aspect of politics.

Catch-22s occur in real life as the result of unforeseen conflicts in complex sets of regulations and in other situations. This is the innocent type. There is also a more deliberate or cynical type. This type hides ugly policies by cloaking them in something which sounds acceptable. For example, the Reagan Administration publicly insisted that it approved payments for liver transplants under Medicare for the children of poor families who need them. The only catch was that the child must have held a job and paid into Social Security for a minimum of three years.

The synchronicity I have experienced for so many years has centered upon the number, 22. However, the number, 23, has also cropped up in a few instances, usually in combination with 22. One of these involves the positions of the planets when I was born. There is a reasonably parallel anecdote provided by Robert Wilson (p. 32, *Cosmic Trigger*):

"After a while my passion for jotting down every significant 23 that came my way began to annoy my Beautiful Red-Headed Wife, Arlen.

"'It's all in your mind,' she told me on several occasions. 'You're just noticing the 23s and ignoring other numbers.'

"Of course. But she was annoyed by being implicated in the 23 mystery even before she met me. Our two oldest daughters (by her previous marriage) were born on February 23 and August 23 respectively."

I have always been interested in astronomy. When I got into parapsychology and occultism, it was natural I would check out astrology as a hobby. I also worked for a time as a producer at a planetarium and once did a show on astrology, including a part on celestial omens and the ways these were interpreted long ago. One of the most disturbing sky-omens of old was the total eclipse of the Sun. By a coincidence again, just before I left the position, I traveled with a group of amateur astronomers to see the last total eclipse of the Sun in North America this century.

My last official duty turned out to be the signing of the expense voucher for the eclipse expedition. Then I calculated carefully the length of time I worked at the job. I probably felt something intuitively because, by this time, I was well aware of the 22-synchronicities. The accuracy of it was still a big surprise. I was there 2.2 years exactly, to the day!

Certain angular separations of planets at the time of a person's birth are considered significant in astrology and these angles are referred to as "aspects." The major aspects are the conjunction (0 degrees of separation), the opposition (180 degrees), the square (90 degrees), the sextile (60 degrees) and the trine (120 degrees). There are a number of minor aspects as well but no aspect, minor or major, corresponds to something very unexpected I found in studying my astrological birth chart. Considering a four-planet 'stellium' or near grouping of planets in the 8th House, it occurred to me to calculate the precise angle between the two planets farthest apart in the grouping.

It looked roughly around twenty degrees but I wanted an exact figure. It was an incredible discovery that they are separated by 22 degrees, 23 minutes of arc, exactly. It was the first hint that both numbers, 22 and 23, might occasionally turn up together in the coincidence phenomenon. I was, by this time, aware of the two forms of the mystery as separate but related. This, however, seemed new.

An angle of 22 degrees, 23 minutes does not correspond to any aspect considered significant in astrology, which is why it wasn't discovered for twelve years. The number-coincidence was naturally significant to me. There was a greater surprise to come, however. A second pair of planets in the chart was found with the same angle of separation, precisely 22 degrees, 23 minutes of arc! It would be interesting to know how long it will be before four planets are separated the same way again, two by two, with this specific combination of numbers for both angles. And two pairs is 2 times 2, another coincidence.

It was beginning to look as though the 22-enigma was working overtime to convey a cosmic message I could not fully comprehend. Wilson remarks more than once in his book that Dr. Lilly's hypothetical "Cosmic Coincidence Control Center" often seemed to be working overtime on his case. I had the same feeling.

One of the planetary pairs is the Sun and Uranus. The Sun's Declination, the distance above or below the Celestial Equator, was 22 degrees, 57 minutes North. I once received Hexagram 57 of the *I Ching* as a personal symbol. The hexagram is named "Sun" in Chinese and its description, in the well-known translation by Richard Wilhelm, begins on page 220.

The Declination of Uranus was 23 degrees, 3 minutes North. Both are very close to the 23 degrees North position, the Sun only 3 minutes of arc below and Uranus only 3 minutes above. The Sun was also close to the same Zodiacal degree as that of Sirius, the star reputedly involved in the 23-enigma.

Wilson provides examples of 23s from the annals of crime, apparently involving New York underworld figures (p. 34, *Cosmic Trigger*):

"'Mad Dog' Coll was shot on 23rd Street when he was 23 years old; a year later, Dutch Schultz (who paid for the Coll assassination) was himself fatally shot on October 23, 1935. Marty Krompfer, king of the Harlem numbers racket, was non-fatally shot on the same October 23, 1935. (It's got to be one of them coincidences,' he told police.) Schultz's killer, Charlie Workman, served 23 years of a life sentence and was then paroled."

Chicago has an equally colorful history of crime. Al Capone's headquarters was a hotel at the

corner of Michigan Avenue and 22nd Street. Within the city limits, 22nd Street was renamed for a Chicago mayor who was assassinated while riding in a motorcade with President Roosevelt.

When the movie, "The Untouchables," based on the Capone story, was filmed on location in Chicago, some of the scenes were shot on a street which runs parallel to but midway between 22nd and 23rd Streets, near where my mother and aunt lived for many years. Transformed to the 1930s, the street became the one on which U. S. Treasury agent, Eliot Ness, had his home. The number of the house filmed as the Ness residence has a 23 and two zeros in it. The street is called 22nd Place. The numbers, 22 and 23, linked up again. Capone also spent 22 months in jail near the end of his life.

Wilson mentions the assassination of President Kennedy but not the connection of its date, November 22, 1963, with a parallel mystery. This is quite understandable; I would not have known about the 23-mystery if he hadn't reported it. 22 years to the day later, on November 22, 1985, my father's will was registered in probate court. On that day I rode in a rapid transit train car numbered 2233. It was also on October 22, 1962 that Kennedy went on national television to announce the Cuban Missile Crisis and naval blockade, precisely 13 months prior to his death.

23 years to the day after the Kennedy Assassination, on November 22, 1986, Lt. Col. Oliver ("Blood and Guts") North held his "Shredding Party." The full story of Reagan's "Watergate," the "Iran-Contra Scandal," became impossible to document. During the congressional hearings it was revealed that North had missed one incriminating document, however, the so-called "diversion memo." Its exhibit number was 22.

It was another coincidence when the space shuttle exploded on January 28, 1986, the day that Reagan was supposed to deliver his "State of the Union" speech crowned by the glory of the first teacher in space. After slashing federal funds for education and for school lunch programs for the children of the poor so that the Pentagon would have more money to waste on \$500 toilet seats and every conceivable profligacy, he had decided on a symbolic gesture -- a school teacher riding into orbit as an astronaut. It was an education, but not the one that was planned.

It was only a coincidence too when the teacher, Christa McAuliffe, was having fun one day with the other nine finalists in the program as an accident occurred. The teachers were the guests of the Alabama Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville. They were there for a taste of space flight, suiting up like astronauts and riding in the Center's "Lunar Odyssey" centrifuge which simulates the forces of acceleration encountered on a trip to the Moon. The accident was not reported nationally at the time and received only cursory coverage in Huntsville.

After the *Challenger* exploded, however, the incident was reported in an article about the larger tragedy which appeared in the *Chicago Tribune* on February 9, 1986, coincidentally the day that Halley's Comet reached perihelion (the closest approach to the Sun). By still another astro-coincidence, the planet Uranus had been in the news just before the shuttle disaster. The spacecraft, Voyager 2, made its close approach to Uranus and sent back spectacular pictures of a ringed planet and its moons just four days earlier, on January 24th. The TV pictures of the distant planet were still coming in when the *Challenger* story broke and dominated the media for the next month.

The *Tribune* of February 9th covered the accident in the following manner:

"Now, though, they were just teachers having fun, spinning around at the Alabama Space and Rocket Center in a centrifuge. Then there was a sudden "boom," followed by a mysterious thud. Gregory Walker, a 20-year-old center employee who was working nearby, had been caught in some of the fast-moving machinery and thrown to his death. He had crashed through the thin wall

of the centrifuge, landing just a few feet from one of the teachers.

"The teacher, Christa McAuliffe, was "crying uncontrollably" as she stared at the young man's body, remembers Kathleen Beres of Baltimore, another of the finalists in America's "Teacher In Space" program.

"Looking back," Beres said, "it feels like tragedy has always been part of it."

We're too scientific to believe in omens or anything of that sort. Everybody at the space center carried on with business as usual and the teachers put the incident out of their minds as best they could.

The space shuttle tragedy had all the earmarks, however, of a sign pointing to trouble for the Administration which came quickly enough. Even more quickly, right after the Iran-Contra Hearings, Reagan found it possible to support a disarmament treaty with the Russians when it had been impossible in the previous six years. Odd how coincidences happen, isn't it? When "Black Monday" occurred, the Dow-Jones average lost 22.6% of its book value in a single day. This also came shortly after the hearings.

Wilson mentions the 23 chromosomes involved in human reproduction. One of the 23 is shorter than the others, the sex-determining chromosome, and is usually shown separately. The information for developing the physical body is contained in the 22 longer chromosomes. The additional chromosome guides the development of sexual characteristics by synthesizing a protein which causes the embryo to be male. It will be female if the protein is not made, as determined by the combining of the sex chromosomes' x and y components. The basic building blocks of organic life, the amino acids, are also 22 in number.

The 22 and 23 enigmas are clearly so similar in kind that the greater mystery may be why numbers are involved at all or why these numbers seem to be the significant ones and not others. I have no explanation beyond the psychic resonance theory. However, if we are dealing with two or more channels, why are the programs on both networks virtually identical? Why are two "carrier frequencies" needed to broadcast the same show?

An intriguing series of coincidences occurred during visits to Montreal. My first visit was during the World's Fair, Expo '67. Thereafter Montreal always seemed friendly and familiar despite my knowing little French and not having lived in this part of the world. Some of the feeling of familiarity was due also to the fact that most of the automobile license plate numbers in the city are, or at least were at that time, prefixed by my initials.

[New coincidences occurred even as I wrote about the old ones. The TV was on when the sentence about Montreal and Expo '67 was being typed. A movie called "The Magnificent Thief," starring Robert Wagner, was being shown. Unbelievably, scenes of the movie shot on the old Expo grounds came on the screen just as I started the sentence.]

I went to Montreal several times in the '70s. While driving downtown from Dorval Airport, a magnificent white cathedral can be seen standing out prominently on the southwestern slope of Mont Royal, the mountain after which the city is named. On one particular occasion in February, 1974 I went for a closer look at this beautiful structure.

I had some free time before a meeting at McGill University and, as it was a bright though cold winter day, I went for a drive through the Parc Mont Royal ending up at the church. As I stepped out of the car, I happened to glance at my watch; it was 2:20 p.m., to the second. I climbed the several long flights of stairs leading to the building and entered. There was a vast vaulted chamber within but no pews and the light of the Sun streamed in diagonally through windows

high up near the roof. It is called St. Joseph's Oratory and is no ordinary church.

Around the turn of the century, a Catholic priest by the name of Frere Andre (Brother Andre) performed miraculous cures for the sick and disabled on this site. Testifying to this is a museum on the lower level of the building containing numerous pairs of crutches and other medical paraphernalia left behind by those who were healed by the famous priest. Next to the Oratory is a small hut containing many of the personal belongings of Brother Andre.

I was in Montreal to do research for a television science-documentary on the mind/body interaction and my meeting at McGill, coincidentally, was with a psychologist whose middle name is the same as my last name. He often called me his "relative" for this reason. By this time I was becoming somewhat blasé about the constantly nagging coincidences. However, I could not be blasé about what followed. It was getting close to the time of the appointment when I started to leave the church. No sooner had I stepped outside when I was stunned by an astonishing sight. The Sun was surrounded by a halo composed of all the colors of the rainbow!

In addition to the main halo there was a secondary arc a bit farther out at about the 10 to 11 o'clock position. The colors of the arc and the halo ran from red closest to the Sun to blue and violet farthest away from it, as I recall. I had heard of halos of this kind but never hoped to see one because they are an extremely rare phenomenon caused by specially-shaped ice crystals high up in the atmosphere. With that in mind I began to wonder why I should see such an incredible apparition at this particular time and place.

I stood outside the Oratory gazing in awe and disbelief at the sky for what seemed a long time. Many thoughts raced through my mind. I wanted to corroborate what I was witnessing and share the experience with everybody nearby. Then I discovered that no one else was around. There had been other visitors earlier but all seemed to have departed.

It was getting late when I decided to rush to the University to bring the professor I was meeting out to see this once-in-a-lifetime spectacle. I drove like a madman to the downtown side of the mountain where McGill is located. As I got out of the car I noted that the halo had not disappeared. However, the secondary arc had turned inside-out. Instead of being concave toward the Sun, as before, it was now convex.

I ran into the Allan Memorial Institute (for psychological research) and excitedly urged the professor to come outside to see the halo. For the second time that day I was struck dumb with amazement. He was not interested. We went on with the meeting and that was the end of it -- almost.

Naturally I could not forget such an unusual incident. I had to leave Montreal and never did find out whether anybody else saw what I did, as many should have done if it was a real atmospheric halo and not a psychic vision. I have never seen things which others could not see either before or since but my feeling now is that it was a vision. For one thing there was the circumstance of being at a religious shrine at the time. For another, I eventually discovered that an acquaintance known to me for her psychic gifts had visited the Oratory some time later with a mutual friend, had also seen a rainbow halo, but the friend had not.

I was talking about this experience when someone suggested that I had seen a "Sun-dog." This is suggestive when we recall the association of Sirius, the Dog Star, with the 23-enigma. I was also born in the Chinese "Year of the Dog." I immediately got out a dictionary and looked up the term. I discovered that a Sun-dog is not what I saw but, at the end of the definition, were these unexpected words: "See also, Halo of 22 degrees." This, it turned out, is the correct scientific name. It is derived from the fact that the angular distance from the center of the Sun to the first

halo ring, measured from the observer's eye, is 22 degrees of arc.

Calling it a "Halo of 22 degrees" assumes it was real and not a vision or hallucination. However, except that the colors I saw were more vivid, pictures published in a Scientific American article were very similar. More synchronicity was on the way.

On the day I visited the shrine of Brother Andre I did not recall a news report I had heard about a year earlier on a similar visit to Montreal. I kept a daily diary in those years. A long while after the vision I came upon the earlier entry. Now that I knew about Brother Andre, what had been an isolated incident took on a new, although retroactive, significance as yet another seemingly connected coincidence. The news concerned the theft of a sacred relic of the Catholic Church, the preserved heart of the great faith-healer, Brother Andre! It was being held for a ransom of \$50,000.

The ransom was never paid but the relic was eventually returned unharmed. Brother Andre's Heart was stolen on March 19, 1973 and returned on December 21, 1974. My visit occurred around the middle of this period. Suspecting a 22 lurking somewhere in this, I calculated the interval of time that the relic was in the hands of the thieves. The number of months was slightly short of the magic number but I remembered that our word, "month," comes from "moon," meaning a lunar cycle. The modern month is a little longer than the lunar cycle of about 28 days. In "moons" or lunar cycles the interval fell between 22 and 23.

The numbers, 22 and/or 23, have not been involved in all coincidences. No other incident or group of incidents has been so visually spectacular as the halo but most discoveries of synchronicity leave me with a questioning and unsettled feeling. Some to-myself-astonishing coincidences involved other persons rather than numerical relationships.

Dr. Andrija Puharich is a neurologist who has investigated many areas of parapsychology. He has studied several of the telepathic talents of modern times, including Peter Hurkos and Uri Geller. He is responsible for bringing the psychic abilities of Geller to the scientific scrutiny of the Stanford Research Institute. He is the author of *The Sacred Mushroom*, *Beyond Telepathy* and *Uri: A Journal Of The Mystery Of Uri Geller*.

I met Dr. Puharich in 1977 while researching a documentary for radio on the electrical wizard, Nikola Tesla. Puharich is an expert on Tesla and credited the intrepid inventor and discoverer with assisting him as a young man, through his many writings and patents, in the development of a new type of hearing aid for the deaf.

The first coincidence turned up in the fact that both Tesla and Puharich are of Yugoslavian ancestry, as am I on my mother's side. Then I discovered that Puharich had lived as a child in the same two neighborhoods that I also spent my childhood in, except more than twenty years earlier. The locations of the houses were very close to each other, within a city block or two. We also attended the same elementary school. When I learned this, I was mystified and intrigued; to me it was yet another incredibly unlikely coincidence. Puharich showed no reaction; to him it seemed without significance beyond mere happenstance.

There are certain coincidences I would like to mention here. While reading biographies of Tesla I have received sensations of familiarity and noted certain resonances in attitudes and interests. I was once told, through a medium, that I may have been his brother in that life. Nikola Tesla died a few years before I was born and his brother, Dane, died in an accident while still a child.

Tesla made what he considered his most important discovery at Colorado Springs in the year 1899. Far beyond his alternating-current power system, which is in world-wide use today, he

considered the discovery of electrical stationary waves in the earth of much greater significance. It was fundamental to his plan for broadcasting power without wires, using the earth itself as the conductor. The opening line of the article in which he reports his discovery is indelibly imprinted on my mind:

"It was on the third of July -- the date I shall never forget -- when I obtained the first decisive experimental evidence of a truth of overwhelming importance for the advancement of humanity..."

July 3rd is my date of birth.

A greater surprise was to come. Later in 1977, as I was about to begin writing the documentary, a most unusual event occurred. I had just inserted the first blank sheet of paper into my typewriter and typed the title of the piece at the top, "Nikola Tesla," when suddenly I heard a sound like a bird's wings fluttering overhead. I looked up to find a sparrow flying around near the light fixture on the ceiling of my room.

It must be added that I had been in the room a long while and had noticed nothing out of the ordinary. The door and single window had been closed all day. The bird might have gotten into the house elsewhere and found its way to the room before I arrived but that wouldn't explain why I heard not a peep out of it in all the time until I started typing. It is possible that the creature had been hiding in the light fixture. Chirping and flying around, it certainly did not keep its presence a secret thereafter. My attention was riveted by this unexpected guest for the remainder of the day and evening. It stayed the night sleeping perched above a door.

It was not until the following morning that I was able to coax the bird outside through a window, concerned that my cat might reach it before I could. This kind of visit would have been remarkable at any time, but, occurring in perfect synchronization with the typing of the title/name, some connection with Tesla seemed inevitable. I knew that he had been very fond of the birds, mostly sparrows and pigeons, which he daily fed in New York City parks in the last years of his life.

The night of the visit I consulted the ancient Chinese Oracle of Change, the *I Ching*, to see if I could obtain a formal interpretation of the unusual event and extraordinary coincidence. I asked to know the meaning of the visit in relation to Tesla, wondering once again whether the seemingly random tossing of three coins would "reveal an archetypal pattern of both personal and cosmological significance," to requote Wilson. The *I Ching* "answers" in the generation of one or two special symbols called "hexagrams." The result I obtained was the hexagrams numbered 11 (Peace) and 22 (Grace). Later that year, the documentary was broadcast on October 22nd, another coincidence since I had no control over scheduling.

In the 70s I was part of a group which was involved in what today is referred to as "channeling." Certain "entities" calling themselves the "Guides" spoke through members of the group who acted as psychic receivers to relay information to the others. A short time later I asked the Guides to comment on the *I Ching* response. They "spoke" through a medium who repeated audibly whatever he "heard" in his mind. Thus the primary authorship of the concepts provided is considered to belong to the entities calling themselves the Guides and not to the person acting as the receiver of their communications. They offered this additional insight:

"This is the essence of Tesla's message. He has offered the means by which peace can be attained, and these means, since they are not imposed solutions of a political or economic nature but rather ideas, understandings of universal principles, are of the character of grace. Understanding of meaning is always an act of grace, for who knows from whence it comes? Suddenly there is a

grasp of a universal principle. That breakthrough is a communication of the Divine, as all mystics know. Tesla has offered the world a concentrated and highly potent form of grace, his understandings and inventions..."

The Guides also had some interesting things to say about synchronicity:

"The timing of the release of certain energies associated with the Laws of Manifestation and with the energies concentrated by Tesla within his lifetime is related to the timing of the overall evolution of the planet, within this century. The time scale is very compressed during this period and increasingly so. Hence, synchronicity becomes more obvious and ubiquitous. Tesla and those associated with him are communicating with many in this group and outside of it, in some obvious and some subtle ways, including the visit of the bird.

[It should be understood that it is in a psychic and discarnate sense that the Guides allude to communication by Tesla, who has been beyond the physical body which was Nikola Tesla and probably not occupying any physical vehicle for nearly fifty years now.]

"This, of course, is a two-way communication; these communications are supplied with meaning by yourselves. The degree of meaning which you attach to these events is of your own choice, yet this is not to say that you are "creating" the communication. You are, in a sense, decoding meaning which has been encoded into events on another plane."

While working and traveling with Uri Geller, Dr. Puharich often witnessed apparent materializations of a hawk, the bird associated with the Egyptian god, Horus, identified with the Sun and kingship. One of the writers on Tutankhamen claims to have seen a hawk fly out from the mountains and hover, circling several times, above the newly opened tomb before flying off once again toward the West.

Puharich suggests that such sightings, visitations or materializations are connected with totems. These sometimes appear and act as "spirit-messengers," as understood in the shamanic/religious traditions of the native peoples of North America. Totems are also assumed as family or clan emblems of kinship. "Totem" is an Ojibwa word meaning "kin." A totem emblem can be any natural object or animate being, and birds and other animals are often chosen. Puharich adds that there is an association of totems and totemic messengers with stars, possibly as the "home bases" of spiritually- and/or physically-related human entities incarnating in groups here on Earth. Members of the same "star-clan" would obviously identify with the same, frequently living, Earth-based symbol.

It's one thing to believe in telepathy but quite another to accept a possibility that material objects can sometimes appear out of and disappear in to thin air in a real sense, without sleight-of-hand, hypnotism, mirrors or other trickery. It has long been my belief that if something like the materialization and dematerialization of physical matter can occur in this almost-too-wondrous Universe of ours, then anything is possible. The "laws" of science may be statistical, telling us what should happen in the vast majority of cases, but not necessarily in all cases. That is what miracles are: special events, anomalies in space-time which defy the odds and seem to operate outside the framework of physical laws that we know. There may be "higher laws" or a "dimensionality factor" which supercedes, under certain circumstances, the normal principles of Universe-behavior which science has discovered up to now.

The sparrow flying around my ceiling may have materialized but I didn't see it early enough to be sure. On another occasion, I saw something which appeared like a materialization but occurred too quickly for accurate observation. Around Uri Geller solid objects appear and vanish with great ease and frequency, judging from the book by Dr. Puharich. One of the most impressive

feats of psychic power I have witnessed was the levitation of a heavy oak table in a "table-tilting" experiment conducted at a chapter of the Society For Psychical Research.

It helps to have someone at these events who has a marked psychic ability and on this occasion the society was enjoying a visit from the celebrated East Coast psychic, Alex Tanous. It was the annual Christmas party and a small group of merry-makers slipped away from the main party and gathered around the massive wooden table in the basement. Mr. Tanous led the group to see what, if anything, might happen. We began by placing our hands palms-down on the table and telling jokes. The idea was to get ourselves in good spirits (we were well-along in that regard already), relaxing all doubts and inhibitions, as a way of facilitating the creation of paranormal phenomena.

I was not expecting anything very spectacular to happen, a few audible raps, like someone tapping on the table, possibly but nothing more. I had witnessed this before and knew what to expect. We did get some taps, as I recall, but what happened after that I would not have believed if I hadn't been there. As though of its own free will, the table suddenly began to rise.

It should be pointed out that every person's hands were clearly visible by all participants and resting on the flat upper surface of the table when it took off. No one could have lifted it from beneath using their hands without being seen by the others and it would have taken several persons to lift such a heavy object in any case.

We were sitting on chairs when the levitation began and had to stand up as the table rose higher and higher. Instead of trying to lift the table physically it quickly became a case of trying to pull it back down. I am fairly tall but, at one point, could scarcely keep my finger-tips on the table's surface as it elevated toward an upper corner of the room. It went as high as all of us could stretch without letting go and so high that the legs and underside were open to view. It was clear, therefore, that no one was using knees or any other part of the anatomy to lift the table either. It moved about in the higher reaches of the room, swinging first in one direction and then the next, with us holding on and following as best we could, before finally coming to rest on the floor once again. This was the only time I've witnessed the genuine psychic levitation of a solid physical object. However, it only takes one such event to make a believer.

The Tesla coincidences and the levitation are perhaps not directly related to the 22-enigma because the number did not appear in these contexts. Nevertheless I have included them here as additional illustrations of my stated belief that, to paraphrase Shakespeare, there are more things in heaven and on Earth than are dreamt of in our rationalist philosophies. Reality is stranger than fiction. It is also stranger than science because science is, probably perpetually, at an incomplete stage in the study and mathematical modelling of all phases and aspects of existence.

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Psychic Has Feel of Flying

By ROBERT ZINTL

Daily News Staff Writer

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You're lying in bed, half asleep, when suddenly you find yourself floating up near the ceiling.

Or you're on an operating table, ready to go under the knife, when you discover yourself off to one side watching the doctors and nurses work on your body.

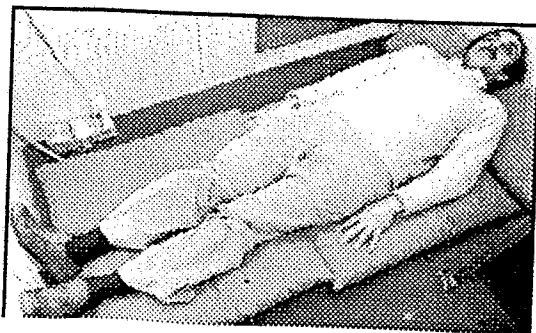
It may sound bizarre and impossible, but chances are, if this has not happened to you, it has happened to someone you know.

Out-of-body experiences, as they are called are an open secret — we know that they happen but we don't like to admit it. They make us think of ghosts, things that go bump in the night. They defy common sense. They challenge our assumptions about who we are and what the world is about.

But investigators say that OBEs occur far more frequently than we suspect. People have them during illnesses or accidents. They also occur in more ordinary situations, such as when someone is tired and about to fall asleep.

Scientists have even been able to go into laboratories with psychics and study their out-of-body trips. Here in New York, at the American Society for Psychical Research, I recently watched psychic Alex Tanous "leave" his body in an isolation booth at one end of the building, "travel" to a different room and "jump" up and down on two electrically-sensitive boxes that left an impression of his presence.

The boxes were wired to a graph that would give a kick each time Tanous jumped on one or the other. Tanous, in the isolation booth more than a 100 feet away, would talk over an intercom with Karlis Osis, the society's research director, describing what he was going to do. When he did a somersault on the boxes, Osis said, "the graph would respond. This was what excited me."



Tanous is not as reticent about his abilities. He says that he has been leaving his body since he was five years old, when he jumped down a flight of steps, looked up and saw his ghostlike "other self" still standing at the top of the stairs. He waved, and his double waved back.

As an adult, Tanous has been able to leave his body almost at will. In experiments with the Society for Psychical Research over the last few years, he has been able to "fly in" to the society's offices on W. 73d St. from Portland, Maine, and accurately describe what was on Osiris' coffee table.

He also has been able to shut himself into the isolation booth and then tell the researchers what he sees on a sophisticated optical machine in another part of the building. The machine creates a special optical illusion that you normally must stand directly in front of to see.

Tanous says he does this by "creating" a second version of himself, usually in the form of a tiny spot of life that he can send anywhere. "Alex Tanous One creates Alex Tanous Two psychically," he said. "This Alex Two is not limited by time or space. It can do anything it wants to. I just jump into the other room — by mere thought I can be where they want me to be."

Tanous says he can teach his method to others, although you probably won't see yourself standing across the room.

Tanous also cannot perform his trick every time he tries — on the optical machine, for example, he scores correctly only half the time. This is one reason why researchers are still cautious about their OBE experiments.

Other scientists have gotten similar interesting but mixed results working with different psychics. At the Physical Research Foundation in Durham, N.C., for example, a man named Stuart Blue Harary managed to "fly" into a different building a quarter-mile away during a series of experiments five years ago.

Harary, who is now on the staff of the parapsychology laboratory at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, was not able to score consistently well on all the tests that the research team devised. "But on individual trials," one staff member said, "His success was so striking that something must have been going on."

During one series of tests, a kitten that Harary had adopted was placed in the room he was scheduled to visit. When Harary arrived, although none of the researchers could tell he was there, the kitten stopped meowing and moving around, and began to behave as if someone was comforting it.

Another time, although the cat did not see Harary, one of the researchers who was watching the room through a television monitor got a glimpse of Harary standing in a corner — an impression that later corresponded with Harary's description of where he was at that time.

In California, psychologist Charles Tart worked with a woman he called "Miss Z", who said that she had been floating out of her body in her sleep since she was child. Among other tests, Tart placed a five-digit number on a shelf near the ceiling of his laboratory and told Miss Z to memorize it if she floated up that way.

Miss Z could not steer herself, and on her first three tests she never got near

enough to the shelf to see the number. On her final night in the lab, however, she did get over to the shelf and was able to read the number correctly — 25132. The odds on guessing such a number correctly on the first try, Tart said, are 100,000 to 1.

If psychics have been able to jump out of their bodies for scientists in laboratories, many normal people also have had the experience accidentally.

People who are close to dying, for example, often have OBEs. Osis has written about more than 1,000 such cases in a book called "At the Hour of Death" (Avon paperback, \$3.95) and a Virginia psychic named Raymond Moody collected other examples in a best-selling book called "Life After Life."

Other people have had out-of-body experiences during operations, childbirth, or simply when they were tired. Tart thinks OBEs have happened to a lot more people than are willing to admit it.

"If you can convince people it's all right to have had this experience," he said, "many of them will say 'Well, there was this one time...'" Tart said he has even found scientists who have had OBEs, although getting them to admit it was "like pulling teeth."

If out-of-body experiences are so common, why do we find them so hard to accept? Probably because it means opening the door to ghosts, and life after death, and a host of other spooky, irrational stuff that we still can't explain. Believing that people can exist outside their bodies, Tart remarked, means challenging "our currently accepted physical view of the world and the nature of man."

"This experience has a tremendous impact on the people it happens to," he said. "It usually makes them believe they're going to survive death. It's probably the original basis for a belief in the soul."

Osis, in his New York office, also insists that he is not simply investigating spooks. "The importance of this work is in understanding what human beings really are," he said. "This is the frontier of parapsychology. ESP is already well-known and documented. This is the frontier."

