

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA OR SLEIGHT-OF-HAND?

Tape recordings from extraterrestrial intelligences which can only be heard in the presence of Uri Geller

Keys and forks which break hundreds of miles from where Geller is filming a television show

Photos of Uri which have been mentally imposed on film

A meteorite which mysteriously appears several rooms away from the still-sealed case which had contained it

Teleportation, psychokinesis, or the most cleverly engineered magician's tricks ever? Is Uri Geller a psychic, the instrument of an alien intelligence seeking peaceful contact with Earth, or an adept fraud out to make his fame and fortune at the public's expense? Scientific and parapsychological researchers have tested Uri's powers with startling results. Magicians have often tried to duplicate his feats.

NOW THE EXPERTS SPEAK OUT ABOUT THE QUESTION THAT EVERYONE IS ASKING: IS URI GELLER A PSYCHIC OR A FRAUD?

SIGNET
W
6475

THE AMAZING URI GELLER

Edited by
MARTIN EBON

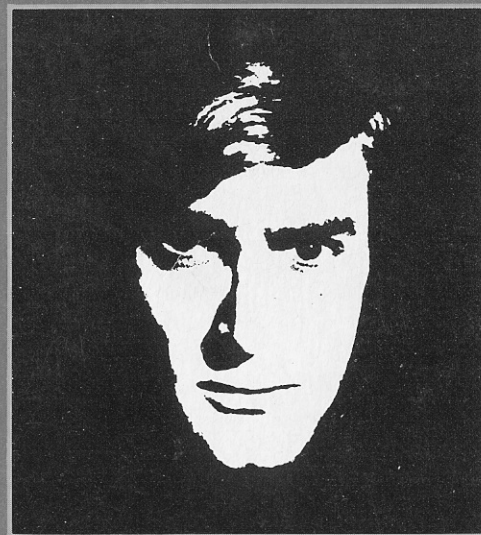
451-W6475-150
MSTIC

SIGNET • 451-W6475 • \$1.50

NOW, AT LAST, THE REAL STORY
ABOUT THE PSYCHIC OF THE CENTURY.

THE AMAZING URI GELLER

EDITED BY MARTIN EBON



EXTRA SPECIAL FEATURE:
URI GELLER EXPLAINS HIS PHENOMENAL POWERS!
WITH 8 PAGES OF ASTONISHING PHOTOS

Uri Geller Talks About His Power:

"I'm not a psychic, because I think psychics use their own forces. I don't think this power is coming from me but that it's being channeled through me. I believe the force is an intelligence that causes things to happen through me; that it operates through me for some reason.

"I also believe that we somehow are being prepared for some other work, perhaps in some other place not necessarily on this earth. What I am able to do is maybe part of a much greater plan that concerns more than the earth and mankind. . . ."

Books by Martin Ebon
in SIGNET Editions

- EXORCISM: FACT NOT FICTION (#Y5701—\$1.25)
- THE PSYCHIC SCENE (#Y5917—\$1.25)
- THEY KNEW THE UNKNOWN (#Y5212—\$1.25)
- TRUE EXPERIENCES IN PROPHECY (#T4539—75¢)
- TRUE EXPERIENCES WITH GHOSTS (#Q6286—95¢)
- TEST YOUR ESP (#Q6085—95¢)
- WITCHCRAFT TODAY (#Q5562—95¢)

THE NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY, INC.,
P.O. Box 999, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621

Please send me the SIGNET BOOKS I have checked above.
I am enclosing \$_____ (check or money order—no
currency or C.O.D.'s). Please include the list price plus 25¢ a
copy to cover handling and mailing costs. (Prices and numbers
are subject to change without notice.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Allow at least 3 weeks for delivery

THE AMAZING Uri Geller



EDITED BY

Martin Ebon




A SIGNET BOOK
NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY
TIMES MIRROR

Contents

Copyright © 1975 by Lombard Associates, Inc.
All rights reserved

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- "Uri Geller on Uri Geller" originally appeared under the title "Interview: Uri Geller," by The Editors, in *Psychic* magazine, June 1973. Copyright © 1973 by The Bolen Company. Reprinted by permission.
- "How Does Uri Do It?" by Donald Singleton, appeared originally as a two-part article in the *New York Daily News*, on November 5 and 8, 1973. Copyright © 1973 by New York News, Inc. Reprinted by permission.
- "Did Uri's Mind 'Teleport' a Meteorite?" by Ray Stanford, originally appeared under the title "Teleporting a Meteorite" in *Psychic* magazine, September-October 1973. Copyright © by The Bolen Company. Reprinted by permission.
- "The Psychic You Have to Believe," by Jon Lipsky, originally appeared under the title "Uri Geller: The Psychic You Have to Believe" in *The Real Paper*, October 17, 1973. Copyright © 1973 by The Real Paper. Reprinted by permission.
- "Uri's Psychic Photography: Real or Fake?" by Charles Reynolds, originally appeared under the title "The Making of a Psychic" in *Popular Photography*, June 1974. Copyright © 1974 by Popular Photography. Reprinted by permission.
- "Uri Through the Camera's Lens Cap," by Yale Joel, originally appeared under the title "Uri Through the Lens Cap" in *Popular Photography*, June 1974. Copyright © 1974 by Popular Photography. Reprinted by permission.
- "Information Transmission Under Conditions of Sensory Shielding" by Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff, appeared originally in *Nature*, London, October 18, 1974. Copyright © 1974 by Macmillan Journals, Ltd. Reprinted by permission.

 SIGNET TRADEMARK REG. U.S. PAT. OFF. AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES
REGISTERED TRADEMARK—MARCÁ REGISTRADA
HECHO EN CHICAGO, U.S.A.

SIGNET, SIGNET CLASSICS, MENTOR, PLUME AND MERIDIAN BOOKS
are published by The New American Library, Inc.,
1301 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019

FIRST PRINTING, MAY, 1975

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AN EVENING ON CENTRAL PARK WEST / Martin Ebon. The editor's Introduction begins with his first encounter with Uri Geller, the incredible Israeli psychic. He describes the Geller phenomenon and the enthusiasm, doubt, and bewilderment it has created among supporters and critics throughout the world. *page xi*

URI GELLER ON URI GELLER / The colorful psychic is his own favorite subject, as this candid interview with the editors of *Psychic* reveals. Uri says that at the age of six he could make the hands on watches change by sheer will power; and from then on, as he puts it, "I'm just following the pattern of my life." *page 1*

HOW DOES URI DO IT? / A seasoned reporter of the *New York Daily News*, Donald Singleton, followed Geller around for days. He found that trying to figure out whether Geller was genuine or a fraud is "like trying to walk down a twisting hall of mirrors wearing a blindfold through which you can take only an occasional, squinting peek." *page 15*

DID URI'S MIND "TELEPORT" A METEORITE? / Ray Stanford. Teleportation is the movement of matter from one spot to another. But to do it to a heavy piece of meteor, which then actually loses weight, would be teleportation on an unprecedented scale. Yet, Stanford experienced Geller's teleportation of a meteor in Austin, Texas. *page 23*

THE PSYCHIC YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE / Jon Lipsky. The author, together with his friend, the photographer David Doubilet, saw Uri Geller photograph himself right through the capped lens of a camera. Doubilet called it "a frightening experience," and Lipsky has this final judgment on Geller: "He is not someone you would like to follow, and not someone you would want to debunk."

He is someone to observe with glee and, if possible, befriend." page 30

URPS PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHS: REAL OR FAKE? / *Charles Reynolds*. The author is a skeptic about psychic phenomena, a professional magician, and a photographer. His conclusion on Geller's ability to photograph himself through a lens cap is the opposite of that expressed by Jon Lipsky in the preceding contribution to this volume. page 38

URI THROUGH THE CAMERA'S LENS CAP / *Yale Joel*, the former *Life* magazine photographer, analyzes the results of Uri Geller's photographs of himself. He concludes that Geller tried a trick that did not work out, and stands revealed in the pictures reproduced in this volume. page 49

THE STANFORD EXPERIMENTS / *Michael Ballantine*. In this cool, factual report, the author describes the experiments undertaken with Uri Geller at the prestigious Stanford Research Institute. The report contains biographical sketches on the scientists involved, a summary of their findings, and the complete text of the narration accompanying a film made of the Geller experiments. page 54

INFORMATION TRANSMISSION UNDER CONDITIONS OF SENSORY SHIELDING / *Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff*. This is the text of the paper prepared by two staff members of the Stanford Research Institute at Menlo Park, California, that appeared in the British scientific weekly, *Nature*, providing an appraisal of tests undertaken with Geller under controlled laboratory conditions. page 66

"WE MUST NOW WORK WITH THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY MOTIVATED . . ." An interview with Captain Edgar D. Mitchell, the former Apollo 14 astronaut who established the Institute of Noetic Sciences at Palo Alto, California, and who persuaded U. S. scientists to organize laboratory experiments with Uri Geller. Captain Mitchell is candid in his appraisal of the successes, as well as the errors, that emerged from his sponsorship of Geller, and he describes how future research in psychokinesis (mind-over-matter) should be organized. page 83

ROARING SUCCESS IN ZURICH, FAILURE IN VIENNA / *Paul Uccisic*. The reporter of an Austrian newspaper accompanied Geller before and during his appearances on German, Swiss, and Austrian television shows. This is an intimate view of Geller in perpetual motion: elated, while others surround him with awe and praise; worried when experiments seem to fail; basking in an atmosphere of euphoria all around him. page 91

GELLER TWISTS BRITAIN / *Tony Miller*. Nowhere has Geller's impact been greater than in England, where the general public as well as the scientific community have been startled by Uri's performances on television, his public appearances, and results of laboratory tests. page 100

GELLER'S EAGER IMITATORS / *Eric Lombard*. Wherever Uri Geller appeared on television screens all over Europe, bending spoons and forks by apparent psychic powers, other cutlery was twisting all over Europe. A Swiss investigative team examined the claims of men and women who suddenly showed psychokinetic powers identical to those of Geller. page 106

BUT IS IT ESP? / *Robert Brier*. The author, who teaches a course in "Experimental Parapsychology," describes in a lively, informal manner how Geller's phenomena fit, or fail to fit, into the pattern of scientific experiments in extrasensory perception (ESP), particularly into psychokinesis and telepathy. page 115

URPS PSYCHIC ANCESTORS / *Thomas R. Tietze*. Uri Geller has had many predecessors in the history of psychical research, but none of these psychic ancestors had the advantage of jet air travel or television transmissions. But the basic pattern of the phenomena he displays are, as historian Tietze notes, virtually identical with those of such psychic greats as the mediums Daniel Dunglas Home, Eusapia Palladino, and Rudi Schneider. page 124

DR. PUHARICH'S UFO FANTASIES / *D. Scott Rogo*. In his book, entitled *Uri*, Dr. Andrija Puharich asserted that Geller and Puharich were chosen by extraterrestrial entities to symbolize or communicate the interest and powers of forces outside our earthly knowledge. Mr. Rogo takes strong exception to Dr. Puharich's claims and

views, noting that Geller only began to attribute his own powers to space beings after Puharich had suggested these ideas to him. *page 130*

THE VIEW FROM JERUSALEM / Heinz C. Berendt.

The director of the Israeli Parapsychology Society deals with Geller from his privileged position of the psychic's "home grounds." He examines the young man's background and psychological make-up, traces his career as a stage magician in Israel, but concludes that doubtful elements in Uri Geller's history or performances should not detract from the scientific need to examine psychic powers in future laboratory experiments. *page 137*

"JUST A MAGICIAN WITH A GOOD GIMMICK!" /

Paul Langdon. The author, who is not a stage magician himself, analyzes the criticism of Geller's claims that has come from professional conjurers who object to his assertion that he does not use magic tricks. The views of such veteran magicians as Milbourne Christopher and James ("The Amazing") Randi are quoted; but the writer still sees a gap between Geller's performances and the conditions under which stage magicians are able to duplicate his phenomena. *page 146*

THE SHOW-BIZ TOUCH / Mary Bringle.

No appraisal of an international phenomenon of the magnitude of Uri Geller would be complete without an attempt to mold a psychological profile of the young, egocentric psychic. Mrs. Bringle brings a mixture of spoofing good humor and, at times refreshingly flippant, psychological insight to bear on her subject. The "extraterrestrial vaudeville act" of Puharich and Geller, as she calls it, is still playing to fascinating audiences. *page 155*

EVERYBODY HAS HIS OWN GELLER! / A Summation

by Martin Ebon. Geller acts on people as if they were asked to view a Rorschach Test, so everyone seems to project his own hopes, fears, and preconceived ideas on Uri's performances and personality. *page 164*

THE AMAZING Uri Geller

AN EVENING ON CENTRAL PARK WEST

Introduction by Martin Ebon

Dr. Friedbert Karger, the nuclear-energy specialist at Germany's prestigious Max Planck Institute, was telling me about his round-the-world tour. We were sitting in my Manhattan office, while Karger described his visits to energy research centers in Japan and Britain, and said that Russian studies and those at Princeton, New Jersey, represented the most advanced work on the international scene. And then he switched to impressions he had gathered, first in Germany and more recently in California, of a young Israeli psychic named Uri Geller.

As Karger described it, Geller seemed to practice particularly intensive and repeatable psychokinetic powers, the ability to have the human mind affect physical matter. He bent pieces of metal by sheer willpower, broke others, and selected an especially prepared film container from a group of others. These, and an assortment of other phenomena, indicated that Geller could use telepathic and clairvoyant gifts at will. Dr. Karger made a pencil drawing for me that showed how Uri Geller had managed to make an incision on a ring owned by the German physicist, seemingly by sheer mental impact, and had then bent the ring and eventually broken it without using physical force.

What Karger described looked like the type of phenomena that are of interest not only to physicists exploring the uncharted areas of their own field but also to parapsychologists eager to advance to knowledge of psychokinesis (PK), telepathy, clairvoyance, and even precognition (prophecy). I could understand why Uri Geller's seemingly effortless PK results might excite researchers. His performances sounded like the answer to the prayers of a parapsychologist who had tried for decades to achieve one major goal: replication—an experiment that can be successfully repeated over and over again, rather than some spectacular but flash-in-the-pan result that cannot be statistically evaluated.

Dr. Karger had participated in several parapsychological experiments in Germany. These had taken place in association with the Institute of Psychology and Mental Hygiene of the University of Freiburg, directed by Professor Hans Bender. The two men had investigated a series of inexplicable incidents in the town of Rosenheim: objects had moved, electrical currents had fluctuated, and other physical events had taken place that seemed linked to the presence of a young woman. Now, early in 1973, Karger felt that Geller's unusual gifts might permit the kind of careful study which the Rosenheim case, loaded with emotional and other human factors, had not permitted.

During the following months I continued to receive word of Geller's amazing feats from California and elsewhere. But from Israel colleagues reported that the young man's reputation had been built entirely on performances of skillful sleight-of-hand stage magic, completely devoid of extrasensory elements. Naturally, the suspicion arose: once a stage trickster, always a stage trickster! Had Geller merely perfected his sleight-of-hand techniques to a point where he had completely taken in his investigators? I wondered, compared claims for his achievements with earlier, similar cases, while West Coast reports continued to speak of his feats as a breakthrough in parapsychology and physics.

Could Geller be the "one white crow" for which psychic investigators had been searching for a whole century? I was, to say the least, intrigued by this possibility, as well as by the contradictory appraisals of his performances. Naturally, when a chance arose to observe Uri Geller as part of a small and informal group, I seized the opportunity. The meeting that enabled me to see Uri close up took place in an apartment on New York City's Central Park West. The get-together is amusingly described by Bob Brier in his contribution to this volume, "But Is It ESP?"

My own first impression of Geller was mixed. He was able to perform telepathy convincingly, but what he did could certainly be achieved by routine stage magic. His bending of assorted cutlery was fascinating. I admit that switching a bent fork for a straight one seemed possible enough. But I found Geller's bending of Brier's key much harder to explain. I was right there, only a few feet away, while it was done; the key seemed small and tough to me; it showed no scratches when we examined it on our way to the car; and there could not

have been a "switch," as the duplicate had remained on the key ring.

To this day I find some of the arguments of magician critics unsatisfactory. They regard Geller's performances as "marvelous close-up work," as a particularly skillful piece of stage magic and showmanship. They say he might be using his metal belt buckle to bend keys, spoons, and forks by sleight-of-hand. Still, I remain puzzled. Granted that the hand of a skilled stage magician is quicker than the eye of the assembled audience. But as I write this, Geller has never been caught at trickery in his standard repertoire of bending and breaking metal objects, nor in the drawings that he seems to read telepathically, or in other, mind-reading acts. I put aside his effort to implant images from his mind onto a photographic film, which Charles Reynolds and Yale Joel analyzed for *Popular Photography* magazine, and that I reprint in this volume. (Make sure to study the photographs in the center of this book, which illustrate the two articles.)

The history of performers of the mysterious is strewn with illusions and disillusion. Thomas Tietze deals with some of them as he writes about "Uri's Psychic Ancestors." Will Geller turn out to be just another clever conjurer who traded on people's desire for real-life magic? He has a lot going for him, in this age of jet travel and television transmissions. Among the most curious side effects of Geller's impact are the reports of metal-bending in sight, or even out of sight, of TV sets in various parts of Europe. In addition, imitators have come forward who claim that they, too, have suddenly gone on a cutlery bender. Unique is the claim of a Swedish housewife that her copper Intra Uterine Device (IUD), designed to prevent pregnancy, had been bent out of shape as she viewed Geller on television, causing her to become pregnant; at last report, she was suing the Swedish television network and Geller to pay for her unwanted pregnancy.

These and other anecdotes—one wife bent all the old cutlery in the drawer, blaming it on Geller, so that her husband would buy her a new set—illustrate that Uri's apparent powers have become part of folklore. Magazine articles by the dozen have appeared in the United States, in addition to interviews in local newspapers, examining the Geller phenomenon from every angle. It was left to *Cosmopolitan* (June 1974) to place Uri into its own framework of sexuality, when it reported on his allegedly charismatic impact on young women. According to the magazine, Geller was con-

stantly being mobbed by demanding females; it quotes him as being annoyed by such groupies: "Just because I can bend rings, all these women seem to think I can have an erection for seven hours." As it is, we may expect, any minute, to read an in-depth psychological analysis of Geller, which deals with bent knives and forks as droopy symbols of impotence or postcoital positioning. Indeed, I have already heard one critic chiding Geller's "negativism," noting that he had never been observed straightening any of these pointed pieces of cutlery, always making them useless instead of putting them into an erect position.

Such fun aside, I was particularly impressed with the introduction Uri Geller received at the Central Park West get-together. His then friend and mentor, Dr. Andrija Puharich, spoke briefly before Uri entered the room. I had met Puharich over a period of some two decades, particularly during the dozen years I served as administrative secretary of the Parapsychology Foundation, and while Dr. Puharich directed the Round Table Foundation at Glen Cove, Maine. On this particular evening, Andrija Puharich was at his charming best. He told us in an engaging conversational manner how he had encountered Geller in Israel and persuaded him to give up stage work for controlled research in the United States. Puharich spoke of the young man as an essentially simple soul who was mainly interested in cars and girls, and not necessarily in that order.

It was all quite chummy, good-natured, and agreeable. Most of us seemed favorably impressed with Puharich's low-key approach. As an M.D., he said with a smile, his scientific training prompted him to be highly skeptical of some of Uri's claims and feats, but he was willing to deal with the more cosmic implications of it all with an open mind. Good-humoredly, he mentioned some of the more mind-boggling claims put forward by Geller, such as his alleged ability to move heavy objects from place to place by sheer mind power: might he, indeed, be able to take the camera left by an astronaut on the moon and transport, or teleport, it back to earth? We just nodded and smiled; it was all in good fun; we were among friends.

That was early in 1973. The following year, Puharich's book, *Uri: A Journal of the Mystery of Uri Geller*, was published. In it the author gave a careful account of his first encounter with Geller, and he told his readers that the two of them (as well as Uri's friend Shipi Strang) had been under

control and instructions from mysterious and erratic extraterrestrial forces. The three of them, he wrote, had been chosen to demonstrate through Uri's gifts that such outer-space influences did, indeed, exist. They had a mission to perform, which included Geller's performances, Puharich's book, and a motion picture.

When I talked to friends about Puharich's book, one of them commented, "I first thought that the whole thing was a giant put-on by Geller and Puharich. Then I realized that Puharich really meant it. That's when I got worried about Puharich." The author anticipated such reactions. He mentioned several times in his book that the experiences he related might easily be regarded as pure hallucinations, as some sort of mental aberrations. What made Puharich's claims particularly hard to swallow were his reports that the tapes on which the instructions from "Spectra," one of the names for the mysterious entities, were recorded, invariably erased themselves. Any photos of the UFO-type crafts that Puharich identified with his outer-space mentions also (with one exception) disappeared. Scott Rogo, who compares the Puharich account with the pattern of other UFO reports, analyzes this aspect in detail.

The Puharich book reflected the author's long-standing fascination with the relationship between parapsychological phenomena and centers of earthly power (such as governments) and higher powers (such as UFOs). He had earlier taken an interest in experiments undertaken in the United States and the Soviet Union that might utilize such perceptions as telepathy, and he regarded some of the messages received in Israel as warnings that might benefit Israel in its struggle with Arab countries. Puharich had, back in 1952, received a rather Delphic message from an Indian sage, which he interpreted as guidance in his lifelong search. Many years later, in 1968, while investigating psychic surgery in Brazil, he saw a correlation between visions of UFOs and the healing powers he observed.

Andrija Puharich encountered Uri Geller at a crucial moment in their respective lives. Puharich was in search of a new and dramatic figure in the world of the psychic, someone who would replace the Brazilian psychic surgeon known as "Arigo." The psychic had died in an auto accident early in 1971. Puharich regarded him as "the hope of thousands, perhaps millions of people who looked to him as the witness to higher powers." Arigo had convinced the visiting U.S. physi-

cian of his powers, particularly when, in 1963, he removed a tumor from Puharich's right forearm. The news of Arigo's death shook Dr. Puharich. In words that are identical in his book on Uri and in his epilogue to John G. Fuller's *Arigo: Surgeon of the Rusty Knife* (1974), he wrote: "I was personally despondent. The loss of Arigo to me was as though the sun had gone out; the planet earth and humanity had lost their great luminary. I had suddenly become impoverished. The shock was so deep to me that I decided to go on a fourteen-day fast and reexamine all my life, to weigh the meaning of Arigo, in life and death."

Puharich felt deeply that he had failed Arigo, that he had not brought the message of the Brazilian to worldwide attention. At the end of his fast, he decided to resign from his duties and positions and to spend two years in full-time research. If there ever was to be another Arigo, Puharich "would not fail the next time." By the spring of 1971 he had set himself two goals: provide a theoretical basis for his research and find people "with great talents" who would participate in such studies.

Puharich's theories were reflected in a paper he presented that year at a meeting of the Parapsychology Foundation. The presentation was entitled "Protocommunication," and it brought together Puharich's interests in many fields, ranging from direct brain perception (which includes his electronic system to enable deaf persons to hear speech sounds) to the return of salmon for egg fertilization five years after the eggs have been deposited at a remote spot. The highly technical presentation centered around Dr. Puharich's biophysical and parapsychological research "to examine the most common unity in the universe—the proton."

When Andrija Puharich met Uri Geller in the summer of 1971, he found what he was looking for, and more. Geller, he wrote, "proved to have power over inorganic things equivalent to what Arigo had over organic and living things." His postscript in the Fuller book ends with this appeal: "Today there is a Uri Geller. I am sure there will be other Arigos. It is up to mankind to cease and desist from persecuting these messengers from the higher powers of the universe and to learn the truth from them." Uri became Andrija's *raison d'être*; he justified his lifelong search, picked up where Arigo left off, and healed Puharich's despair over the Brazilian's death.

In turn, Puharich became Geller's guide to fame and for-

tune, his bridge toward American and European TV cameras, public audiences, and performance fees. He made no bones about this, and Puharich more than once tells us that Uri's undisguised drive to be famous and make a lot of money irritated him. But then, Puharich's academic-philosophic monologues used to bore the hell out of Geller. The Israeli psychic agreed to go along with his American mentor's ideas about laboratory experiments, in return for public exposure (which eventually annoyed the scientists at the Stanford Research Institute, as well as former astronaut Edgar D. Mitchell, who had backed research in the "Geller effect" with funds from his young Institute of Noetic Sciences in Palo Alto).

Puharich's outlandish-sounding claims to extraterrestrial backing for his and Uri's work did not go down well with those who had been persuaded to risk their academic necks by doing research with Geller, presenting their findings at Columbia University in New York, and releasing a film documenting their experiments. While Puharich put his own reputation on the carving table by quoting extraterrestrial ramblings, and while Uri was busy cashing in on his notoriety with tours of Europe and the U.S., SRI and Mitchell began to feel that they had been had. They had hoped to shake the academic establishment; what they got, instead, was the back of the hand from *Time* magazine. A few paragraphs in *Time*, published on March 4, 1974, upset Puharich and Geller quite unduly. Puharich, in his book, several times speaks of the "crucifixion" of Uri Geller; in actual fact, the news magazine was just its usual editorial self, reveling in its poses of alternating holier-than-thou and wise-guy attitudes.

When all is said and done, I find Puharich's position courageous and touching. He describes a scene in his house in Ossining, New York, when he doubted and questioned the gods who seemed to have betrayed him, the extraterrestrials who appeared to have tested, taunted, and abandoned him. How could they, he questioned, refuse to have Uri tested scientifically: "I felt that if Uri was to make his way in the world by simple demonstrations, he would always be treated like a juggler, a magician." On November 9, 1972, Puharich argued with Uri, urging him to press his extraterrestrial guides to permit scientific research. Uri, angry, hurled a sugar bowl at his mentor. Puharich "uttered a curse against the gods." Whereupon "the wind came up around the house, the trees swayed, the house rocked, then a tall grandfather clock was impelled

across the entrance hall and smashed into a thousand pieces." The little group was frightened, "waiting for the wrath of heaven to take us away." Uri got another message during the night, saying that Andrija could tell all in a book, and Puharich "thanked God for the mercy shown a brash fool."

Later, Puharich's beloved dog, Wellington, was killed in an accident; this, too, he saw as an omen. (He has, with all his self-admitted maverick quirks, a delightful sense of humor: the dog had been named Wellington because of his plucky attitude toward the fierce resident cat, Napoleon.)

Of the two, I am a good deal more puzzled by Puharich than by Geller. To begin with, as I said before, I have seen Puharich over the years in other places and other settings. He has medical training, has been a practicing physician, and is an inventor of devices designed to aid hearing. Andrija Puharich is a three-dimensional human being, a man with several ex-wives, mistresses, and numerous children. He has lived on the California coast, in Maine, and close to New York City, and he did his original studies in Chicago. To a degree, this is a man of the world, who knows the traps in the jungle of the scientific community, particularly those encountered by a practitioner of parapsychology.

By contrast, Uri Geller is crudely two-dimensional. His drive and egocentricity are that of a rock star; he thrives on the kind of adulation—preferably perpetual—that usually surrounds amplified guitars and voices. Whatever conversation he has circles, like a plane caught in an airport approach pattern, around himself and his feats. But, as Mary Bringle notes in her contribution on Uri's personality, "What can you say about a twenty-seven-year-old man whose gaze causes forks to bend and clocks to stop?" Eventually, nothing. You've seen one bent spoon, you've seen them all!

Dr. Puharich obviously takes a much less lighthearted view of what he calls the "Geller effect." In an article entitled "Uri Geller and Extraterrestrials," published in that excellent San Francisco bi-monthly, *Psychic* (March-June 1974), he summarized his two-year-study of Geller. He began by noting that Uri accurately guessed things at the age of three that he could not have normally known (his mother's winnings or losses at card games). Next, at seven, Uri could make the hands of watches move by willing them to do so. Geller lived in Cyprus as a child, where he perfected his English, did stage magic in Israel until Puharich met him at twenty-three and

arranged that he be "studied by other scientists in Israel, Germany, England, and the United States."

Looking back on Geller's feats, Dr. Puharich believes that his telepathic powers have been tested "under cheat-proof, scientific, controlled conditions." This specifically refers to Geller's ability to reproduce line drawings made by others. These have been observed, at the Stanford Research Institute, by Drs. Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff. In the area of clairvoyance, Puharich states, also under strictly controlled conditions, Geller "is able to read the face of a die which is inside a steel box, repeatedly."

Next, Uri Geller can move the hand of a watch without touching it. Puharich says that Geller has done this with Captain Mitchell, the former astronaut, and that "Captain Mitchell bears testimony that this demonstration was conducted under cheat-proof conditions." Geller has also "repaired hundreds of broken watches, without touching them." He can also repair electronic circuitry and has, so Puharich says, fixed a miniature electronic calculator in the office of Dr. Wernher Von Braun at Fairchild Industries in Germantown, Maryland, on August 29, 1972. Next, Geller, according to Puharich, has "on a number of occasions with different photographers produced images on film sealed in a light-tight camera." And, of course, "Uri has, without touching some of them, bent or broken hundreds of bar metal pieces such as knives, forks, spoons, angle irons, rods, keys, etc., made of materials such as stainless steel, carbon steel, silver, alloys, iron, brass, copper, and other metals."

Puharich also cites cases when Uri was able to erase patterns from videotape that was being fed into a television monitor, and that he has made objects disappear from one place and later reappear in other places. In addition to these feats, Puharich added, Geller has also been able to "control by mental means" such laboratory instruments as weighing balances, gaussmeters, piezoelectric devices, oscillators, and oscilloscopes." In listing these various "Geller effects," Puharich added, in each case, that "science has no explanation for this phenomenon."

Dr. Puharich explained that when he began to study Geller in August 1971, he set up "physicalist hypotheses." But on December 1, "when in the course of a routine hypnosis experiment with Uri Geller a voice appeared from, or near, him, which announced itself as a representative of an extraterrestrial power," he changed his mind. These voices, Gel-

ler points out, were supplemented by others, so that he came to differentiate between the various communicators as follows:

"I. Robot-computers aboard various spacecraft with various identifying names such as Rhombus 4-D, Spectra, etc. The voice on the tape is distinctly like that of synthesized speech.

"II. Living beings who say they are humanoid in appearance from a planet they call Hoova, which exists outside of the Milky Way (our) Galaxy. The recorded speech has the quality of a human voice.

"III. Living beings who exist millions of light-years in the future.

"IV. Other beings who do not identify themselves."

The beings from Hoova, whose "basic attitude" toward man "appears to be benevolent," according to Puharich, "have been observing earth for some 20,000 years." He adds, "Were it not for the tangible reality of Uri Geller, none of this would be believable."

Can we believe Andrija Puharich? He knows, and has said so, that he is straining our credibility. There have been hundreds of people who have hallucinated or otherwise imagined contact with beings from outer space, who have had messianic visions, who have regarded themselves as "chosen ones," selected by Higher Powers to carry a secret and sacred message to the rest of mankind. In his psychiatric notebook, entitled *The Fifty Minute Hour* (1955), the late Robert Lindner told of a long encounter with a patient whose imagination had created a whole civilization, complete with language, customs, history, and social structure. Lindner entitled this account "The Jet-Propelled Couch." The psychiatrist became enthralled with this ever-progressing civilization, which appeared to be literate, sophisticated, and altogether fascinating. In fact, Lindner himself was so drawn into the web of his patient's meticulously hallucinated world that he was loath to abandon what apparently had become a joint patient-therapist hallucination. Eventually the patient recovered, and his recorded account of the hallucinated civilization was published in book form as science fiction.

Of course, there are many individuals and societies that report on contact with entities from outer space; the involvement and detachment of their participants vary a great deal. At the same time, much erudite calculation and speculation is taking place in scientific circles. In 1971 Russian and Ameri-

can specialists held the first international conference on extraterrestrial civilizations and problems of contact with them. An account of this meeting was published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1973), edited by Dr. Carl Sagan, director of the Laboratory for Planetary Studies and professor of astronomy and space sciences at Cornell University. The conference was attended by astronomers, biologists, astrophysicists, radiophysicists, electrical engineers, psychologists, and others.

With that kind of high-powered scientific attention, can one really say, as Dr. Puharich does, that we need to be still more alert to extraterrestrial contact? Puharich, of course, thinks in larger terms. He wants humanity to prepare itself for such contact, get ready "for the impact of knowledge of the existence of an extraterrestrial civilization, especially one with such awesome power." He realizes that most people prefer to think of Uri Geller as "an illusionist," rather than as the demonstrator of extraterrestrial powers. If so, one cannot really blame them. Uri's performances seem far removed from the "awesome power" commanded by his alleged controllers from outer space.

Fuller, in his book on Arigo, quotes Dr. Puharich as telling him "to check everybody" before presenting his material on the Brazilian psychic surgeon: "His enemies as well as his friends. You must never take the word of a single source. On any aspect of the story." I have tried to follow a similar pattern in this symposium. It is designed to throw light on the Geller phenomenon from many directions. I call this the "Rashomon" technique, after the Japanese play in which an event was recalled successively, by its different participants. As a result, the contributions to this volume range from wide-eyed endorsement of Geller to fierce criticism. In between are other viewpoints, both in terms of geography—from Palo Alto to Vienna—and in terms of attitudes and conclusions. My own views are reflected in this introductory chapter: I am skeptical, bewildered, and intrigued. I hope my readers will share this fascination.

New York, N.Y.

URI GELLER ON URI GELLER

An Interview

The editors of Psychic, the San Francisco bi-monthly magazine, published an interview which its editors had with Uri Geller. With it, they gave biographical information on Geller which included the following items: Uri Geller was born in Tel Aviv, Israel, on December 20, 1946. His mother's maiden name was Manzy Freud (she was a distant relative of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis); she had been born in Berlin. His father, Itzhaak Geller, is a retired military noncommissioned officer. Uri's first name translates into "Circle of Light." He was an only child and attended grade school in Tel Aviv. When he was eleven years old, he and his mother moved to Cyprus. There he attended a Catholic high school, learned English, and, as he put it, "finally began to consciously associate unusual psychokinetic things that happened around me with myself."

When he was seven years old, Geller noted that wristwatch hands abruptly changed their positions while he was near them. Also, the band of a wristwatch bent and broke in his presence. For a long time, Psychic reports, he was reticent in discussing these occurrences, "lest people think him odd." In 1965, when he was eighteen years old, Uri graduated from high school and left Cyprus to enter the Israeli Army. He served as a paratrooper for three years and was wounded in action in the Six-Day War of 1967. After being released from the army, Uri worked in the correspondence department of an import-export firm, using his language skills. He also worked as a photographer's model.

Geller first performed feats in extrasensory perception at a Tel Aviv school, where he bent and broke metal objects. His first professional performance took place in 1969; within three months he gave major presentations before large audiences throughout the country. His stage demonstrations, and such feats as driving a car blindfolded, came to the attention of Andrija Puharich, M.D., who arranged for Geller to be in-

vited to the United States. Before coming to the U.S., Uri gave performances before public as well as scientific audiences in Germany. Then came his tests at the Stanford Research Institute in California, late in 1972, followed by a series of widely publicized performances in the United States and Europe.

The following interview is reprinted by special permission of *Psychic*, which has its offices at 680 Beach Street, San Francisco, California 94109; the magazine, which maintains high editorial standards and is attractively illustrated, is an excellent forum on psychic events, past and present, in the U.S. as well as abroad.

PSYCHIC: When did you first become aware of your paranormal abilities, particularly your ability to crack and bend metallic objects?

GELLER: Actually, the first observable thing that ever happened to me wasn't cracking or bending an object, it was moving the hands of a wristwatch. This happened by coincidence in school, when I was about seven years old.

In class I noticed that my watch would show a different hour than what it really was, which began to happen fairly frequently. I complained to my mother about the wristwatch being broken; she examined it and said that it kept good time for her. But it continued to happen, so one day in class I took it off and held it in my hands, watching it very closely. I began to notice that the hands would change their positions almost instantaneously—very fast—like dematerializing from one hour to another. When I tried the same thing alone, outside of class, it wouldn't happen; so I realized I had to be in class—around people—for it to happen.

Not long after that, the wristband bent and broke. That was actually the first time I became aware of something bending and breaking near me.

PSYCHIC: Did you connect it to yourself?

GELLER: I wasn't clever enough at that time to start thinking that it was some power in me or coming through me. And although I thought it was something unusual, I also thought that maybe everybody had it at that age. Connecting this to myself I think happened around my mid-teens when I realized it was very unusual; this was when I lived in Cyprus for eight years.

PSYCHIC: Did this disturb you?

GELLER: No, because it seems to be natural for me. Be-

sides it's been with me for many years and I've grown accustomed and comfortable with it.

PSYCHIC: Then the wristwatch is the first unusual thing you remember that occurred around you?

GELLER: Yes, as far as the movement and bending of things go, but not other things, such as telepathy. I've had telepathy since I was very small. I can remember when I was about four my mother would come home from playing cards with friends and I would always tell her exactly how much she won or lost.

PSYCHIC: What was her reaction to that?

GELLER: She just felt it was something I was able to do and didn't make a big deal out of it. Besides, I really didn't talk about it much with her or discuss other things that were happening, or my father either, and they never asked.

After I began my shows in Israel, about three and a half years ago, I finally got my mother to see one, and my father saw a couple. They had read about me in the papers, but they never asked about it because they were excited for me and felt that I could do better without them around. I know my mother went through a great strain during that show, because she didn't want me to fail. It turned out well, but I think it was much harder on her than it was on me, and I can understand why she or my father felt it was better to stay away and just read about me.

PSYCHIC: Then it wasn't until a little over three years ago that you began to publicly demonstrate your abilities?

GELLER: That's right. But I have been aware of all this since I was three, which goes back to an experience I had at that time.

Opposite our house in Tel Aviv then there was a huge garden where I used to play. It was surrounded by a fence which I would climb over. Many people were scared to go in there, but I had fun playing inside and once found an old rusty rifle from the wars. The police saw me playing with it and took it away from me, so I went looking for another one in the same place. This was in the afternoon when I can remember experiencing this flash inside my head as well as outside of it—which was very vivid and real to me and which seemed to come from up above.

I ran to tell my mother about it, but she said it was nothing. There were no clouds in the sky and it wasn't a rainy day or no lightning. I didn't think much about it until much

later, when things began to happen. I connect the flash with my ability.

PSYCHIC: Why did you choose to demonstrate your abilities on stage?

GELLER: Let me start from the first. After the Six-Day War, in which I was wounded and was sent to a rehabilitation center, I was given a three-month holiday and went to work in a summer camp for kids as an instructor. I met a girl and her brother there and we became good friends. That was in 1968. I would demonstrate things to them, and discovered that when her brother was around I could do unbelievable things, like reading his mind and passing thoughts to him.

One day he came to me and asked if I'd perform at his school, which would pay me ten dollars for my time. I agreed and appeared for nearly four hours; the students wouldn't let me stop and the teachers were really impressed. That was the beginning.

Word got around and I was invited to perform at other schools. Then an article about me appeared in the paper, and the whole thing just grew—very rapidly and large. Agents began contacting me; I let one start handling the requests from large theaters.

It was unbelievable for me, and caused a complete change in my life style. I was not making that much money—about four hundred pounds a month—and my mother worked, too. Suddenly my agent tells me you're going to earn one thousand pounds a night just to appear for two hours. In only three months I had become quite popular.

PSYCHIC: How were you billed there, as a mentalist or a magician?

GELLER: The papers described me as a mind reader, and that I was also able to do psychokinesis—move and bend objects.

PSYCHIC: Is that what your performances in Israel and here consist of?

GELLER: Yes, telepathy and psychokinesis. And I would always break a ring or a chain or anything that people brought to me.

PSYCHIC: What about the article in *Time* magazine charging that you are just a magician?

GELLER: That story really began shortly after my five weeks of intense work at Stanford Research Institute in Menlo Park, California, where I did a lot of experiments. After I finished my work there, I returned to New York to wait

for SRI to give out their press release about my work with them.

Well, things began to drag, letters were coming out of the Defense Department about me. A film that SRI took of my work with them was supposed to be released and an early copy sent to me, but plans weren't clear about its arrival. Our motivation was not to be interviewed by any publications, until SRI released their information. When it looked like nothing was going to happen, as I had been told it would, we decided to go ahead with any interviews with the press, and felt that the largest and most influential would be the best to talk to first. *Time* magazine sent a reporter, I think his name was John Wilhelm, from California to see me. I demonstrated for him and he was greatly impressed, wrote a favorable story, and tried to get material about me from SRI. All that SRI would say was that I had been there. So when *Time* couldn't get any information from SRI, arrangements were made for me to demonstrate at their New York editorial offices. There were a lot of people there, as well as some magicians.

I bent a fork slightly, but it was a very bad day for me. I even saw one of the magicians take the bent fork out of a desk drawer where it had been placed and bend it back, which later made people wonder if it had really bent.

The biggest thing I did was bend a thick key which they brought me. It was taken away quickly and that's the last I saw of it. But a lady phoned me from *Time* and said that the key continued to bend after I left. I was excited to learn that, but they never mentioned it in the article.

As far as my performances in Israel are concerned, I did six hundred shows and got nearly all positive reaction from the press, although I was never checked in the laboratories or by scientists. Israel is a small place and by that time nearly everyone had seen me. But then a very negative article came out accusing me of using laser beams to bend and break things; that I had pliers, mirrors, and springs hidden on me. That started the whole thing going again, and people started coming to see me. So the first lesson I learned from the media is that it doesn't hurt when negative things are written about me. And I did not leave Israel in disgrace, as the article said. Actually, I left with half of the people believing and the other half divided into those not quite sure I'm real and the rest not believing at all.

PSYCHIC: Dr. H. C. Berendt, of the Israeli Parapsychology

Society in Israel, writing in the *Parapsychology Review* (July–August 1972), said his group sent you eight personal invitations to demonstrate your abilities before them and that you postponed appointments and later refused to attend a meeting. Why?

GELLER: Listen, I don't remember receiving any invitations from this group and don't even know who they are. They might have thought they got invitations to me, but I didn't receive any. It's too bad this thing happened, since I am not opposed to demonstrating for scientists. I've certainly done a lot of it in this country. So something is wrong somewhere.

PSYCHIC: Is there a great deal of interest in psychic phenomena in Israel?

GELLER: Not really, but being a new country we're open to these things, particularly the new generation.

While I was doing shows there the interest seemed to be higher than it is now, though. Apparently the time was ripe for it then.

PSYCHIC: Getting back to *Time*, what's your feeling of what was written about you?

GELLER: I have thought of all possibilities, and I don't know why such a responsible magazine would do what they did. There must be some reason behind it. It could be just the opinions of the editors or it could be the influence of some outside source. Things like this happen, but I still don't understand how they could write the things they did.

Looking back, I think I was set up. I think if I had levitated in the air for five minutes in front of them, the magicians would have said it was a trick and that they didn't know how I did it.

PSYCHIC: Have the controlled tests at Stanford Research Institute substantiated your abilities?

GELLER: I don't think that's for me to answer. The scientists who were around me and saw me do things, who controlled me, know I'm real; they know that their data is real. So it's up to them to substantiate it and what they see from it.

At this point I suspect they know it's really happening, but not how it works.

For example, they know I can read the dice better in a metal box than in a plastic one, or that I can find a ball bearing better than I can a cube of sugar. These things will probably lead them to ideas and theories, but maybe that's all.

Personally, I don't think they will know how these things

work for a hundred years. But I do think that the first step will be made when somebody invents a device to actually measure what this is, like waves of energy or whatever is taking place. For instance, I did an experiment from coast to coast with numbers and letters and got three out of four correct. But each time I did it, it came to me differently: once it came in what I feel was broad waves, another time in curvy waves. So even with a measuring device it will be a big problem, because maybe my mood changes this and not where I am.

GELLER: What else did you do at Stanford Research Institute?

PSYCHIC: I tried to levitate a little weight on a balance scale for over four hours and nothing happened. Edgar Mitchell, who was there, suggested that we put a cover over the weight—a little can—so nobody could observe it, since these things seem to happen when you can't see them. After about an hour it levitated or lost weight, because the scales tipped, something happened. So there must be some kind of rule or law that operates about the observation of these things.

When I bend a fork, if you watch it immediately after I bend it, it will continue to bend. But if you try to observe the actual bending to record it, nothing happens. Also, it seems when you don't care if it will bend or what happens, it bends.

PSYCHIC: Edgar Mitchell has reported that a ring you broke for him continued to bend over a period of time and after you left the room. Is that standard?

GELLER: No, and it's unusual that it bent that much. But often things that happen like this have a sense of humor about them, too, and we laugh about it. If it wasn't funny, I think it would be kind of hard for me to take. Like once when I was eating a pineapple my fork broke off inside of it—that's crazy, it's funny. Things that can be funny never hurt anybody; they are nice things so I'm not afraid of them or what goes on with me. It doesn't make me uncomfortable.

PSYCHIC: What about the phenomenon of materialization and dematerialization which it is reported you do?

GELLER: I have to feel it to do it. I don't know what happens. But I am working on bringing back Edgar Mitchell's camera that he left on the moon; I know I will be able to do it.

What I do is put it in my mind and mostly forget it, but it's still in my mind someplace. Now I don't know when it

will come back, but when the time is right it will. And it will have to be under the right circumstances and with the right witnesses so that people can't say it was a big hoax.

I'm told that since there are already pictures of it on the moon, no one can say the astronauts smuggled it back and then we were able to fake it. Besides, a physicist told me that it would be radioactive by this time and that this is something that can definitely be measured—as well as the word of the astronauts, NASA, and the pictures. Then people will have to believe me, it seems, although I'm sure many still will not.

PSYCHIC: That should be one of the top stories of the century, if you can do it.

GELLER: I'll do it and then people will have to believe this is real. I hope there are a couple of magicians around at the time, too.

PSYCHIC: It's been reported that at Stanford Research Institute materialization wasn't able to be recorded on film. Why?

GELLER: I don't know, but we tried. It's something that takes more time and the right conditions, though.

PSYCHIC: We also received reports that cameras often broke down or something happened during your breaking or bending attempts, as well as dematerialization experiments, and that none of this was recorded on movie film. There is speculation that you caused it. Did you?

GELLER: I don't know; I wasn't uncomfortable around the cameras and really wanted something to be filmed. Remember, though, that the experiments were conducted under conditions I wasn't accustomed to and it was a totally different situation for me.

My normal way is to walk up to a person, hold the thing, and put my hand over it to make something happen. Under the scientists' conditions it was very difficult; I wasn't allowed to touch objects or anything. But even though things did break and bend there, and they saw it, I wasn't able to do it in front of the camera, so they weren't able to get it on film. But they were able to get other things on film, such as telepathy experiments.

I ask myself, why does it happen in unimportant places, in front of just anybody, but when it's important for me to prove it to people at SRI, then it doesn't happen under the conditions they must record it happening? Maybe it's not sup-

posed to happen for them yet, I don't know. But I do know it's really frustrating and depressing for me.

PSYCHIC: Do you think that the laboratory conditions are a psychological barrier for you?

GELLER: I don't know. But in big audiences, say more than three hundred people, I can demonstrate almost all of my abilities. Nobody is telling me what to do on stage, like I'm told in the laboratory experiments. I just go on and do what I feel like doing because I know people have come to see something, which is positive for me.

Also, half of the audiences are usually women, which is important to me because I like to have them around; they're always somehow good, they're seldom negative.

PSYCHIC: You tell your audiences that you need people around for these things to happen. Why?

GELLER: Because I've never broken a spoon or fork alone, there's always one or two or more people around. It might be that I'm taking energy from them some way. I also must feel that the people are right—positive and wanting it to happen—then it happens. But even when conditions seem to be right sometimes I can't do anything.

And I don't mind skeptics, either, except when people are outright negative; that somehow kills my confidence. But I don't understand why these powers work sometimes and other times they don't, although positive people and crowds are very encouraging for me and more than likely something will happen.

PSYCHIC: Have you developed this ability over a period of time or has it remained the same from the outset?

GELLER: It has developed a lot since the beginning, especially over the past few years. Eight years ago it would take me maybe half an hour to do something that it now takes about fifteen minutes to do. I'm particularly aware of this when I'm trying something telepathically.

But the greatest thing I've learned and which I now understand is that to succeed I must feel when to do whatever I'm going to do. When I get the right feeling, then I know it will happen. If I don't feel right, then I'll pass; I won't attempt to do it because I know it will be wrong or it won't happen. That's why I don't fail, because when I jump up and want to do something, I know it will happen.

The experiments at Stanford Research Institute had a full set of controlled conditions, which is the first time I have had to operate under these kinds of conditions. Someone would

come into the room, when they were ready, and tell me to do something. If I didn't feel I could do it or feel like doing it, then nothing would happen. That's why under those conditions it takes a lot of time.

On the stage I feel everyone is with me and I can relax and things start to happen. But even under favorable conditions I never promise people I can do anything at a moment's notice or whenever I would like to do it for them. I have to feel it. If it happens, it happens, if it doesn't, well, there's always next time.

PSYCHIC: What sort of feelings do you get when you know it will happen?

GELLER: I just *feel* it and I *want* to do it; something grabs me. And I know that if I don't do it at that time, then I'll miss it and those who want to see it will miss it too.

At Stanford Research Institute sometimes we sat for three or four hours talking, waiting, and then I'd jump up and say, "Okay, I feel like doing the thing," and I would do it.

PSYCHIC: Does this happen with all of your abilities, say telepathy?

GELLER: Yes, the same way.

PSYCHIC: Do you get any sensations when you bend or break objects?

GELLER: There's no sensation, although I feel a little heat sometimes or a few prickles, like a very low electric shock. And I can get very tired from doing it. It can be physically exhausting.

PSYCHIC: What about any sensations in your brain?

GELLER: Nothing, except that after I've done something I feel exhilarated, I'm thrilled about it because it's never the same. I'm quite happy that it happens, but I don't understand why.

PSYCHIC: How do you get your telepathic images? Do you hear things, see pictures, or just get impressions?

GELLER: I put this screen in my mind; I have it in front of my eyes. I can still talk or listen, but the screen remains there all the time.

When I'm receiving something, I get it as a picture on my screen. I see it. If I am telepathically passing something to someone else—say like a number or a geometric figure—I first put it on my screen and then try to pass it to the other person. When it disappears from the screen, then I know it has been passed to the other person. That's how I do it telepathically.

So I don't hear it or feel it, I actually see it. That's why when I don't see something on my screen I won't attempt telepathy—I'll pass—because I know I didn't receive it. I don't receive things as ideas, although I do see colors. But if you pass me the word "green" then I see the word.

PSYCHIC: When you say "see" do you mean as we are accustomed to normally seeing?

GELLER: Yes, as I'm looking at you, seeing you or other things. If you close your eyes and try to imagine something, that's the way I see it, but much stronger than that.

PSYCHIC: What about precognition, seeing into the future?

GELLER: I don't do that; I don't believe I can do it well. I tried it many times and I was wrong many times. I'm very sensitive to being right or wrong, so I stopped doing it.

PSYCHIC: What about out-of-the-body experiences?

GELLER: I can do that, though no scientific experiments have been conducted with me on this yet.

What I do is lie down, close my eyes, will it, and I'm out of my body. The first time I tried it, I didn't think anything was happening then suddenly I was there.

My impressions are like I'm going into something fast and with a lot of impact. It's not like I'm flying, but like I'm above everything momentarily and then I'm where I want to be. My body remains in the place where I am, and I can still talk to whoever is there, yet I'm someplace else.

One experiment I did with Andrija [Andrija Puharich, M.D.] was when he asked me to go to Brazil out of the body. I got to this city and asked a person where I was and he told me it was Rio de Janeiro. Then someone came up to me and pressed a brand-new one-thousand-cruzeiro note in my hand and it appeared in my hand on the couch by Andrija—to prove I was there.

PSYCHIC: That's pretty far out. . . .

GELLER: Yes, but it mostly happens in other ways.

For instance we were in Philadelphia visiting Arthur Young, as well as Ted Bastin from England. [Mr. Young is a noted inventor-scientist and Mr. Bastin is a physicist and mathematician.] We were sitting in Mr. Young's study, on the second floor, which has a little statue in it. Later when we were in the room below the study, the statue appeared—as though falling through the ceiling—and landed on my shoulder. Things like that happen spontaneously. I didn't think of doing it.

Ted Bastin had a blue plastic box with eight screwdrivers

of different sizes in it. He asked me to draw one and thought of it and I drew it for him. He later put the box of screwdrivers back in his bag, while Mr. Young and I went downstairs. Then the box appeared in front of us. Mr. Young picked it up and ran to show Mr. Bastin, who opened the box up and all the screwdrivers inside were broken in half.

PSYCHIC: Do you think this power comes from you or from some outside source?

GELLER: First, I'm not a psychic, because I think psychics use their own forces. So I don't think that this power is coming from me but that it's being channeled through me. I believe this force is an intelligence that causes things to happen through me; that it operates through me for some reason.

Until about one and a half years ago I didn't even consider the possibility of an outside force. It wasn't until I met Andrija Puharich in Israel about two years ago that I began to think more about an outside force.

I also believe we are somehow being prepared for some other work, perhaps in some other place not necessarily on this earth. What I am able to do is maybe part of a much greater plan that concerns more than the earth and mankind, like the universe. And when I say being prepared, I don't believe we ever die, I believe that the body dies but that we continue as energy and as ourselves.

PSYCHIC: Are you talking about some cosmic plan and God?

GELLER: I believe in God and I believe that God is the plan.

PSYCHIC: That takes in a vast area.

GELLER: Sure it does. And I do not exclude spirits or other existences in our universe.

I'm just following my pattern of life: when things happen I let them happen. If it does not hurt me or anybody else, then I don't think there's anything wrong with it—no evil in it. In fact, I don't think there is evil, no Hell and no devil, just perhaps people doing evil with their powers by inventing and creating bad things.

Now I believe this whole thing that is happening—what I'm able to show people—is part of a complicated plan to give all of us proof of what can be done, preparing us for a greater thing in our development. They are just signs that more things are going to happen, that we are capable of greater things.

My feelings and theories of this thing concern a super civi-

lization that learned how to understand and control time—the past, present, and future—and that evolved beyond our comprehension. They could have left a control unit—like computers—which have a mission and help direct people to accomplish it. And I think this mission concerns us for sure, as well as a lot of other people.

But let me emphasize that I don't think this is God, since I believe God is way beyond that. Also, things are so programmed that they can't change them, only work within the structured program.

PSYCHIC: What is your concept of God?

GELLER: Right now I would have to say that I see God more as a person, something living, and not an idea. As a living thing which is the whole idea of creation and of being, of space and infinity. I believe that there is a greater power above everything and that is God.

PSYCHIC: Has all of this affected your religious outlook?

GELLER: I was not brought up in very religious surroundings, and I've never gone to a synagogue, but I've always known that God exists. Today, from my experiences and from what I'm now able to do, it's even greater.

To me it's similar to what happened to some of the astronauts who landed on the moon or traveled in outer space. It seems their trips caused experiences that made them more aware of God and the universe. My own experiences have been extended over a longer period of time, that's all.

PSYCHIC: Does this include the theory of reincarnation you implied earlier?

GELLER: Yes. And I believe that if you don't finish your work on earth in this lifetime, then you're going to have to come back in another one and finish it.

I also believe that there is no going backwards from what you have accomplished, you go only forwards. You might stay at one place for a long time, but you never go backwards. I believe you're given all the chances you need until you accomplish what it is you set out to do. When you leave your body on earth, if you've finished your job, you don't have to come back, and you enter a different dimension and do other work there.

PSYCHIC: Why did you come to this country?

GELLER: Dr. Puharich brought me over late last year to meet scientists and to do experiments. He had come to Israel to see me, watched many of my shows, followed me around for a long time, and then we became friends. Through his ex-

tensive experience in this field, he gave me a lot of information about my abilities and answered a great many questions about them that were troubling me. I will continue to work with him for a long time.

PSYCHIC: What do you hope to accomplish here?

GELLER: I personally don't hope to accomplish anything. But I feel my life is planned—looked over—although not controlled.

PSYCHIC: Do you see any pattern emerging, anything in the future that what you're doing involves?

GELLER: I think that in three years something enormous is going to happen, something very big; it will involve something outside of our planet, but still connected with it.

PSYCHIC: Are you alluding to extraterrestrial contact?

GELLER: Yes, but very heavily this time. However, it will depend on whether we—mankind—are prepared for it. If we're not, then it won't happen. I will be able to say more about this later, but right now I'm afraid I don't have all the information about it to answer any further questions.

PSYCHIC: What are your future plans; your goals for yourself and your abilities?

GELLER: I'm going to stay in America for as long as I'm welcome. And since I'm young and identify with the younger generation—which is far more open and receptive to new things than the older one—I'll be giving presentations at universities across the country, like the University of California at Berkeley, and at Yale, Harvard, and so on.

The main thing I want to do is work with the people around me, doing the best I can with the powers controlling me—like exploring more and trying to understand more that will perhaps open up new horizons for me and for other people.

As for definite future plans, I honestly don't have any. I believe things will happen—I'll let them happen—when they're supposed to. And I hope I'll be happy in this country and be able to do the things I enjoy doing.

HOW DOES URI DO IT?

Donald Singleton

Is Uri Geller really psychic, or is he just a particularly skillful stage performer who practices quicker-than-the-eye magic? Mr. Singleton was assigned by the New York Daily News to observe Geller for the better part of a day, interview professional magicians, and test Uri in accordance with the rules laid down by his critics. The following article describes this assignment, which Singleton found one of the most intriguing and difficult in his reportorial career. He writes that trying to figure out whether Geller "is genuine or a fraud is like trying to walk down a twisting hall of mirrors wearing a blindfold through which you can take only an occasional, squinting peek."

Uri Geller and I are sitting in adjacent seats on the Metro-liner, heading toward Philadelphia.

Geller is an Israeli with a fast-growing reputation as a psychic, and I am going to spend a few days with him, watching what he does and trying to figure out (a) whether he's for real, and (b) if not, how he manages to achieve his effects.

He asks me if I have a key with me. I don't, having left my heavy ring of keys at home. He asks if I have some other metal object. I do; a nail clipper. Geller takes the nail clipper in his hand and examines it. He swings open the small nail file section, and tells me to hold the file in my fingers. He strokes it lightly, with one finger. A few seconds later the file bends upward. A few more seconds and it cracks. A few more seconds and it breaks in two.

"Isn't it amazing?!" Geller says with great enthusiasm. (During the next few days I find no matter how amazed people are by the things he does, Geller is usually the most amazed.)

I agree that the broken nail file is amazing; but, frankly, I've seen so many pictures of the keys and silverware he has bent of late that I am not particularly surprised at this feat.

Geller asks me if I am wearing a watch. I am not. So he asks if I have one at home. Only a pocket watch, I say. He says to pick a time of day, and draw a clock face on a pad with the time indicated. I draw a clock face with the hands pointing to 3 o'clock. Geller looks over and says it wasn't necessary to draw the minute hand, but only the hour hand.

* * *

He says he will try to make the hands of my pocket watch point to 3 o'clock by long-distance telekinesis (moving objects without physically touching them). I ask him what about the wind-up alarm clock I have brought with me. He says he usually can only move the hands of wristwatches, not larger clocks, but he'll give it a try.

Later, when I open my suitcase in the hotel, the alarm clock is staring me in the face. It says 3:03 p.m. It's a strange coincidence—that happens to be the correct time of day.

(When I arrived home three days later, I stuck the alarm clock in a dresser drawer and went to check the pocket watch. The pocket watch said 7:34 p.m. But a few days later, I happened to open the dresser drawer again. The alarm clock, which had been ticking when I put it into the drawer at about 11 p.m., had run down and stopped. The time that was, and still is, showing on the clock was less than 30 seconds after exactly 3 o'clock.)

We check into the hotel, Uri Geller, his manager, Yasha Katz, and an assistant, a young man named Shipi. Almost immediately, we start off on a round of television and radio shows, newspaper interviews and special appearances, all of them designed to publicize a public appearance in nearby Cherry Hill, N.J., to be held Nov. 3 in Cherry Hill High School East.

Everywhere we go, Geller leaves people gasping. Skeptics become converts. Geller bends people's car and house keys, apparently by the power of his mind alone. The people hold the keys in their hands, and Geller touches or strokes the keys lightly until they curl up.

Keys and spoons and forks are not the only things to bend when Geller is around. People bend, too—mostly women. Geller is charming, personable. The 26-year-old psychic is tall, slender, graceful. He has glistening black hair and sparkling dark eyes, and he dresses with studied casual elegance.

Everywhere we go, some woman or other is trying to press a telephone number into his hand or make a date for dinner, or an interview, or anything. At one point, Geller tells me that during one of his appearances, a survey showed that a number of women in the audience had experienced orgasm during the course of the evening.

One afternoon, Geller tapes a Mike Douglas show. In the three hours we are in the KYW-TV studios, Uri bends keys for Hugh Downs and several people on the production staff. He also bends rings and bracelets for a number of swooning women.

Before the show, Uri sends Shipi running to buy a camera. After the show, Uri has his picture taken with Mike Douglas, Tony Curtis and Kirk Douglas. "My mother gets a big kick out of it," he says.

One evening we all go to Cherry Hill, to a private reception at the home of one of the sponsors of Uri's coming appearance. The house is filled with people wearing name tags. Some are identified as members of the "Psychic Information Exchange" or some other group; others are merely identified as "Psychic."

Uri tells the rapt gathering what they have come to hear—all about himself: how he discovered he could read minds at the age of three by telling his mother how much she had won or lost at cards; how he learned at the age of seven that he could bend the hands of his wristwatch merely by concentrating on them and willing them to bend; how he became a big entertainment attraction in Israel; how he met Andrija Puharich, a physician/inventor/parapsychological investigator, who brought him to America to be studied by the Stanford Research Institute in California and who has written a book about Uri.

Geller also tells them strange secrets: how he and Andrija saw a flying saucer in an Israeli desert; how the brass cartridge of a pen dematerialized one day and rematerialized in the flying saucer; how various films of unidentified flying objects and eerie tape-recorded messages from unworldly beings dematerialized before the very eyes of Uri, Andrija, and others.

He tells them everything, in fact, except the identity of the source of his powers, and what is the deeper meaning of it all—for that, he says, you'll have to wait for publication of the book next spring; "The book will shock the world, I can tell you that," he says.

Just about then, things begin to happen in the room. Jewelry twists. A gold and stone amulet hanging around the neck of one "psychic" begins to bend. People pass up several broken wristwatches; Uri touches them and they begin to tick. A man in the crowd concentrates on a figure of the Star of David and Uri reproduces it flawlessly on a pad. At that moment, a Star of David pendant hanging from a woman psychic's neck curls up like a potato chip.

It's time to leave them with their eyes popping out. "Wasn't it great?!!" he enthuses as we head off toward Philadelphia. "What a terrific group!"

The next evening, we have some free time. Uri wants to see a Bruce Lee movie.

At dinner, in the hotel dining room, I notice a strange-looking object protruding from beneath a napkin on Uri's side of the table. I move the napkin; the object is a fork, which has taken a bend like a folded ribbon. Uri acts startled—"These strange things happen around me all the time," he says. "It's amazing—one time I was having dinner in the home of Ray Stanford, a parapsychologist in Texas, and a meteorite that had been in a Bell jar suddenly teleported through the door and crashed to the floor!" Out of the corner of my eye, I spot a strange-looking fork at the next table. Is it bending? I check it again a few minutes later. It seems to have bent.

We walk to the theater, arriving about five minutes before the show is to start. As we stand, talking, in the lounge, there is a strange, mechanical sound from across the room. I look over and see that the soda dispenser has gone mad; it is spewing forth piles of shaved ice.

"It happens all the time!" Geller says. "Once in Munich, I was three miles away from the Olympic stadium, and I concentrated on turning the lights off and they went off in the whole stadium. Three times at SRI, where they tested me, the candy machines shot chocolates all over the place."

Back in the hotel, I draw three different symbols on three pieces of paper. I fold them up and shuffle them so I don't know which is which, then I choose one and, without looking to see which it is, I put it into an envelope. I then put that envelope into another envelope. Uri asks me to concentrate; I do so, and within about five minutes he says he is getting an image of a circle with an X in it. I open the envelopes and that is the drawing inside.

The next day, it is time to leave. Uri has some TV shows

in Washington, and I have to get back to New York. As we are paying the check for a farewell cup of coffee at the station, Uri notices that one strand of the cashier's necklace is bent at a 90-degree angle. The cashier swears it had been straight; we try to straighten it out and can't.

As I rode home on the train, I thought back over the events of the three days. A whole lot of strange things had happened to me and to people around me.

Or had they really?

Trying to figure out whether Israeli psychic Uri Geller is genuine or a fraud is like trying to walk down a twisting hall of mirrors wearing a blindfold through which you can take only an occasional, squinting peek. You're forever catching glimpses of reality; but then each successive glimpse seems to prove the one before it was really only a mirage after all.

The young Israeli psychic who has been enthralling American audiences has a whole bag of tricks, that's for sure.

Take his ability to bend metal objects merely by concentration on them, willing them to bend.

On the one hand, things really do get bent when he's around: keys curl; spoons and forks twist and break; bracelets and rings crumple.

But on the other hand, all the professional magazines say his bending routines are just tricks, probably incorporating a lot of sleight-of-hand, suggestion, some special strength and possibly some new gimmicks. One magician, The Amazing Randi, claims he has studied Geller and can duplicate all the tricks, using only normal magician techniques and no psychic abilities whatsoever.

You ask Randi if it would be possible for Geller to fool you so many times, and he asks you to think back over all the details of the times Geller bent things. Did you ever actually see something in the process of bending? No. Were you always right there watching every time something bent? No. Come to think of it, it seemed like he was always taking somebody off into a corner or another room, and then two of them would emerge, all enthusiastic about how a key, or a ring, had bent magically.

You think you have him at last, and so you take a photographer with you to see what Geller can do on camera, and this time you make sure that you stay right in the room. But you have to leave the room momentarily, to go and buy some spoons and forks for Geller to try to bend, and when

you come back Geller and the photographer are all excited about how the photographer's key bent while you were gone.

So you've finally caught him, you think—the need for silverware was a ruse, just to get you out of the room so he could trick the photographer with no experienced observer watching him.

But then the photographer comes up with a series of photographs which show, with indisputable clarity, Geller holding a key, and the key in successive stages of bending. And the photographer swears he never took his eyes off the key, and Geller never moved it or touched it with his other hand the whole time, and the key just flopped over like a noodle going limp.

And there you are.

Or take Geller's ability to do telepathy and clairvoyance—his forever reading people's thoughts, or reproducing a drawing someone has done and placed in one or more sealed envelopes.

On the other hand, you've got to believe your eyes. You test him, as I did. You take three identical sheets of paper, make a different drawing on each. You fold the sheets and shuffle them, so you have no idea which is which. Then you place one of the sheets into an envelope and put that envelope into another envelope. And after a 30-minute effort, Geller comes up with a drawing of a circle with an X in it, and that turns out to be what's in your envelopes.

So you think he's genuine for sure. But then Milbourne Christopher, chairman of the Occult Investigation Committee of the Society of American Magicians, tells you there are many standard ways to perform that particular trick.

And you read Christopher's books on the subject, and you're forced to admit that, yes, maybe if Geller had held the two envelopes up in front of a light, he would have been able to see through them—they were only flimsy hotel stationery. And besides, you did have your eyes closed for a couple of minutes, when he was telling you to concentrate on your drawings and you presumed he wouldn't cheat.

So you figure Geller's probably only a fraud.

But then you talk to Kreskin, the magician who specializes in several forms of thought-reading, and he tells you that while 90% of his act is simply a combination of deception and suggestion and special magical effects, the remaining 10% does involve some very real thought transference.

And then, just to complicate matters, Kreskin asks you to

look for a minute, he wants to show you something. And he puts a folded dollar bill—your dollar bill—on a bedspread, and he tells it to unfold, and it unfolds. And then he tells it to walk, and it begins to skid slowly across the bed, starting and stopping on his command. And you know you're looking at something at least as impossible as a bending spoon. And Kreskin assures you that what you have just seen has nothing whatsoever to do with psychic abilities, but is just "an effect."

And you suddenly realize that maybe you're right back where you started in the hall of mirrors, not knowing which way is up.

Both Christopher and Randi are perturbed, to put it mildly, about the recent rash of interest in Geller. Both of the professional magicians call Geller nothing more than a clever trickster, possibly the most clever trickster to come down the well-worn occultist path for several decades.

"And I want to emphasize the difference between the two terms," said Christopher. "Geller is a trickster, not a magician. Magician is a legitimate term for a member of an honorable profession. This guy is going after really big money—bigger money than you can get just by being a good magician."

Randi agrees: "It's really convenient to have an act like Geller's. He claims he has these psychic powers that come from someplace outside himself, and he has no control over them. So when he manages to do a stunt, he succeeds, and when he fails to do a stunt, he says that's proof he's not a magician. So when he wins he wins, and when he loses he wins. If I ever went on stage and nothing happened for 30 minutes, the way it sometimes goes with Geller, they'd boo me right out of the house.

"No, Geller is no magician, in the ordinary sense of the word," Randi continued, "but he does have something. He's discovered a completely new approach to magic—something brand new—and it's so naive, so direct, so simple, that even the magicians can't figure it out right away. I couldn't figure it out myself for quite a while. But I now can duplicate any trick Geller has done."

Randi calls Geller "Just about the most dangerous man to come into the limelight for the past 50 years, because he's into psychic feelings, and when he gets into that, the next thing you know, people will be bringing him their problems, their secrets, and then their money."

Randi, Christopher and Kreskin all agree on one further

fact: The more intelligent one is, the easier it is for one to be fooled by a professional magician—and that fact applies to the scientists who have been mystified by Geller at the Stanford Research Institute in California. "The intelligent mind makes a lot more presumptions and assumptions than the less intelligent mind, and the magician learns to manipulate these assumptions to his advantage," says Kreskin. "I'm not the least bit impressed by all that SRI stuff," says Randi.

After talking to all the magicians, to Ed Edelson, science editor at the *News*, and to assorted others, I began to feel that perhaps I had been had. So, with the assistance of Randi and Christopher, I set up one final test for Geller, and Uri agreed to try a couple more things for me.

I went to a locksmith and got a duplicate of the strongest, thickest key on my key ring. I tried with all my might and I couldn't bend it, even by pressing it against the corner of a steel desk. Then I made a simple drawing (of an eye), wrapped it in aluminum foil and put it into two envelopes.

I went to see Geller the next afternoon.

He tried for more than half an hour, with me keeping the envelope in my sight every second, to get the drawing. And he failed.

Then he made an effort to bend the key, again with me keeping it in view every second. Again, nothing happened. Uri said that he was terribly disappointed, that this simply had been an all-around bad day for him.

We continued talking for a while, and at one point a spoon which Geller was handling seemed to break in half—when I wasn't looking, unfortunately. Then, a bit later, he tried again to bend my key, and it did, in fact, bend ever so slightly. But my attention had been diverted from it for several minutes at that point, and I can't swear to you that he didn't palm it and pass it to Yasha Katz, his manager, who entered and left the room several times.

I don't think that's what happened. But I can't swear it didn't either.

So that's about it. I left Geller, wiggling the ever-so-slightly-bent key in my pocket, trying to figure out what I really believed about him.

And I guess you'll just have to do the same.

DID URI'S MIND "TELEPORT" A METEORITE?

Ray Stanford

"Teleportation" is the apparent instantaneous transmission of matter from one place to another, seemingly by dematerializing in one place and rematerializing in another place. Was this what Uri Geller did to a meteorite in Austin, Texas? The author of this contribution, who witnessed these and other puzzling Geller actions, is the identical twin brother of Dr. Rex G. Stanford, a well-known parapsychologist. Ray Stanford can recall events that took place when he was less than one year old. Since childhood, he says, he has experienced precognition, clairvoyance, and telepathy. Since 1971 Stanford has been research psychic of the Association for the Understanding of Man (A.U.M.), P.O. Box 5310, Austin, Texas 78763. His life story and a book entitled The Psychic Children are in preparation.

Some remarkable phenomena occurred during Uri Geller's visit to Austin, Texas, on July 21–22, 1973. Although the phenomena were spontaneous, precluding rigid scientific control, some of them contain significant self-substantiating elements. His brief stay in Austin was to help in arranging two September public appearances by him, with sponsorship of the Association for the Understanding of Man (A.U.M.).

At the mutual studios of KTBC-TV and KLBJ-RADIO, a tape-recorded interview with Geller was made by well-known radio-TV personality "Cactus" Pryor. During the interview, Geller caused the file of a nail clipper to break by lightly touching it, and a thick brass key to bend without touching it.

When Geller stepped out of the recording studio he told me, "I have attempted something that I have never tried before. I do not know if it will work. I tried having things bend for people in the radio audience while the recording is being played next Tuesday [July 24]. You know, I will be in New York." In order to discuss Geller's phenomena in sequence, I

shall wait until later to describe the results of his tape-recorded experiment.

Cactus Pryor also had an interview with Geller filmed for use on KTBC-TV news. During the filming Geller performed, with apparent ease, some interesting demonstrations of telepathy. He also then bent and broke a spoon by a light rubbing motion of his left index finger. At KTBC, Geller succeeded in causing a thick, brass key to bend in full view of their camera.

With media appearances over for the day, Uri Geller and I proceeded to my house for dinner. I showed Uri around the house. When he spotted a meteorite sealed in a Pyrex glass container on my desk, he asked, "What is that?" I explained, and Uri asked if it would be all right if he handled it. I took the meteorite from the case and handed it to Geller. He stared intensely at it for a few moments. That caused me to wonder if he might be trying to psychokinetically bend it. It was somewhat of a relief when Uri put the object back in its container and I resealed it. I was not sure I wanted the meteorite deformed.

Finally we began eating dinner. About seven minutes into the meal, Geller seemed to become filled with enthusiasm about being in Austin. He had just so stated when he exclaimed, "Yes! Look!" Uri had just picked up a bite of food with one of our thick stainless-steel forks. As Mary Kathryn, my wife, and I watched, the fork started bending and the food dropped off.

"Let me see it!" I exclaimed.

Geller handed me the still-bending fork. While I held it, we all watched the fork handle steadily continue to bend a full 40 degrees more; then, the bending motion slowed. I placed the fork on the table between my wife and me. We watched it continue bending a bit more without anyone touching it.

After dinner, Uri and I were standing in the living room while going through a book about unidentified flying objects. His back was seven or eight feet from the front door, which was closed. Both of Geller's hands were in full view of me. Mary Kathryn was sitting next to the door at one end of a couch.

Suddenly, out of the corner of her right eye, Mary Kathryn spotted a "flying object" emerge out of the space just in front of the closed door and about five feet above the floor. The "emerging" object was about four inches long and rather streamlined in appearance. She watched it shoot across a dis-

tance of seven feet or more and hit Geller in the back. Then it glanced down and struck the asphalt-tile-covered concrete floor with a sharp sound. I saw only the last portion of the object's movement and its striking the floor. We could then identify the "flying object" as the Imperial Harpa shell from my collection. When last seen, the shell was on a table across the living room.

Surprised that the shell was not completely shattered, I carefully picked it up. There was neither crack nor chip. A drop from even a foot above the hard floor normally would have broken the delicate seashell.

Uri then told us that objects "come out of the ceiling or a wall" around him, but that never before, to his memory, had any come "out of a door." He said it must have some special meaning, but neither he nor my wife nor I could suggest what the significance might be. Yet we were amused that the shell's mysterious flight had occurred just as we were talking about unidentified flying objects. Uri acknowledged that the paranormal phenomena which happen around him sometimes incorporate a sense of humor.

Later that evening my identical twin brother, Rex G. Stanford, Ph.D., a well-known parapsychologist, who was then president of the Parapsychological Association, telephoned from Charlottesville, Virginia. Geller insisted on doing a telepathy experiment between himself, Rex, and Rex's wife, Birgit, who was on an extension phone.

After drawing something which he kept out of my sight on a pad, Geller stared intensely at the telephone. Then he told me to ask them what they got. Birgit said, "I seem to get an 'O' or a circle." Rex commented, "I got an 'O' first, but then I saw a capital 'M'." Without picking up his pen again, Geller turned his pad around for me to see. It showed simply a circle with a capital 'M' inside it.

Ten minutes later, Rex and Birgit rang back. Rex told me, "Birgit has something she has drawn and wants to see if Uri can get it." Geller was in the living room. I went from where the phone was in the bedroom and told Uri what Rex and Birgit wanted.

"Oh," Geller said rather matter-of-factly, "while I was sitting here just now talking, a woman was contacting me [telepathically] and trying to send me a bird and a flower."

I went back to the bedroom phone and told Rex and Birgit what Geller had so casually reported. Birgit said, "That really is amazing. Before I called, I first was going to draw a bird

but decided it wouldn't look much like one and would be hard for him to identify. So, I then drew a flower because I figured that would be an easier target for him to identify."

Later, after some friends had joined us at the house, Uri seemed to become very excited. Suddenly, he said, "Something can happen right now! I feel it very strongly. Quick! Does someone have some personal object you don't mind having bent or broken? I feel a lot of power right now for some reason. Can we get together here in a circle in the middle of the floor? If somebody has an object, toss it on the floor."

Dwight Pryor, A.U.M. president, tossed an Eisenhower dollar onto the carpet. Geller and I got up and were in the process of sitting down on the carpet. Bob Dunnam was asking Geller if he wanted to bend some other object. Geller was saying, "No, this is enough. . ."

The conversation came to an abrupt stop with a loud thud. The nickel-iron meteorite mentioned earlier, which when last seen was sealed in its Pyrex glass case in a back bedroom-office, came crashing down onto the asphalt-tile-covered concrete entrance way just inside the closed front door. Sam Young and Jeanette Pryor, who were right beside the place where the meteorite hit, had the impression that it must have come almost straight down from at least two feet above the floor. The meteorite made a big dent and cracks in the asphalt tile, but its appearance was not altered in any way whatsoever.

There were eleven persons in the room at the time, including Geller. Everyone seemed sure he could not have tossed the meteorite without being clearly seen. Furthermore, the meteorite would have been obvious if hidden in Uri's tight-fitting jeans and shirt.

I had returned to the bedroom-office where the meteorite was stored after Geller's last visit there. I had specifically noted the meteorite in its case, since I was wondering if it might have been psychokinetically altered in some way. Eyes were on Geller the whole of his visit. There seemingly was no way he could have secreted the meteorite from its storage case unobserved.

Following the meteorite's startling appearance, I rushed into the bedroom-office to check on the condition of the Pyrex container. The container itself was sealed and just as I had left it. However, in the absence of the meteorite, the acrylic floss on which it had rested somehow had become ex-

tremely fluffed up. The floss had risen up like a cumulus cloud and filled almost all the open space of the container, as if sucked up by the vacuum created by the meteorite's dematerialization. I know by experience that normally, in the meteorite's absence, the floss only rises about halfway to the top.

Back in the living room, everyone was excited by the literally jarring fall of the meteorite. Geller said several times that he had a feeling the meteorite had now lost weight. I knew that would be easy to check. In Arizona, in 1966, it had been weighed twice, soon after I cleaned the oxide from its surface. One weighing was on a minerologist's scale of high quality. Both weighings indicated it weighed approximately .8 ounce less than three pounds, or 47.2 ounces. Kept in its sealed container and protected by a special coating, no visible oxidation has occurred since then.

Careful weighing of the meteorite on Tuesday, July 24, 1973, made on twelve different scales, yielded a mean weight of 42.32 ounces. Thus, the apparent weight loss was about 4.88 ounces—or just over 10 percent.

On the Tuesday morning following Geller's return to New York on Sunday, Cactus Pryor played the recorded interview, including Uri's voluntary "remote bending" experiment. At the A.U.M. office a desk key, in the lock at the time, bent during the recorded experiment. What happened in records room B-526 of the Texas Attorney General's Office, in the State Supreme Court building, was much more remarkable.

Attorney S. J. Aronson, employed in the Attorney General's Office, had heard Geller would be on Cactus Pryor's radio program. He suggested to the three women in the records room that they listen, too. Hearing Geller say that women were more likely than men to have an object respond or bend, they put a teaspoon, a very large star-shaped paper clip, and a ring of keys out on the table in the center of the room where they were working.

During the recorded experiment itself, nothing happened. As the Geller interview continued, the women commented among themselves that they were relieved nothing had happened. Cornisea Bailey tossed the key ring back into her purse, and then left for a coffee break. Mrs. Ella Mae Jennings was glad that the borrowed spoon had not bent out of shape. The third person in the room, Melissa Aicken, left the paper clip on the table, not far from the spoon, and continued work.

Mrs. Jennings turned around to a file cabinet and resumed work. About twenty to thirty seconds later, when she turned back to the table, she was astonished to observe that the spoon handle was now very much bent, and called Melissa to look. No one else had been in the room at the time. Melissa's astonishment changed to complete puzzlement when she then noticed that the large paper clip was nowhere to be seen.

The women called attorney Aronson into the office. Aronson recalled that Geller had said that objects often continue to bend, sometimes even for hours. He placed the spoon atop a piece of paper on a file cabinet and marked off its degree of bend. Then it continued to bend more, and the subsequent degree of alteration was duly noted.

Since no one had seen the paper clip actually disappear, they could not be completely sure that its absence was paranormal. But, it appeared that no one in the office had taken it, and there was no one else in the room when it apparently disappeared.

Upon her return from the coffee break, Cornisea Bailey was shown the contorted spoon. The excited people who had by then gathered in the room insisted that she examine her key ring to find out if any key had bent. Cornisea, however, was "spooked" by the spoon incident. She now wanted nothing to do with such strange things. However, with her permission, Gilbert Bernal removed the key ring from Cornisea's purse, in the presence of all gathered. They were amazed to find that one key had been completely broken in two, with only the top half still on the ring. Bernal then dug into the bottom of the purse and found the other end of the key. All three women and S. J. Aronson were videotaped in interview with Cactus Pryor, during which each attested to the strange happenings. The interview was shown on KTBC-TV news on the evening of July 24.

On the day of these happenings, three representatives of A.U.M. visited the State Attorney General's Office to document the events there. The apparent sincerity, continued astonishment, and spontaneity of the witnesses were impressive. Also, an affidavit to the events was signed by the witnesses.

Cactus Pryor was so impressed by the results of Geller's taped experiment, and the audience reaction to it, that he played the entire July 21 tape interview a second time, on Monday, July 30. No one told Geller it would be replayed.

Although no calls to radio KLBJ reported any paranormal

events in response to the second broadcast, what happened to A.U.M. office manager Jeanette Pryor at that time left her so shaken she was unable to do any work for twenty minutes. During the replayed interview, Jeanette held two keys in her hands, wondering if one or the other might bend. Neither one did. However, only a few minutes later, when she took her key chain from her purse to return a key to it, she could hardly believe her eyes. There, "materialized" on the chain, was a just-slightly-bent version (even with the same serial number) of the key which had bent out of shape during the playing of that same recording six days before.

Mrs. Pryor is a very observant person and she is sure the key could not have been on the chain earlier. Also, the chain was new and only about two weeks earlier she had put only five keys on it. The duplicate key had been lost several months before, and had been searched for on several occasions. The A.U.M. staff recalled Geller's stating that long-lost objects sometimes have a way of mysteriously "materializing" when he is around or after his departure. Also, he remarked to Jeanette eight and a half days earlier, "Something will happen to you very soon. It will surprise you."

I am reminded of what an *Austin American-Statesman* reporter told me just after Geller had demonstrated telepathy and had bent and broken a key for him, on Sunday, July 22. He said, "I'll admit Geller bent that key for me a few minutes ago, but my mind is still bending. I think it will be bending for a long time to come."

After the events at my house the previous night, I could only comment, "Well, join the club! You're not alone."

THE PSYCHIC YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE

Jon Lipsky

David Doubilet is a seasoned photographer and, as Jon Lipsky writes, a "trustworthy friend." Both men observed Uri Geller, and both became convinced that he had managed to photograph himself through the lens cap of Doubilet's camera. In one of the two pictures that accompanied Lipsky's article, which originally appeared in The Real Paper, Cambridge (Massachusetts), Geller's upper body was visible, showing his open shirt, most of his shoulders, his neck, chin, and the hair around the lower part of his head. A second photograph caught Geller's mouth and nostrils. Doubilet, in a note accompanying Mr. Lipsky's article, said that "as far as I could tell, he could not possibly have unscrewed the lens cover." These views clash with those expressed by Charles Reynolds and Yale Joel in the articles beginning on pages 38 and 49 respectively. Mr. Doubilet also wrote: "What I saw, I saw awake, with both eyes. Nothing I know about photography or that I observed in Uri's actions can explain those two exposed frames. Seeing those pictures on a blank roll of film was a frightening experience."

The most accurate description of the most astounding phenomenon ever presented to the western world came from the mouth of three crows, animated cartoon characters in Walt Disney's *Dumbo*. If the crows could be believed, they had seen a peanut stand, had heard a rubber band, had seen a needle wink its eye. But, they assured us, they would not have seen *everything* until they'd seen an elephant fly.

Well, I know that even if they had seen an elephant fly, they would still not have seen *everything*. They would not have seen the photographs I have seen: photographs taken while the lens cap of the camera was screwed on tight. There was no way for a picture to come through. There was no way for *anything* to come through. The developed negative is blank, frame after frame, until, suddenly, in the center of the

roll, there are two snapshots which have no business being there. The snapshots are of the Israeli psychic Uri Geller. He claims that his mind, not light, exposed the film.

I've read of such things in parapsychological texts. They always make me shrug my shoulders with a mixture of curiosity and resignation. But I can't shrug this off: the photographs were taken with the camera of a skillful photographer, who takes pictures for many national magazines and is completely competent with his equipment. He's a trustworthy friend to boot. True, the photographs turned out slightly out of focus, showing Geller from an angle that might have occurred if Geller somehow had removed, then replaced, the lens cap. But our photographer, David Doubilet, assures me that there was no way the lens cap could have been removed. It is a screw-on, not a snap-on, lens cap. It makes a horrible scraping sound when twisting off. And Doubilet, like a spy, never stopped watching or listening while the camera clocked. Either way, the pictures were astounding proof of a psychic phenomenon, or proof that a new Houdini has arisen.

I didn't actually see the magic pictures snapped. When I walked into the photography session, Doubilet was standing by the window, taking ordinary pictures—of a key that had been bent at a 60-degree angle. The key was still bending and later broke in half. The only force that had been applied was the stroke of a finger, the kind-of stroke you would give a cat to make it purr.

But by this time I had already seen keys bend—the key to my motorcycle lock had curled up before my eyes. And untouched watches had moved their hands, and telepathic pictures had been projected over the phone. It had taken me only four hours in the presence of the psychic phenomenon Uri Geller to accept the unacceptable, as if it were no more extraordinary than a peacock's feather. Birds fly. Cows moo. Keys bend.

Uri Geller gives you the impression of a living science-fiction fantasy. Not the fantasy of a superman, but the fantasy of the ordinary Joe who happens to have an extraordinary talent and doesn't quite know what to do with it. He may have bent keys a thousand times, but when *your* key starts bending he jumps like a kid who has discovered how to work a new toy. When the crowd at Town Hall in New York presses in on him after the show, he is horrified that they want to touch him as if he were some god or idol. When he meets a reporter from *Rolling Stone*, he wants to know who

is responsible for getting him on the cover. Under the influence of a scientist colleague, he agreed to have his powers tested at the Stanford Research Institute. Under the influence of a theatrical colleague (who produced the German production of "Hair") he took voice lessons in preparation for a possible psychic musical.

In answer to spiritual skeptics who can't understand why anyone with ESP and telekinesis would bother with parlor tricks and nightclub acts he replies that he gets off on the crowds, on answering questions, on showing off his gift and watching people wonder. He appears on the Jack Paar Show and gives interviews with *Cosmopolitan*: "No one is going to tell me how to run my life, or how much money to make," he repeats vehemently over and over again. And over and over again he repeats, too, that he is no Jesus, no Moses, he doesn't know how he works his tricks, he doesn't even know if he is the one doing the tricks, he's normal, normal, normal plus.

Five of us—friends, and friends of friends—played Fair Witness to his powers at an interview in New York, trying hard not to interview but, rather, to visit. There were David and Ronnie Silver, Steve Diamond, Carolyn Richardson, Uri and I, crowded into a chic sterile room in an East 57th Street apartment. The visit was play—parlor tricks around the coffee table—but this game was for real.

The beginning was a bit uncomfortable. Uri immediately launched into his autobiographical rap, much of which I had already heard in his Town Hall demonstration. Guessing correctly how much his mother won at cards. Discovering as a kid that the hands of his watch bent. Hiding the gift from other kids. Joining the élite Israeli paratroopers. Modeling professionally. Deciding to make extra bucks showing his talents in Israeli nightclubs. A thousand performances. Then, off to Germany to test his powers and his act in a foreign and cynical clime. Off to America at the urgings of his scientist friend, Andrija Puharich. The Stanford Research Institute gig, sponsored by astronaut Edgar Mitchell. Barnstorming through the states. Growing aware that the powers came not from him, but from outside control.

The man has a charming quality, though, of saying an often repeated monologue as if he had just thrown away the script and had started improvising. He got restless before we did, anxious to try out his talents before he lost his audience. He asked us for something that meant a lot to us emotion-

ally. I offered my house key, but it was a skeleton key, slightly bent, and he rejected it. He also rejected Ronnie's first wedding ring. He finally settled on a key to my apartment but when he tried to bend it, it remained unbowed. An attempted solution was to switch our seating positions, and stand Ronnie and me away from the table, taking the wedding ring with us.

He had no real plan; he was simply ~~changing~~ variables to see if something would happen. The ring didn't bend. Instead, as he held the key in his hand it arched up. He took his hand away and put it on the table. There was nothing underneath the table (it had a glass top), and nothing over it except the ceiling. And as we stared the metal clearly continued to bend until it stopped at about a 60-degree angle. I didn't know it then, but I've subsequently discovered the key *did* belong to something I cared about: my old rusty motorcycle.

We switched to watches. In his stage act at Town Hall, Uri had unsuccessfully tried to start a pile of broken watches which had been brought on stage by people in the audience who had heard about his act. But in the apartment, he tried a different tack. Out of his line of sight, Carolyn set her working watch to 7 o'clock and placed it in the cup of his hands. Then, in his sight we set a clock to 8:30, to give him something to concentrate on. He attempted to turn the dial to that hour.

He failed. When he opened his hands after a few seconds, the watch had not moved forward an hour and a half but *backwards* an hour and forty minutes. As everyone laughed and gabbled excitedly I kept my eye on the watch. Its hand was now moving forward faster than it should, covering three minutes on the timer in what I estimated to be one minute real time. We all loved the idea that it might be trying to reach 5:30 in order to make a change of exactly 1½ hours.

About 45 minutes later I happened to look at the watch again. I asked if anyone had touched the watch: no one had. It had suddenly become 12:30 on the dial. Uri was delighted but not surprised. Things happened around him without his effort. He cupped the watch in his hand to see if anything more would happen. An instant later, he opened his hands and the time was 3:10.

By this point, Andrew Weil, author of *The Natural Mind*, had arrived to do a story on Uri for *Psychology Today*. He had brought along a broken watch which would only tick for a few seconds if you shook it hard. He took it out of his

pocket—it was now running fine. And continued to run OK (we set it against another watch) for at least a half hour, after which I got bored checking it.

Toward the end of our visit, which lasted four hours, Uri tried some telepathy over the phone. We called a friend at the *Rolling Stone* office, a few blocks away, and asked him to draw a picture. Uri began sketching. At first he lightly outlined a crescent moon and bisected it with a straight line. Then, with more conviction, he drew a triangle, and, inside the triangle, an eye. I don't know where he got the moon idea, but our friend at *Rolling Stone* had sketched a picture taken from the back of a dollar bill: the pyramid under the coptic eye. We were gleeful. Uri elaborated on his picture, saying that he had entertained an urge to put lines, like sunrays around the triangle, which seemed to fit with the occult nature of the pyramid. When we walked over to *Rolling Stone* we discovered no sunrays around the pyramid, but the eye was surrounded by little lines—eyelashes.

The whole thing was really too heavy to handle. For me, and I think for the others, the burden of proof has suddenly shifted. Other psychic phenomena I have accepted on a subjective intuition, or waited with anticipation for someone to come along and substantiate the claims beyond a shadow of doubt. But now, with my bent key in hand, I wonder only if some incredible genius could figure out a way to fake it.

Imagine what it must be like for Uri, who actually does these things. When Steve took out a packet of English Senior Service cigarettes, Uri asked why he was smoking them. He had noticed the picture of a sailboat on the cover, almost an exact replica of a picture he had drawn in an ESP demonstration a few days before. This for Uri was cause to wonder. It's happened too often to him; he became disappointed when a watch, which had suddenly changed time, had performed this feat because someone reset it.

Like us, too, he experiments and fools around. On hash he has discovered an amazing increase in his powers. He feels he can bend steel girders. When he comes down, however, he receives the disappointment of all reefer madness: the powers are neither more, nor less glorious than when he is not smoking.

He's not immune to the fear, either. He has attempted teleportation twice and it scared the shit out of him. He was lying down, eyes closed, in Ossining, New York, the home of his scientist friend, Andrija Puharich, trying to project him-

self to Brazil. Suddenly he saw colors flash past him, like the kaleidoscope in *2001*. When the colors cleared he was on a plaza with wavy inlaid lines: Rio or Brazilia. Not just in his mind, his whole physical body. Inside his head, though, he could hear Puharich's voice: "Bring back money!" A couple was walking towards him, just strolling. He asked for money but of course they couldn't understand his language. Puharich supplied some Portuguese or Spanish words. That did the trick. Uri had no shirt pocket, so he clutched the paper money in his fist. Then he was back in Ossining, New York. Puharich, who had seen nothing out of the ordinary in Uri's behavior, asked what happened. Uri opened a fist holding the cruzeiro currency.

He couldn't relate the other teleportation trip. That information was being saved for a book by Puharich. Uri and his entourage are as careful as a rock band about their publicity and make no bones about it. "Bring back money!" was an appropriate phrase. In any case, the experience was too much for Uri, and he won't try it again soon.

Uri causes one to worry. He wants to assure everyone that not *everything* about him is peculiar. Asked about his strange experiences during sleep he says: "No, it's very normal, very very normal, like you or me. Very normal. Actually everything is normal if you condense what we saw here and heard—that's the only thing that's not normal. Otherwise I do things that *you* and *you* do." But he's such a package of contradictions: defensive, ingenuous, arrogant, nervous, ambitious, and innocent. (And *normal*—this alloy of adjectives might describe any number of young Israelis.) The question is, how is he going to make his contradictions cohere?

He's only in his late twenties. And he claims to have flooded the Greek Orthodox Archbishop by turning Mateus rosé wine into a blood-red liquid that tasted, to the Archbishop, like Manischewitz.

He likes to parachute, scuba dive, and drive fast (even drive blindfolded with someone sitting beside him as his "eyes"). His bravery, though, quavers at certain responsibilities of his gifts. He predicted Nasser's death in front of an Israeli audience ten minutes after it had happened, 65 minutes before Israeli radio announced it, but a year ago he decided he didn't want these things to happen and they have now stopped.

He admits to having looked on occasion into ladies' minds to find out their sexual predilections. And he has bent Werner

Von Braun's wedding ring and visited other hotshots in high-security catacombs which have filled him with awe: "What am I doing here? This is James Bond."

If his "normal" life is incompatible with his powers, his ideas are even more incompatible with the various petty and peculiar interests of the people around him. He believes that there are worlds within worlds, with creatures of greater powers than ours: a whole universe at the tip of his ball-point pen is one of his favorite images. And then he has to contend with the people who are sure that the vitamin C pills he pops before performing are the cause for his telepathic gifts. The powers he wields come from outside him, he says. They are channeled through him for a reason—*everything* has a reason, according to Uri. Meanwhile, a young researcher complained that Uri is difficult to work with because of his ego tripping, and groupies write him batty lecherous letters after creaming over his image on the TV screen.

Geller thinks he's possibly preparing us—or maybe we are all just being prepared—for some future evolution. In the present, though, the professional magicians who packed Town Hall are out to cut his throat and defrock him as a fraud. Uri's wilder ideas are anchored in the old Jewish theory of an all-encompassing God who, through various powers and creatures, is behind the whole design. But spiritualists, like the magicians, groupies, and scientists, are sure to complain. He backs off in horror at pulls of guruhood and expresses amazement and distaste for people like the followers of Guru Maharaj Ji who he observed bowing down to a picture of a human being.

I suspect that Uri is performing in his peculiar mode of showbiz psychic-scientific researcher because it really is natural for him. If you were suddenly faced with death or with immortality, or with some strange telepathic and psychokinetic power, you too would probably settle back to do what you do best, what gives you the most human satisfaction, what other people enjoy in you. Your life would still be filled with contradictions, but those contradictions would be familiar, and familiarity breeds security.

You really have to hear him talk, though, gesticulating, shouting, leveling with you, to pick up his infectious charisma as he goes in and out of wild ideas and level-headed assurances, excited bravado and down-to-earth fireside chat.

"Look, I'm . . . Look! I swear . . . Look, this is not my

watch. It's not a trick . . . You see. Here! I don't even have to . . . *He* brought the broken watch. It's running!

". . . Don't think now of little green men on Mars or on Jupiter. Our earth has been contacted by these *powers*, these *energies*. I really can't say more because I really don't *know* more.

"Everything is from God, Jesus is from God. I'm not ruling *that* out. I don't understand this business, 'do you believe in Jesus or in Moses.' *What is this?* I believe in God—*Finished!*

"People ask me well how come these intelligences that came to earth 8,000 years ago didn't leave us a tool for proof, they just built the pyramids . . . Listen; if they could come to earth from another Galaxy . . . they're going to dematerialize everything they brought, because it's *theirs*, it's from *them*, you understand.

"Now, they are so civilized . . . maybe they're not even beings, maybe they're *computers*. They can travel 50 billion years into the past. 50 billion years into the future . . .

"Listen I'm really going far out. I've never talked this way to any magazine because I don't want people to think I'm crazy. But I'm sure the readers . . . They're all far out. Aren't they?"

Are they? He is not someone you would like to follow, and not someone you would want to debunk. He is someone to observe with glee and, if possible, befriend.

URI'S PSYCHIC PHOTOGRAPHS: REAL OR FAKE?

Charles Reynolds

The monthly magazine Popular Photography, published in New York, became interested in Uri Geller's "astonishing feats," reported in the British press, of producing photographs "by psychic means." The London Sunday paper News of the World, for example, had a huge front-page headline reading, "Uri's Miracle Pictures: He Took These with a Sealed Camera Lens." The New York photography magazine reported in its issue of June 1947 that former Life magazine photographer Yale Joel had brought pictures to its office that were taken "during a day-long visit with Geller, including one extraordinary frame on an otherwise blank roll of film apparently 'exposed' through a taped lens cap by the power of Geller's mind."

On the following pages, Charles Reynolds reports on the mysterious Geller photographs from the viewpoint of a skeptic, professional magician, and photographer. The reader will also find on page 49, a report by Mr. Joel, the photographer who took part in Geller's day-long experiment. Photographs illustrating the two articles are reproduced in the picture insert in the center section of this book.

Only one thing about Israeli wonder-worker Uri Geller is certain: to the press and his audiences on television and in lecture halls around the world, he is a sensation. Handsome, charismatic, seemingly humble and amazed himself at the apparent miracles he performs, the 27-year-old "psychic" from Tel Aviv has been the center of intense controversy since his first appearances in the United States just over a year ago. To the believers, and there are many, Uri's alleged ability to divine the contents of sealed messages, bend metal by thought power alone, stop and start watches and clocks, and perform other equally amazing feats is proof positive, albeit clothed in show-business glamour and media hype, that extrasensory perception and the telekinetic ability to affect and

transform inanimate objects through telepathic power are a reality. To his equally vocal detractors, he is a clever and showmanly young magician who has baffled lay audiences and investigating scientists (including members of California's prestigious Stanford Research Institute), using principles that accomplished conjurers have employed for thousands of years. To make things even more interesting, Geller has recently added psychic photography to his repertoire of miracles (or bag of tricks) and has been producing images on film in borrowed cameras with the lens cap taped over the camera lens!

I have been following Geller's career with considerable interest since I was first told about him a little over a year ago by photographer Peter Basch. Basch, who frequently works on assignment in Europe, had heard of the sensation Geller had created on the continent. Uri had supposedly stopped cable cars and escalators with his mind power, and bending metal objects such as knives, forks, spikes, rings, and keys by merely concentrating on them were a standard part of his stage act. Basch met Geller and predicted he would be a great success. Rumors were that Uri had performed under "scientifically controlled test conditions" at the Stanford Research Institute and had impressed and baffled reputable scientists, although the California think tank had not yet released the results of the tests. *Time* magazine had heard of Geller, and correctly sensing that he was likely to ride the current wave of interest in ESP and psychic phenomenon to fame and fortune, became interested in doing some kind of story on him. Because of previous research I had done on the Psychic Investigating Committee of the Society of American Magicians and some articles I had written they hired me to check him out.

Discussing Uri with some of my friends who are far less skeptical than I about the psychic forces that are supposedly around us, I learned that Uri had performed for several executives and reporters of a major TV network and had impressed them profoundly. One executive (a vice-president of one division of the network) would know how to reach Uri. Indeed he did. Uri was staying with Dr. Andrija Puharich, who had written one major book on psychedelic mushrooms and another on the scientific basis of telepathy. The network executive recounted his amazing experiences with Uri (a key had become "like taffy" in his hands and had bent) and gave me Uri's number, cautioning me to keep it private since there were rumors of a CIA plot to assassinate

him because his mind powers could "blow up government computers."

A meeting with Uri, perhaps one at which he would demonstrate his amazing powers, was not hard to arrange. Dr. Puharich said that Uri would be delighted to submit to an interview and perhaps even read a few minds and bend a few forks and keys if his powers were with him.

Thomas Paine, who looked on many of the foibles of mankind with a skeptical eye, once wrote, "Is it more probable that nature should go out of her course, or that a man should tell a lie?" It seemed to me that this just might apply to Geller. Either he was lying about his psychic powers, and very probably backing it up with some clever sleight-of-hand, or we had one of the biggest news stories since the invention of movable type.

The meeting with Uri was arranged for a few days hence to take place in the office of *Time's* picture editor, John Durniak. Recognizing the fact that I occasionally had been fooled by skilled magicians in the past and would, quite likely, be fooled again sometime in the future, I decided to invite a professional magician as skeptical as I, to pose as a reporter and keep one pair of eyes on Uri just in case his psychic miracles did depend more on skillful misdirection than on extrasensory powers. We all decided that the logical man for the job was James Randi, the professional magician and dedicated debunker of fraudulent psychic chicanery who appears on television and the college circuit as "The Amazing Randi." Bolstered by information from Dr. Ray Hyman, a professor of psychology at the University of Oregon who had observed Geller at work at Stanford Research Institute and was extremely skeptical of the genuineness of his powers, we set down some ground rules about what to watch for, no matter how cleverly Uri misdirected the attention of the others who were observing him.

When the time of the demonstration arrived, Durniak's office was packed with *Time* staffers anxious to see the Israeli psychic perform, and he did not disappoint them. His demonstration began with some moderately successful experiments in "projecting" and receiving thoughts. Uri had a good number of hits and about an equal number of misses. Uri would cover his eyes with his fingers and assure us with great sincerity that he was not peeking. The person with the best chance of seeing him peeking was a lady sitting next to him on the couch. We noted that he asked her to close her eyes "to help

him concentrate." Several of the things written and drawn by various members of the staff Uri hit with amazing accuracy. Randi suspected him of "pencil reading," a technique used by professional mind readers to determine what has been written by the movement of the pencil over the top of the pad or card upon which the subject is writing. When Randi tilted down his pencil so that the top was not visible, Uri, peeking or not, missed every one. Soon Uri discarded Randi as a bad subject and when the next person wrote and drew things with the top of his pencil visible, Uri's percentage of hits went up.

Many of the *Time* staff were impressed, although it soon became obvious that science editor Leon Jaroff and a couple of others in the audience were becoming increasingly skeptical of the genuineness of the demonstration they had been called in to witness. Perhaps sensing this, Uri decided to vary his program and move into the bending of metal objects. First, Uri asked for two pieces of cutlery. Two forks were supplied by the staff. Uri explained that he needed two pieces for comparison so that we could see if one were to begin bending. This seemed a logical procedure since forks are naturally bent and to see if one had bent more we would need some basis for comparison.

The forks were held by a staff member and lightly stroked by Uri. On comparison, nothing had happened. This was repeated a few times to no avail over a period of about twenty minutes. Uri was obviously frustrated that his powers were not working. Then Randi was asked to hold one fork between his hands. "Did he feel anything?" "No." The forks were compared, and still no bend. At this point Geller asked someone else to put the fork between his hands and he casually put the comparison fork aside. As he laid it down on the coffee table in front of the couch where he was sitting, both Randi and I saw him, using both hands, put a considerable upward bend in it. All attention was on the fork between the staff member's hands. Later when forks were compared, one did have a bend in it. It was a little confusing which fork had bent and, overall, the staff did not seem quite as impressed as they were with the telepathic experiments.

Now Uri was to move into his most impressive feat, the bending of a key. I supplied Uri with a brass key (it was, in fact, the key to the *Popular Photography* picture room). Both Randi and I had decided that no matter what distractions Geller produced, we would keep our eyes on the key.

Uri tried several times with the key in various people's hands. It did not seem to bend. Then Uri became uninterested in the key and asked if there was something else he could try. Someone suggested a beer can opener and there was considerable rummaging around trying to find one. At this point, both Randi and I distinctly saw Geller place the tip of the key against the top of the table before which he was seated and, leaning forward, bend it. We looked at one another and smiled. A short time later Uri returned to the key for another try. He rubbed the wide head of the key on the table top. Apparently the key was flat, but actually the shank of the key (bent at about a thirty-degree angle) was concealed behind his thumb. He then placed the key in someone's hand and finally revealed it bent. "Did you see that?" said Uri. "Yes, I certainly did," answered Randi, with a wink to me.

Now we were told that the key would continue to bend and Uri rushed into the next office to show it to someone else. On subsequent viewing the key was indeed bent further, but at no time did we see it bend visibly as Uri insisted it would do and, furthermore, he had plenty of opportunity to bend it. After Geller left, Randi did the key- and fork-bending for the staff and has continued to do so to the considerable amazement of audiences in his stage performances and on television.

Uri himself has appeared frequently on television. For those of us who have watched him repeatedly and even studied his performances played over and over on videotape, certain interesting similarities appear. Geller usually limits himself to two or three tests. He reveals a drawing sealed inside of two or three nested, sealed envelopes. He is invariably successful at it, but the divining of the contents of envelopes is not exactly new material for any professional mentalists from Dunninger to Kreskin. Randi is regularly duplicating the feat on his TV appearances. Geller often bends a spike or nail by lightly stroking it. The performance goes something like this: Uri asks the MC or moderator whether he has brought some nails or spikes. Usually five or six are introduced and are found to be bound together with adhesive tape. Uri expresses surprise at this although the consistency of this happening makes one wonder if the wrapping of the nails is not a condition of the experiment. A couple of nails are shown to be straight. Then Uri selects one of the other nails and, holding it well-concealed in his hands, proceeds to stroke it. When Uri removes his fingers, it is seen to be bent.

He tells us it will continue to bend although we do not see this.

Is it conceivable that, in the general confusion of getting a TV show on the air, Uri or one of his assistants could have gotten to the nails and prebent one of them? Possibly. Or is Uri really bending metal by thought power alone? Also, possibly, but, in my admittedly skeptical opinion, not probably.

Another Geller feat, done less frequently but certainly more impressive, is the bending and final breaking of a large and seemingly sturdy metal salad fork or spoon. Does Geller accomplish this through genuine psychic power or is it possible that someone gets to the spoon or fork beforehand and bends it back and forth until metal fatigue sets in at the spot where Geller causes it to bend and snap? In the course of repeated viewings of videotape of this seeming miracle, I have my own opinions. I could be wrong. Probably only Uri knows for sure.

Interestingly, not all of Uri's television appearances have been unmitigated triumphs, but then, any psychic, real or otherwise, will tell you that the powers do not always work. When Uri appeared on the Johnny Carson show, surely his biggest television break if all had gone well, nothing worked. Why was it such a fiasco? Perhaps because Carson, an amateur magician of some ability, had called Randi before the show and been advised not to allow Uri or any of his entourage to get near the props before showtime. Again on the Joyce Brothers show, Uri was unsuccessful in getting any of the nails to bend. Perhaps, again, this was because Dr. Brothers insisted on using the nails she had brought in her purse rather than the other set conveniently wrapped in adhesive tape. Even for the most amazing psychic of recent years, that's show business.

After over a year of watching Uri bend things, reveal things, and occasionally, fix things much to the amazement and delight of his followers, I was interested to see, in the course of one of the most fantastic press coverages in history in the British newspapers, that Uri had added a new miracle to his repertoire. He was producing pictures on borrowed cameras not only with the lens cap on but also taped over. I could understand, to my own satisfaction, how Uri had performed at least the effects I had *seen* him do. The miracles others had *said* they had seen him do, unhappily, never televised or included in performances where I was present, were something else again. It is probably a mark of my extreme skepti-

cism that I have never been a great believer in second- and third-hand information. (Did that key *really* continue to bend or did Uri simply say it would and sometimes bend it when no one was looking and he got the chance?) Now Uri was doing something that I, as a photographer, believed was clearly impossible. London's *News of the World* described them as "Uri's Miracle Pictures" in headlines two inches high. The paper described the two frames it published as perhaps "The most amazing ever published in a newspaper." The camera was a Nikon F belonging to Michael Brennan, a former British Press Photographer of the Year. Uri pointed it at himself, lens cap taped and all. He shot three rolls of Tri-X. In the middle of one of them were two pictures—of Uri. Amazing? It certainly is. Particularly since *News of the World* reporter Roy Stockill writes, "Brennan and I were both convinced that there was no way he could have removed the lens cap by sleight of hand." Uri repeated the feat in Miami, London, and Boston. Each time some image turned out on the film and the lens cap, tape and all, apparently stayed in place.

Were these miracles involving telepathy and psychokinesis? How could I possibly know? I wasn't there. But in reading about Uri and his psychic pictures, my mind went back almost seven years to a trip that photographer David Eisen-drath and I had taken to Denver, Col., on assignment for *Popular Photography* to witness the "psychic" photographs of a man named Ted Serios. A book had been written on Ted's "Thoughtography" by a prominent psychiatrist who had studied the "psychic" at great length. The book recounted things which we did not see and therefore could not explain. From our observations and from what seemed to us a highly revealing television film of Ted producing his pictures on a television camera, we concluded that the phenomena were easily duplicated and probably not produced by supernatural means. Our explanation of the pictures was reported in detail in the October 1967 issue of *Popular Photography*. Given the method we deduced, Randi produced virtually identical pictures, both with a Polaroid camera and a TV camera, on the NBC *Today* show and other TV programs. Comparing a tape of Ted and of Randi side by side, it would be hard not to deduce that they were using the same methods. Yet—the book reports apparent miracles, and we were not there. Also, since shortly after our visit, Ted Serios has reportedly produced no more images on tape or film, although experiments

have continued ever since. Did we set up "bad vibes" and inhibit a genuine psychic, or did we figure out how the trick was done? While we have strong opinions based on the evidence, we will probably never know.

While we did not get a chance to see Uri produce a psychic photograph, we were able to talk to a knowledgeable person who did. Yale Joel, a veteran professional photographer, spent a day photographing Uri Geller. At most of Uri's feats, Joel was astonished. Uri bent a heavy silver serving spoon (it eventually broke), revealed a message that Seth Joel (Yale's son and assistant) had placed in an envelope, and did several other things for which the Joels had no explanation. Then he ventured into a field of Joel's expertise. Uri's photographic "miracle" is described in the article following. The pictures tell the rest.

From Yale Joel's description of what happened and the final picture that resulted, there is little doubt that Uri *could* have gotten to the camera, untaped the lens, and by holding the lens cap a few inches from the lens (either with the help of someone else or by himself) shot a picture. If the camera had been fitted with a normal focal-length lens, the results might have turned out to look quite mysterious with most of the frame black and some sort of image in one part of it.

The history of psychic phenomena is filled with accounts of famous practitioners not only suspected of fraud but often caught red-handed. The invariable answer of the true believer is that, yes, psychics might sometimes be caught in fraud but at other times they were undoubtedly genuine. But *were* they genuine at other times or were they simply lucky enough or clever enough not to get caught at it? Uri is quick to say that his TV and public demonstrations are not done under laboratory-controlled conditions, such as those tests performed at the Stanford Research Institute, but we might logically ask ourselves what those conditions were. Is it not possible that a skilled magician can fool trained scientists who know nothing of the techniques of conjuring? Perhaps the best team to observe a psychic wonder-worker should not be made up of just scientists but also of magicians who make their living honestly by performing apparent wonders and who understand the art of deception.

Genuine or not, where does Uri Geller go from here? He is currently the glamour boy of the psychic field, but it is likely that he is considering bigger things than bending spoons on television and the lecture circuit, even at very good money.

As might be expected, several books deal with Geller's strange feats. Surely one of the most astonishing is *Uri: A Journal of the Mystery of Uri Geller*, by Andrija Puharich, Geller's mentor on earth and the man who brought him to the U.S. from Israel, and who has most vocally supported Uri as a genuine psychic and the paranormal wonder of the age. The book (published by Anchor Press, a division of Doubleday) defies summation. Even for the believer who accepts the fact that Uri can bend metal with his thoughts and produce pictures with sealed cameras, it is pretty heavy going. In it Dr. Puharich states that "superior beings" have been in communication with man on earth for thousands of years and that Uri has been selected by these extraterrestrials as an ambassador for an advanced civilization. While Puharich says that his "editor in the sky" will not allow him to reveal everything about this cosmic plan, at the center of which is Uri, he does tell us enough to make even the most credible reader ponder whether this is merely crudely written science fiction.

The story of Dr. Puharich is full of flying saucers, of UFOs, dematerializations, messages from computers in outer space, levitations, and other assorted miracles including an encounter with a giant hawk who is identified as the Egyptian god, Horus. Uri's first contact with a UFO occurred on December 25, 1949 (could the date be significant?), and from that day on his psychic powers began to manifest themselves. Over twenty years later, Geller tells Puharich, "Then maybe I am a descendant; my ancestors were people not from earth. They landed in a flying saucer. They had these powers and somehow they came up in me."

This explanation seems logical to Dr. Puharich who, after all, has seen Uri bend things.

On later occasions, Uri (presumably in a trance) speaks with the voice of "Spectra," one of the spacecraft "fifty-three thousand, sixty-nine light-ages away" which, along with several computers in outer space, are constantly sending messages, through Uri, to Puharich. Spectra explains that Uri has been sent to earth to save mankind and is, in fact, the only one who can do this.

Spectra is only one of several extraterrestrial intelligences that are in frequent communication with Puharich. Some of them are computers, like Rhombus 4D which is one and a half million light-years away and orders Puharich to write the book on Uri. Another contact which Puharich called IS

(for "Intelligence in the Sky") communicates, "Do a movie on Uri." As if Dr. Puharich needed further proof of the existence of these forces, and it's apparent from the entire tone of the book that he does not, things are constantly appearing and disappearing in the course of his adventures with Uri. For example, one day Puharich discovers that Uri has "dematerialized" the brass filler cartridge of his fountain pen, "In order for this brass filler cartridge to disappear without damaging these housings, it would have to be taken apart atom by atom. To do this required enormous intelligent energies unknown to man today," writes Puharich. Later Uri (again in a trance) reveals that the filler for the fountain pen is safe on the spacecraft and would be eventually returned. All of this comes to pass one evening when Uri and Dr. Puharich encounter a flashing blue light on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. They realize immediately that it is a spacecraft. "Only I am allowed to approach it," says Uri and moves off into the night. Later he returns and, in his outstretched palms, he has the filler to Dr. Puharich's fountain pen.

All of this should be on record, for Dr. Puharich had the presence of mind to film the miraculous event with his Nizo 8-mm movie camera. Unfortunately the film cartridge dematerialized as did the tape cassettes with the voice of Spectra on them. "The secret of Spectra was safe because they had leaked out just enough information to convince me of their reality, but not enough for me to convince any other human being." How true!

That Dr. Puharich's apparent note of discouragement is unnecessary becomes obvious when Uri meets astronaut Ed Mitchell and scientists Russell Targ and Hal Puthoff at Stanford Research Institute who are to set up the "scientifically controlled" tests of Uri's power. When Uri tells them of the intelligences from outer space that give him his powers, the scientists accept this information calmly and astronaut Mitchell comments, "Uri, you're not saying anything to us we don't in some way sense or understand."

Perhaps an indication that even Uri himself is not in complete agreement with some of the details of Dr. Puharich's strange story are recent items in both the British and American press that Uri is writing his own book, tentatively titled *My Life*. Still a third book is being prepared by *Time* writer John Wilhelm who, at first, was profoundly intrigued by the SRI investigation of Uri's feats but in view of subsequent evi-

dence now says he has a completely open mind as to whether they are genuine or not.

Recently, Uri Geller has canceled lucrative engagements both in Europe and America. Quoted in a London newspaper, his manager, Yasha Katz, referred to appearances in New York and Miami where Uri produced less than spectacular results: "The audience at both settings was packed with magicians and they were both a disaster." This raises one more interesting question. If Uri is a genuine psychic, why should he be unwilling to perform for magicians? Is it just because the "vibes" are bad as any true psychic believer would tell us? For the true believers Uri performs miracles on schedule just as he does for the scientific investigators at Stanford Research Institute who also apparently accept his stories of extraterrestrial influence at face value. Perhaps along with being a highly successful showman he, too, is a magician and his psychic miracles are magic tricks after all. Over one hundred years ago, Ambrose Bierce in *The Devil's Dictionary* defined magic as "an art of converting superstition into coin." To this skeptical viewer of Uri's amazing feats, the definition seems to fit.

URI THROUGH THE CAMERA'S LENS CAP

Yale Joel

Former Life photographer Joel reports in this contribution on his adventures with Uri Geller, which involved a 17-millimeter lens and a roll of Tri-X film. The editors of Popular Photography, which originally published this article and the photographs illustrating it (see picture section in center of book), have challenged Geller to "genuinely produce photographs with a camera with the lens taped over," but to do so "in front of a committee" chosen by the photography magazine.

I might accept Uri's power to repair watches, bend table utensils, and sketch hidden chairs. After all, these are not my fields. But photography is another matter. Photography is my profession. And as a *Life* magazine staff photographer for some twenty-five years, I have obviously taken more pictures than Uri ever psyched out. I also teach a photography workshop in my own studio. And I know what a camera can do. I know you can't take a picture—any kind—with the lens cap sealing the lens. I have tried it several times myself, accidentally. It won't work.

Yet I must report that Uri attempted to make it work.

Here is what happened.

I was on assignment photographing Geller in New York in color and black-and-white, assisted by my son, Seth. After several hours of spoon-bending and other amazing feats, Uri may have become bored with performing the same old routine for my camera. He peered into my shoulder bag. "Do you have a spare camera for me to take pictures through the lens cap?" he asked matter-of-factly. Did I have a spare camera? That bag was literally spilling over with cameras and equipment of my profession. Two Nikon-Fs, with a fast 35-mm f/4 medium wide-angle; a 24-mm f/8 extreme wide-angle; and an 85-mm f/8 medium tele lens. Also a Pentax equipped with a 17-mm Takumar f/4 extreme wide-angle "fisheye"-type lens with a 160-degree field of view.

"How about the Pentax?" I suggested. (That lens has a real solid lens cap to protect the somewhat bubbly shape of the front element.)

"Okay, tape the lens cap for a secure seal, and load the camera with film," he answered. As I threaded the Tri-X onto the take-up spool, Uri admitted this would be a tough assignment for him. But he felt Seth and I were sympathetic guys who responded positively to his seemingly amazing powers, and, therefore, the chances of a successful lens-cap penetration were greatly enhanced.

Uri told Seth to choose a large picture book off the shelf and find a poster-like full-page picture. Seth settled on a striking close-up of an eagle. Uri's idea was for Seth to sit across the room staring at the eagle with maximum concentration, while Uri would try to transmit the eagle through the sealed lens cap onto the film.

So Seth concentrated on the eagle.

I concentrated my Nikon on Uri.

Uri raised the Pentax with cap swathed in black tape, lens practically touching his forehead. His tightened facial muscles and closed eyes testified to his intense effort. He proceeded to click off twelve or so exposures. (I had set the camera for $\frac{1}{60}$ sec at f/4, a perfect exposure for pictures in the given light, but without a lens cap.) Along about the fifth or sixth exposure, Uri intimated with a gurgle that he had established contact with the eagle. "I can feel it getting through," he cried, as he urged the image through the lens cap.

I was busy shooting him with my Nikon, and keeping pace with his exposures. If Uri got a decent image on that film, I could see the Kodak ad . . . "Now you, too, can shoot psychic pictures without a camera or lens—on Kodak film." I also wondered what mysterious ASA speed he was shooting at. Frankly speaking, I didn't take this lens-cap photography seriously. Yet, I found myself caught up in the crazy atmosphere that Uri generates when he performs. It's a kind of frenetic, exciting, childlike "out-of-the-world" nimbleness: bending spoons, fixing watches, busting keys, all presumably accomplished by an enthusiastic, engaging superpsychic.

Meanwhile, Uri set the Pentax on the coffee table, and we flew to the next experiment. Uri said he would attempt to receive telepathically a drawing which we were to make in an adjoining room. At this point, Seth and I went into the bedroom and closed the door. Seth decided to sketch a chair, and I photographed him at work. We placed the drawing in-

side two envelopes as Uri had instructed us and returned to the living room three to five minutes later, where Uri was waiting for us. Uri had no trouble in duplicating the chair which Seth had drawn. Then I reloaded my Nikon with color for more sealed lens-cap pictures. Uri once again held the same Pentax, still with the original roll in it, to his forehead while I shot him in color this time. When he had finally completed the roll, I immediately unloaded the Pentax and placed the film in my pocket to keep it apart from the others. There was no way Uri could have gotten to the film after that point.

By this time, I could see that Uri had shot his bolt. In fact, we were all slightly exhausted from the bizarre happenings. Enough was enough. After all, I had Uri's hot roll of Tri-X in my pocket, and I could hardly wait for Seth and me to get home to develop the psychic film in my workshop darkroom. So off we went.

Next scene is well after midnight at my photography workshop. Seth's faint incredulous voice echoing from downstairs, "Come on down, I see an exposure on the film!" "Is it sharp?" I yelled, grabbing my magnifying glass. Seth was holding the film as though it were radioactive. He was really shook up. So was I when I put the five-power glass to the one and only exposed frame. The image was well-enough exposed, a bit thin, clear and sharp, except for the empty blob in the center. Not a bad try for an amateur, I mused. Finally, the enormity of what had possibly occurred with the film hit me!

Do I have a transparent lens cap?

Had Uri Geller really accomplished the impossible?

Who the hell would have thought. . . .

This was a traumatic moment in the history of photography.

Here am I, a recognized professional photographer, years of experience with lens caps, and Uri one-upmanships me with my own lens cap, my very own Pentax, even my film. I couldn't believe it. And yet, there was an image on that crazy roll of Kodak film!

Seth hung the film to dry as I prepared the enlarger for an 11 × 14 print of that mysterious image. Meanwhile, filled with awe (it was well past midnight), I telephoned Uri to tell him the amazing news. Yasha Katz, his manager, answered the phone. I blurted out the earth-shaking news to Yasha, and asked for Uri. Yasha told me that Uri was asleep, and

he would not awaken him even for this bombshell event because he had a performance that evening at Town Hall, and besides, even a psychokinetic needs his sleep. I was stunned by Yasha's blasé acceptance of Uri's picture of the century, but knowing managers, I told him I would phone Uri at 10 A.M.

Back to the darkroom. By this time, the film was dry. I examined it critically under the light of the wide-open Focotar lens of my Focomat enlarger. No dust imbedded in the emulsion. Good. Clean negative. Fine. Carefully, I slipped the frame into the film holder. The image on the easel, slightly flat. Needs a #4 Polycontrast filter to bring out full contrast, I judged. Seth developed the test strip while we pondered the mysteries of photography. What's left to explore after this caper? Finally, a print emerged in the developer. Both of us were literally spent. Here it was about 2 A.M. I made an extra print for Uri, and we went to bed. Even photographers need rest.

Promptly at 10 A.M. I was on the phone with Uri. "Uri," I asked, "what were you thinking about when you did it?" His answer—"To tell you the truth, I was concentrating on a star in the sun." I told this pearl to Seth, who promptly remarked, "I guess he was thinking of himself!"

That day, at the Time-Life building, on the twenty-eighth floor (where most all the ex-*Life* photographers now rent office space) I showed Uri's picture to the dean of photo-journalism, the venerable Alfred Eisenstaedt. I asked his opinion of how the picture was taken. He took a quick look at it, and opined that the center blob looked like someone had held a lens cap in front of the lens. I then told him how Uri apparently shot it through the taped lens cap, and the picture was therefore the product of a supernatural phenomenon. Eisenstaedt's eyes blinked like a shutter. "Impossible!" he exploded.

I ran into Ralph Morse in the photographer's lounge. Now, Ralph is an expert photographer-technician type. He has taken every conceivable technical kind of picture of the astronauts for *Life*. What a fertile, imaginative photographic mind that Ralph has! The only possible picture he may have missed up on is shooting the astronauts through a lens cap. So I showed him the Uri picture. Ralph's reaction? "How did that lousy lens cap get in that picture?"

George Karas runs what's left of the old *Life* lab. By this time, my euphoria about Uri's supernatural photographic talent was fading fast. So I asked George, as I showed him the

picture, "Who the hell would take such an awful picture, George?" He glanced at it, and offered, "If whoever took that picture had held the lens cap further away from the lens, it might have been a decent photograph."

Could Uri, or somebody else in the room, have surreptitiously removed the lens cap while I was in the other room photographing Seth? That was the only time when Seth and I were out of sight. It was our feeling that he could have, and perhaps did. Assuming this is the case, Seth and myself and the editors of *Popular Photography* closely duplicated Uri's "through-the-lens-cap" pictures without resorting to supernatural means.

Uri, I'm sorry to say, the consensus of expert photographic opinion, including my own (after due reflection), is that your lens cap is showing. (I mean my lens cap.)

You really didn't reckon with the extreme depth of field of the extreme wide-angle 160-degree 17-mm Takumar f/4 "fisheye" lens.

Besides, what the hell happened to the eagle?

THE STANFORD EXPERIMENTS

Michael Ballantine

The most rigorous tests of Uri Geller's unusual ability were undertaken, during a five-week period in November-December 1972, at the Stanford Research Institute at Menlo Park, California. The institute, which is not affiliated with Stanford University, engages in research and in consulting and advisory services for commercial and industrial organizations throughout the world, as well as for government agencies. In 1973, according to the institute's annual report, 41% of its revenue came from work for the U.S. Department of Defense; 34% from non-defense-related government contracts in such areas as health, environment, and education; 23% from commercial research; and 2% from "other" research. The following report, based largely on material issued by the Stanford Institute, describes the scope of the Geller research, its procedures, and its tentative results.

The two men directly responsible for the experiments with Uri Geller at the Stanford Research Institute were Russell Targ and Dr. Harold E. Puthoff. The experiments were carried out in the institute's information science and engineering division, located on SRI's seventy-acre grounds in Menlo Park, California, a suburban community thirty-five miles south of San Francisco. The institute's headquarters, in the nature of a town-within-a-town, is supplemented by other offices and laboratories in the United States and in Europe and the Far East, from Tokyo to Milan, from Stockholm to Madrid.

Targ joined the SRI staff in 1972, when he was thirty-seven years old, as a specialist in laser and plasma research, as well as in parapsychological and parapsychical phenomena. He is a member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the American Physical Society, and the Optical Society of America. He did early work in the development of the laser, in the technology of ultrahigh vacuum and ion

pump design, and is the inventor of the tunable plasma oscillator at microwave frequencies. He has published more than twenty-five technical papers in the field of laser research, gas plasma technology, and optical communication. Mr. Targ graduated from Queens College, New York, in 1954 with a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and did two years of graduate work at Columbia University.

His colleague, Dr. Puthoff, joined SRI in 1972 at the age of thirty-five. He is a specialist in quantum physics, parapsychology, and parapsychical phenomena. At the institute his areas of main interest have been lasers, biofeedback, and biofield measurements. Puthoff holds a patent in the area of lasers and optical devices. He supervised research for doctoral candidates in electrical engineering and applied physics at Stanford University. His publications include a textbook on lasers, and he has published more than twenty-five papers in professional journals.

Before joining the Stanford Institute's staff, Dr. Puthoff was a research associate at the Microwave Laboratory and a lecturer in the department of engineering at Stanford University, where he received his Ph.D. in 1967. While there he developed a tunable Raman laser which produces high-power radiation throughout the infrared portion of the spectrum. Puthoff graduated with a master's degree from the University of Florida in 1960. Both Targ and Puthoff were born in Chicago.

The records of the Geller experiments undertaken by Targ and Puthoff in 1972 were originally presented in two ways: in a joint report to the Physics Colloquium of Columbia University in New York City and in the narration and visual content of a film, *Experiments with Uri Geller*. The report at Columbia University, made on March 9, 1973, stated that they had been engaged in experiments to "determine whether so-called psychic or psychoenergetic functioning can be observed under rigidly controlled laboratory conditions." Pending publication of a joint paper by the two experimenters, entitled "Information Transmission Under Conditions of Sensory Shielding," in the British scientific journal *Nature*, this report is the most authoritative account of the Geller experiments.

Puthoff and Targ told the Columbia University meeting: "We do not claim that either of these two men [Geller and another psychic, Ingo Swann] has psychic powers. We draw no sweeping conclusions as to the nature of these phenomena

or the need to call them psychical. We have observed certain phenomena with the subjects for which we have no scientific explanations. All we can say at this point is that further investigation is clearly warranted. Our work is only in the preliminary stage." The tests involved perception experiments, as well as the subjects' "alleged ability to interact with laboratory equipment."

Before showing a movie of Geller's performances, Targ explained that the experimenters were aware that many purported psychics have resorted to trickery to supplement claimed extraordinary capabilities. Therefore, he said, the researchers had set up the following ground rules:

- All experiments were under the design and control of the experimenters—not the subject.
- All experiments were designed to be as "cheat-proof" as possible. If, in retrospect, the experimenters concluded that the subject could have achieved positive results in a particular experiment through trickery, the experiment was discounted even though there was no evidence that cheating actually had taken place.
- Whenever feasible, the experiments were performed on a "double-blind" basis—that is, neither subject nor experimenter would know the "right" answer beforehand.
- On any given repetition of an experiment, the subject was allowed to "pass"—that is, choose not to answer without being considered to have "failed."

The experiments performed with Geller were in the following categories:

Dice Box—A double-blind experiment was performed in which a single die was placed in a closed metal box. The box was vigorously shaken by one of the experimenters and placed on a table. The orientation of the die inside the box was unknown to the experimenters at that time. The subject would then look at the box without touching it and call out which die face he believed was uppermost. He gave the correct answer each of the eight times the experiment was performed. The probability that this could have occurred by chance is approximately one in a million. The experiment was actually performed ten times, but on two occasions the subject said his perception was not clear and he was allowed to pass.

Hidden Object Experiment—Ten identical aluminum film cans were placed in a row. An outside assistant not associ-

ated with the research would place the cans in a random position and put the target object into one of them. He would then put caps on all the cans and leave the experimental area, notifying the experimenters that the experiment was ready. The experimenters, who were not aware which can contained the object, would then enter the room with the subject. The subject would either pass his hand over the row of cans or simply look at them. He would then call out the cans he felt confident were empty, and the experimenter would remove them from the row. When only two or three cans remained, the subject would announce which one he thought contained the target object. This task was performed twelve times, without error. The probability that this could have occurred by chance is about one in a trillion. On two occasions he declined to answer. One of the targets that apparently "stumped" him was a paper-wrapped metal ball bearing. The other was a sugar cube. He had no difficulty identifying water, steel ball bearings, and small magnets.

Picture Drawing Experiment—In this experiment simple pictures were drawn on 3 × 5 file cards at a time when Geller was not at SRI. The pictures were put into double-sealed envelopes by an outside assistant not associated with the experiment. To conduct the experiment, the experimenters selected an envelope from a safe, opened it to identify the picture, sealed it again, and went into the experiment room. The subject made seven almost exact reproductions of the target pictures, with no errors.

Two experiments to measure physical perturbation of laboratory apparatus were also carried out. One of these involved apparently exerting a force on a laboratory balance, and the other was the generation of an apparent magnetic field recorded by a magnetometer. Both of these experiments were performed several times, with results improving with repetition, showing apparent evidence of learning taking place.

Laboratory Balance—A precision laboratory balance measuring weights from one milligram to fifty grams was placed under a bell jar. This balance, made by Scientech Corp., Boulder, Colorado, generates an electrical output voltage in proportion to the force applied to it. The balance had a one-gram mass placed on its pan before it was covered with a bell jar. A chart recorder then continuously monitored the force applied to the pan of the balance. On several occasions the subject caused the balance to respond as though a force were applied to the pan. This was evidenced by a correspond-

ing displacement shown by the chart recorder. These displacements were ten to a hundred times larger than could be produced by striking the bell jar or the table or jumping on the floor.

Magnetometer Experiment—A Bell gaussmeter was used to determine if the subject could perturb an instrument sensitive to magnetic fields. The instrument was set to a full-scale sensitivity of 0.3 gauss. The subject would move his empty hands near the instrument in an effort to cause a deflection of the chart recorder monitoring the magnetometer output. In carefully filmed experiments, the subject was able to perturb the magnetometer without touching the measuring head of the instrument.

The documentary motion picture *Experiments with Uri Geller*, shown by Mr. Targ at the Columbia University meeting, has since been presented before a number of public audiences. Following is the complete text of the narration accompanying this film:

Throughout mankind's history there has existed a folklore that certain gifted individuals have been capable of producing physical effects by means of some agency generally referred to as psychic or psychoenergetic. Substantiation of such claims by accepted scientific methodology has been slow in coming, but recent laboratory experiments, especially in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, and more recently in our own laboratory, have indicated that sufficient evidence does exist to warrant serious scientific investigation. It would appear that experiments could be conducted with scientific rigor to uncover not just a catalog of interesting events, but rather a pattern of cause-effect relationships of the type that lend themselves to analysis and hypothesis in the forms with which we are familiar in the physical sciences. SRI considers this to be a valid area for scientific inquiry.

As scientists we consider it important to examine various models describing the operation of these effects so that we can determine the relationship between extraordinary human functioning and the physical and psychological laws we presently understand. It is not the purpose of our work at SRI to add to the literature another demonstration of the statistical appearance of these phenomena in the laboratory, but rather we seek to achieve an understanding more compatible with contemporary science, and more useful to mankind.

This film describes a five-week investigation conducted at

Stanford Research Institute with Uri Geller, a young Israeli. The film portrays experiments that we performed with him just as they were carried out. Each scene has been taken from film footage made during actual experiments; nothing has been restaged or specially created. It is not the purpose of the film to demonstrate any purported psychic abilities of Mr. Geller but rather to demonstrate the experiments done with him and his response to the experimental situation.

Meet Uri Geller. One of the types of demonstration that Geller likes to do is to sit with a group of people and attempt to send a number to various people in the room. With Uri Geller, this is Edgar Mitchell, who with his eyes covered is trying to pick up the number that Geller is sending. Also, we see Wilbur Franklin of Kent State, Harold Puthoff and Russell Targ of SRI, along with Don Scheuch, vice-president for research at SRI. Dr. Scheuch is trying to receive and then write down the number that Geller is sending. In this case, Scheuch is successful in picking up the number.

Of course, this is not a laboratory experiment, since the activity is totally under Geller's control. It was set as an absolute that experiments, to be worthy, had to be under Institute control. Here we show a series of experiments where, previously, fifteen drawings were placed in double-sealed envelopes in a safe for which none of the experimenters had the combination. It took signatures of both the key researchers to remove a drawing at random from the collection in the safe. One of the researchers would then, in this case Targ, look at the drawing outside the experimental room, reseal the envelope, enter the experimental room, whence Geller's task was to draw what he perceived in the envelope.

This is Geller's representation of what he believed was sealed in the envelope. At no time during these experiments did he have any advance knowledge of the target material. As far as he is concerned, these could be drawings of any kind, whether a design or a representational picture. In fact, this is the most off-target of the drawings that he did.

Here—the experiment is repeated, this time with Puthoff as a sender, just to check that the identity of the sender is of no significance in the experiment. Additionally, all experiments are tape-recorded to guard against any verbal cueing on the part of the experimenters.

This is the drawing that Geller has made to correspond to the target object. The rectangle on the clipboard represents the TV screen in Geller's mind on which he claims to project

the image he is trying to draw. As you can see, he is quite elated about getting the right answer. Before he does this, it is usually preceded by several minutes of "I can't do this—it's impossible. I want to stop. Let's wait."

Here in the laboratory notebook on the left side of the page you see the original targets, and, on the right, Geller's responses. This is not a collection of correct answers out of a long series of correct and incorrect responses. This is actually the total run of pictures in the series. It is interesting that there is often a mirror symmetry.

In this particular case, neither Geller nor the experimenter had knowledge of what the target was. This is a double-blind experiment. Here, on the upper left of the page, is a picture that was brought to SRI by an outside consultant and sealed in his own envelope; Geller's representation is at the lower right. This was by far the most complicated target picture encountered during these experiments.

This is a typical target carrier used in the experiments. The inner envelope is opaque in its own right; the outer one is a heavy manila envelope. A floodlight behind these envelopes would not permit the interior to be seen. This type of communication experiment was repeated many other times during the five weeks, with Geller choosing to pass about 20 percent of the time.

It is interesting that when he drew his response in this case he didn't recognize the object as eyeglasses—it seemed to him to be an abstract drawing. In general, these drawing experiments were not double-blind, as one of the experimenters knows what was in the picture in the envelope.

Here, however, we present a case of a double-blind experiment, in which someone not associated with the project comes into the experimental room, places an object into a can chosen at random from ten aluminum cans. Numbered tops are also put on at random. The randomizer then leaves the area, and the experimenters enter the experimental area with Geller, with neither the experimenters nor Geller knowing which can contains the object. In this particular case, the target is a three-quarter-inch steel ball which now resides in one of the ten cans in the box.

The ten cans having been arranged neatly, Geller's task now is to determine which of these ten cans holds the steel ball bearing. He is not permitted to touch the cans or the table. The experimental protocol is for experimenter to remove the cans one at a time in response to Geller's instructions as

he points or calls out a can-top number. Eventually, there will be just two or three cans left, and Geller will then indicate both by gesture and in writing which one of the remaining cans contains the target. It is only at the end of the experiment that Geller touches the can that he believes contains the object. The protocol included the possibility that he might touch a can accidentally. In such case, that would have counted as a miss. Here he writes the selected number.

This, you might say, is a kind of ten-can Russian roulette. He has made his choice. The steel ball is found.

In later repetitions of this same experiment, he was finally weaned away from the dousing technique where he runs his hands over the cans. He got to the point where he could walk into a room, see the cans lined up on a blackboard sill, and just pick up the one that contained the target. We have no hypothesis at this point as to whether this is a heightened sensitivity of some normal sense, or whether it is some paranormal sense.

Now we are repeating the experiment with a different target object. One of these cans is filled with room-temperature water. Again, the can was filled by an outside person who randomized the position of the cans. Then the box that contained the cans was rotated by a second person so that there is no one person in the room who knows the location of the target can. As you can see here, there is less hand motion by Geller over the can. The protocol as before involves his calling out the number or pointing, and one of the experimenters removing the can at Geller's call. At this point in time he is asked to make his choice both by writing the number down as well as making a selection by hand. You will note that he is making a final test to be sure of his selection. Tentatively, he reaches, and having made the selection, now looks to see whether water is inside the can. He now waters the plant with the contents of the can. You will note, he is very pleased with finding this target because he had doubts at the outset whether he would be able to locate a can filled with water.

We repeated this type of experiment fourteen times; five times involved a target being a small permanent magnet, five times also involved a steel ball bearing as the target. Twice the target was water. Two additional trials were made—one with a paper-wrapped ball bearing, and one with a sugar cube. The latter two targets were not located. Geller felt that he didn't have adequate confidence as to where they were,

and he declined to guess, and passed. On the other twelve targets—the ball bearing, the magnet, and the water—he did make a guess as to the target location and was correct in every instance. In subsequent work with another subject, we found the subject experiencing a highly significant difference in his ability to find the steel ball bearing as compared with finding other targets.

The whole array of this run had an *a priori* probability of one part in 10^{12} , or statistics of a trillion to one. Here is another double-blind experiment in which a die is placed in a metal file box (both box and die being provided by SRI). The box is shaken up with neither the experimenter nor Geller knowing where the die is or which face is up. This is a live experiment that you see—in this case, Geller guessed that a four was showing, but first he passed, because he was not confident. You will note he was correct, and he was quite pleased to have guessed correctly, but this particular test does not enter into our statistics.

The previous runs of ten-can roulette gave a result whose probability due to chance alone is one part in 10^{12} . We decided at the outset to carry out the die-in-box experiment until we got to a million-to-one odds, at which time the experiment was terminated. Out of ten tries in which he passed twice and guessed eight times, the eight guesses were correct, and that gave us a probability of about one in a million.

We would point out again, there were no errors in the times he made a guess.

This is the first of two experiments in psychokinesis. Here a one-gram weight is being placed on an electrical scale. It is then covered by an aluminum can and by a glass cylinder to eliminate deflection due to air currents. The first part of our protocol involves tapping the bell jar; next tapping the table; then kicking the table; and finally jumping on the floor, with a record made of what these artifacts looked like so that they could be distinguished from signals. In tests following this experimental run, a magnet was brought near the apparatus, static electricity was discharged against parts of the apparatus, and controlled runs of day-long operation were obtained. In no case were artifacts obtained which in any way resembled the signals produced by Geller, nor could anyone else duplicate the effect.

The bottom four signals show the type of artifact that results from tapping or kicking the table. They are small AC signals with a time constant characteristic of the apparatus.

The upper two traces, on the other hand, are apparently due to Geller's efforts. They are single-sided signals, one corresponding to a 1500-mg weight decrease, the other corresponding to an 800-mg weight increase. Those types of single-sided signals were never observed as artifacts with any other stimuli.

We have no ready hypothesis on how these signals might have been produced. The width of the signals produced by Geller was about 200 milliseconds. The chart ran at one millimeter per second. It was of interest to note that Geller's performance improved over the period of experimentation, starting with 50-mg deflections and arriving at 1500 mg.

In this experiment Geller is attempting to influence the magnetometer either directly or by generating a magnetic field. The full-scale sensitivity of the instrument is 0.3 of a gauss, and, as is clear in this instance, his hands are open. Throughout the experiment, his hands do not come into contact with the instrument. The magnetometer itself was used as a probe to go over his hands and person to make sure that there were no magnetic objects in his hands or on him. Here you see substantial fluctuations both to the left and to the right—almost full-scale, in certain cases—on the magnetometer. These fluctuations are sometimes uncorrelated with the motions of his hands.

This is the chart recording of the magnetometer fluctuations produced by Geller. We see here full-scale fluctuations of 0.3 of a gauss, which is a significant magnetic field, comparable to the earth's field. After each of these experiments we would in general discuss the results with Geller, show him the strip chart recording, and talk about the significance of his experiments. He was very interested in the experiments we were doing because he had never taken part in laboratory experiments of this kind before.

The following is an experiment which in retrospect we consider unsatisfactory, as it didn't meet our protocol standards. Here the task is to deflect the compass needle, which, indeed, Geller does. Before and after the experiment, he was gone over with a magnetometer probe and his hands were photographed from above and below during and following the experiment so that we are sure there were no obvious pieces of metal or magnets in his possession. However, according to our protocol, if we could in any way debunk the experiment and produce the effects by any other means, then that experiment was considered null and void even if there

were no indications that anything untoward happened. In this case, we found later that these types of deflections could be produced by a small piece of metal, so small in fact that they could not be detected by the magnetometer. Therefore, even though we had no evidence of this, we still considered the experiment inconclusive and an unsatisfactory type of experiment altogether.

A look at the lower mirror affords one the best view. It can be seen that his hands are completely exposed to photography from above and below with different cameras.

These are a series of unconfirmed physical effects that need further investigation. One of Geller's main attributes that had been reported to us was that he was able to bend metal from a distance without touching it. In the laboratory we did not find him able to do so. In a more relaxed protocol, he was permitted to touch the metal, in which case, as you will see in the film, the metal is indeed bent. However, it becomes clear in watching this demonstration on film that simple photo interpretation is insufficient to determine whether the metal is bent by normal or paranormal means.

In the laboratory, these spoon-bending experiments were continuously filmed and videotaped. It is evident that sometime during the photographic period this stainless-steel spoon became bent. However, unlike the things we have heard about Geller, it was always necessary for him in the experimental situation to have physical contact with the spoon or for that matter any other object that he bends. It is not clear whether the spoon is being bent because he has extraordinarily strong fingers and good control of micro-manipulatory movements or whether, in fact, the spoon "turns to plastic" in his hands, as he claims.

Here are a number of the spoons that were bent by one means or another during the course of our experiments. There is no doubt that the spoons were bent. The only doubt remains as to the manner of their bending. Similarly, we have rings that were bent by Mr. Geller. The rings that were bent are shown here. The copper ring at the left and the brass ring at the right were manufactured at SRI and measured to require 150 pounds force to bend them. These rings were in Geller's hand at the time they were bent.

This brief recap is to remind you of those experiments we feel were best controlled. They are the three perception experiments, including the hidden drawings in envelopes, the double-blind hidden-object experiments, and the double-blind

die-in-the-box experiment. The two psychokinetic experiments—the depression or raising of a weight on an electrical scale and the deflection of the magnetometer—also do not seem to admit of any ready counterhypothesis. What we've demonstrated here are the experiments that we performed in the laboratory and should not be interpreted as proof of psychic functioning. Indeed, a film never proves anything. Rather, this film gives us the opportunity to share with the viewer observations of phenomena that in our estimation clearly deserve further study.

INFORMATION TRANSMISSION UNDER CONDITIONS OF SENSORY SHIELDING

Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff

The findings of Mr. Targ and Dr. Puthoff, discussed in the preceding contribution to this volume, were published in the prestigious British periodical, Nature, on October 18, 1974. The editors of the magazine said in a statement concerning their own position on the Targ-Puthoff paper that it was "bound to create something of a stir in the scientific community," because the idea that "some people can read thoughts or see things, remotely" was "bound to be greeted with a preconditioned reaction amongst many scientists." To some, the editors said, this "simply confirms what they have always known or believed," while to others "it is beyond the laws of science and therefore necessarily unacceptable."

The Nature editors summarized the opinions they had received from "three independent referees," of whom one had opposed publication of the paper, the second "did not feel strongly either way," and the third had been "guardedly" in favor of publication. The editors themselves decided to publish it because "despite its shortcomings, the paper is presented as a scientific document by two qualified scientists writing from a major research establishment," who had "clearly attempted to investigate under laboratory conditions" and there had been "considerable advance publicity." As to Nature itself, while being respectable, it could not afford "to live on respectability alone," because "the unusual must now and then be allowed a toehold in literature, sometimes to flourish, more often to be forgotten in a year or two." The editors added that publication in a scientific journal is "not a process of receiving a seal of approval from the establishment; rather it is the serving of notice on the community that there is something worthy of their attention and scrutiny."

We present results of experiments suggesting the existence of one or more perceptual modalities through which individuals obtain information about their environment, although this information is not presented to any known sense. The literature¹⁻³ and our observations lead us to conclude that such abilities can be studied under laboratory conditions.

We have investigated the ability of certain people to describe graphical material or remote scenes shielded against ordinary perception. In addition, we performed pilot studies to determine if electroencephalographic (EEG) recordings might indicate perception of remote happenings even in the absence of correct overt responses.

We concentrated on what we consider to be our primary responsibility—to resolve under conditions as unambiguous as possible the basic issue of whether a certain class of paranormal perception phenomena exists. So we conducted our experiments with sufficient control, utilizing visual, acoustic, and electrical shielding, to ensure that all conventional paths of sensory input were blocked. At all times we took measures to prevent sensory leakage and to prevent deception, whether intentional or unintentional.

Our goal is not just to catalog interesting events, but to uncover patterns of cause-effect relationships that lend themselves to analysis and hypothesis in the forms with which we are familiar in scientific study. The results presented here constitute a first step toward that goal; we have established under known conditions a data base from which departures as a function of physical and psychological variables can be studied in future work.

Remote Perception of Graphic Material

First, we conducted experiments with Mr. Uri Geller in which we examined his ability, while located in an electrically shielded room, to reproduce target pictures drawn by experimenters located at remote locations. Second, we conducted double-blind experiments with Mr. Pat Price, in which we measured his ability to describe remote outdoor scenes many miles from his physical location. Finally, we conducted preliminary tests using EEGs, in which subjects were asked to perceive whether a remote light was flashing, and to determine whether a subject could perceive the presence of the light, even if only at a noncognitive level of awareness.

In preliminary testing Geller apparently demonstrated an

ability to reproduce simple pictures (line drawings) which had been drawn and placed in opaque sealed envelopes which he was not permitted to handle. But since each of the targets was known to at least one experimenter in the room with Geller, it was not possible on the basis of the preliminary testing to discriminate between Geller's direct perception of envelope contents and perception through some mechanism involving the experimenter, whether paranormal or subliminal.

So we examined the phenomenon under conditions designed to eliminate all conventional information channels, overt or subliminal. Geller was separated from both the target material and anyone knowledgeable of the material, as in the experiments of ref. 4.

In the first part of the study a series of 13 separate drawing experiments were carried out over 7 days. No experiments are deleted from the results presented here.

At the beginning of the experiment either Geller or the experimenters entered a shielded room so that from that time forward Geller was at all times visually, acoustically and electrically shielded from personnel and material at the target location. Only following Geller's isolation from the experimenters was a target chosen and drawn, a procedure designed to eliminate preexperiment cueing. Furthermore, to eliminate the possibility of preexperiment target forcing, Geller was kept ignorant as to the identity of the person selecting the target and as to the method of target selection. This was accomplished by the use of three different techniques: (1) pseudo-random technique of opening a dictionary arbitrarily and choosing the first word that could be drawn (Experiments 1-4); (2) targets, blind to experimenters and subject, prepared independently by SRI scientists outside the experimental group (following Geller's isolation) and provided to the experimenters during the course of the experiment (Experiments 5-7, 11-13); and (3) arbitrary selection from a target pool decided upon in advance of daily experimentation and designed to provide data concerning information content for use in testing specific hypotheses (Experiments 8-10). Geller's task was to reproduce with pen on paper the line drawing generated at the target location. Following a period of effort ranging from a few minutes to half an hour, Geller either passed (when he did not feel confident) or indicated he was ready to submit a drawing to the experimenters, in which case the drawing was collected before Geller was permitted to see the target.

To prevent sensory cueing of the target information, Experiments 1 through 10 were carried out using a shielded room in SRI's facility for EEG research. The acoustic and visual isolation is provided by a double-walled steel room, locked by means of an inner and outer door, each of which is secured with a refrigerator-type locking mechanism. Following target selection when Geller was inside the room, a one-way audio monitor, operating only from the inside to the outside, was activated to monitor Geller during his efforts. The target picture was never discussed by the experimenters after the picture was drawn and brought near the shielded room. In our detailed examination of the shielded room and the protocol used in these experiments, no sensory leakage has been found.

The conditions and results for the 10 experiments carried out in the shielded room are displayed in Table 1 and Fig. 1. All experiments, except 4 and 5, were conducted with Geller inside the shielded room. In Experiments 4 and 5, the procedure was reversed. For those experiments in which Geller was inside the shielded room, the target location was in an adjacent room at a distance of about 4 m, except for Experiments 3 and 8, in which the target locations were, respectively, an office at a distance of 475 m and a room at a distance of about 7 m.

A response was obtained in all experiments except Numbers 5-7. In Experiment 5, the person-to-person link was eliminated by arranging for a scientist outside the usual experimental group to draw a picture, lock it in the shielded room before Geller's arrival at SRI, and leave the area. Geller was then led by the experimenters to the shielded room and asked to draw the picture located inside the room. He said that he got no clear impression and therefore did not submit a drawing. The elimination of the person-to-person link was examined further in the second series of experiments with this subject.

Experiments 6 and 7 were carried out while we attempted to record Geller's EEG during his efforts to perceive the target pictures. The target pictures were, respectively, a tree and an envelope. He found it difficult to hold adequately still for good EEG records, said that he experienced difficulty in get-

Table 1 Remote perception of graphic material

Experiment	Date (month, day, year)	Geller Location	Target Location	Target	Figure
1	8/4/73	Shielded room 1*	Adjacent room (4.1 m)†	Firecracker	1a
2	8/4/73	Shielded room 1	Adjacent room (4.1 m)	Grapes	1b
3	8/5/73	Shielded room 1	Office (475 m)	Devil	1c
4	8/5/73	Room adjacent to shielded room 1	Shielded room 1 (3.2 m)	Solar system	1d
5	8/6/73	Room adjacent to shielded room 1	Shielded room 1 (3.2 m)	Rabbit	No drawing
6	8/7/73	Shielded room 1	Adjacent room (4.1 m)	Tree	No drawing
7	8/7/73	Shielded room 1	Adjacent room (4.1 m)	Envelope	No drawing
8	8/7/73	Shielded room 1	Adjacent room (4.1 m)	Camel	1e
9	8/8/73	Shielded room 1	Remote room (6.75 m)	Bridge	1f
10	8/8/73	Shielded room 1	Adjacent room (4.1 m)	Seagull	1g
11	8/9/73	Shielded room 2‡	Computer (54 m)	Kite (computer CRT)	2a
12	8/10/73	Shielded room 2	Computer (54 m)	Church (computer memory)	2b
13	8/10/73	Shielded room 2	Computer (54 m)	Arrow through heart (computer CRT, zero intensity)	2c

*EEG Facility shielded room (see text).

†Perceiver-target distances measured in meters.

‡SRI Radio Systems Laboratory shielded room (see text).

ting impressions of the targets and again submitted no drawings.

Experiments 11 through 13 were carried out in SRI's Engineering Building, to make use of the computer facilities

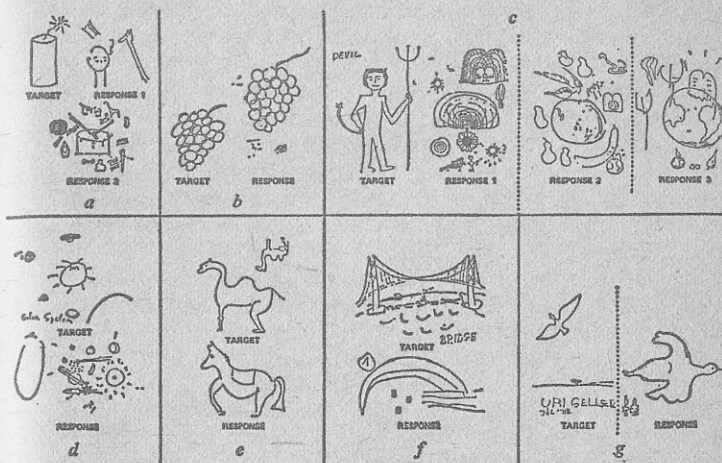


Fig. 1 Target pictures and responses drawn by Uri Geller under shielded conditions.

available there. For these experimenters, Geller was secured in a double-walled, copper-screen Faraday cage 54 m down the hall and around the corner from the computer room. The Faraday cage provides 120 dB attenuation for plane wave radio frequency radiation over a range of 15 kHz to 1 GHz. For magnetic fields the attenuation is 68 dB at 15 kHz and decreases to 3 dB at 60 Hz. Following Geller's isolation, the targets for these experiments were chosen by computer laboratory personnel not otherwise associated with either the experiment or Geller, and the experimenters and subject were kept blind as to the contents of the target pool.

For Experiment 11, a picture of a kite was drawn on the face of a cathode ray tube display screen, driven by the computer's graphics program. For Experiment 12, a picture of a church was drawn and stored in the memory of the computer. In Experiment 13, the target drawing, an arrow through a heart (Fig 2c), was drawn on the face of the

cathode ray tube and then the display intensity was turned off so that no picture was visible.

To obtain an independent evaluation of the correlation between target and response data, the experimenters submitted the data for judging on a "blind" basis by two SRI scientists who were not otherwise associated with the research. For the 10 cases in which Geller provided a response, the judges were asked to match the response data with the corresponding target data (without replacement.) In those cases in which Geller made more than one drawing as his response to the target, all the drawings were combined as a set for judging. The two judges each matched the target data to the response data with no error. For either judge such a correspondence has an *a priori* probability, under the null hypothesis of no information channel, of $P = (10!)^{-1} = 3 \times 10^{-7}$.

A second series of experiments was carried out to determine whether direct perception of envelope contents was possible without some person knowing of the target picture.

One hundred target pictures of everyday objects were drawn by an SRI artist and sealed by other SRI personnel in double envelopes containing black cardboard. The hundred targets were divided randomly into groups of 20 for use in each of the three days' experiments.

On each of the three days of these experiments, Geller passed. That is, he declined to associate any envelope with a drawing that he made, expressing dissatisfaction with the existence of such a large target pool. On each day he made approximately 12 recognizable drawings, which he felt were associated with the entire target pool of 100. On each of the three days, two of his drawings could reasonably be associated with two of the 20 daily targets. On the third day, two of his drawings were very close replications of two of that day's target pictures. The drawings resulting from this experiment do not depart significantly from what would be expected by chance.

In a simpler experiment Geller was successful in obtaining information under conditions in which no persons were knowledgeable of the target. A double-blind experiment was performed in which a single $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch die was placed in a $3 \times 4 \times 5$ -inch steel box. The box was then vigorously shaken by one of the experimenters and placed on the table, a technique found in control runs to produce a distribution

of die faces differing nonsignificantly from chance. The orientation of the die within the box was unknown to the experimenters at that time. Geller would then write down which die face was uppermost. The target pool was known, but the targets were individually prepared in a manner blind to all persons involved in the experiment. This experiment was performed ten times, with Geller passing twice and giving a response eight times. In the eight times in which he gave a response, he was correct each time. The distribution of responses consisted of three 2s, one 4, two 5s, and two 6s. The probability of this occurring by chance is approximately one in 10^6 .

In certain situations significant information transmission can take place under shielded conditions. Factors which appear to be important, and therefore candidates for future investigation, include whether the subject knows the set of targets in the target pool, the actual number of targets in the target pool at any given time, and whether the target is known by any of the experimenters.

It has been widely reported that Geller has demonstrated the ability to bend metal by paranormal means. Although metal bending by Geller has been observed in our laboratory, we have not been able to combine such observations with adequately controlled experiments to obtain data sufficient to support the paranormal hypothesis.

Remote Viewing of Natural Targets

A study by Osis⁵ led us to determine whether a subject could describe randomly chosen geographical sites located several miles from the subject's position and demarcated by some appropriate means (remote viewing). This experiment carried out with Price, a former California police commissioner and city councilman, consisted of a series of double-blind, demonstration-of-ability tests involving local targets in the San Francisco Bay area which could be documented by several independent judges. We planned the experiment considering that natural geographical places or man-made sites that have existed for a long time are more potent targets for paranormal perception experiments than are artificial targets prepared in the laboratory. This is based on subject opinions that the use of artificial targets involves a "trivialization of the ability" as compared with natural preexisting targets.

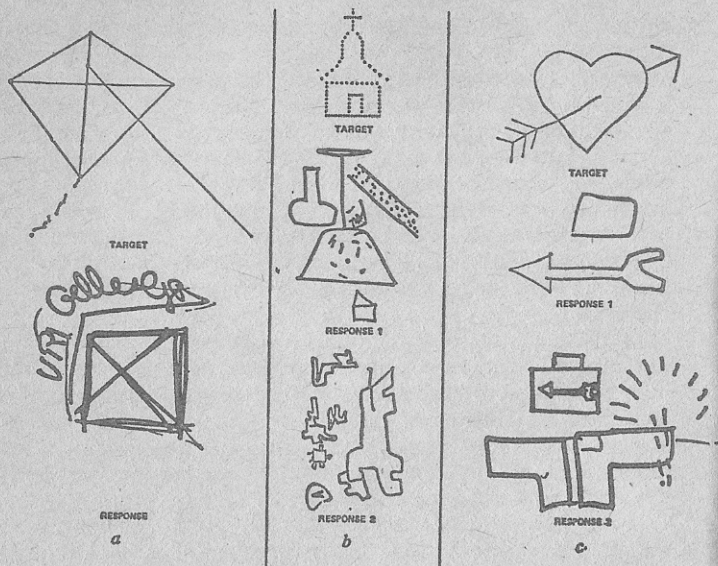
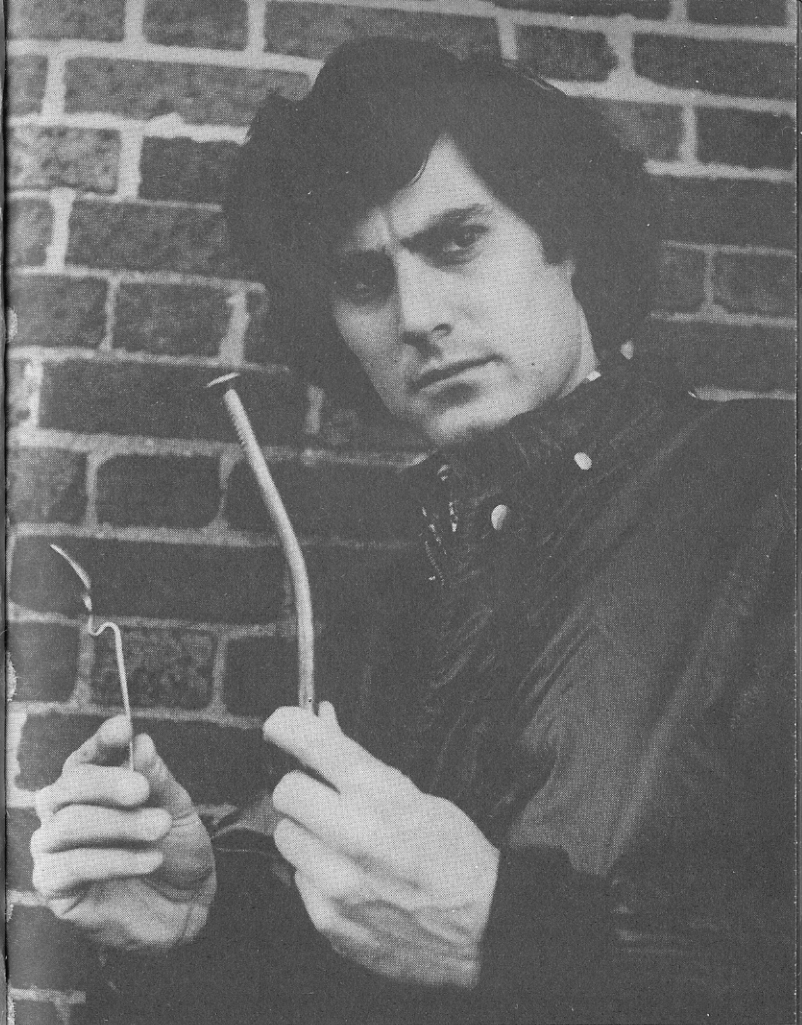


Fig. 2 Computer drawings and responses drawn by Uri Geller. *a*, Computer drawing stored on video display; *b*, computer drawing stored in computer memory only; *c*, computer drawing stored on video display with zero intensity.

In each of nine experiments involving Price as subject and SRI experimenters as a target demarcation team, a remote location was chosen in a double-blind protocol. Price, who remained at SRI, was asked to describe this remote location, as well as whatever activities might be going on there.

Several descriptions yielded significantly correct data pertaining to and descriptive of the target location.

In the experiments a set of twelve target locations clearly differentiated from each other and within thirty minutes' driving time from SRI had been chosen from a target-rich environment (more than 100 targets of the type used in the experimental series) prior to the experimental series by an individual in SRI management, the director of the Information Science and Engineering Division, not otherwise associated with the experiment. Both the experimenters and the subject were kept blind as to the contents of the target pool, which were used without replacement.



Uri Geller, displaying two psychically bent objects: a spoon that has been double bent into an S-shape, and a nail of unusual thickness and length.
BRYCE BOND; DYSART-BOND PRODUCTIONS



On an airplane flight from Zurich to Vienna, Geller psychically bent the metal headline prepared by the Austrian newspaper, Kurier, announcing Uri's bending feats. As noted in the report on his "Roaring Success in Zurich, Failure in Vienna," Uri bent the second headline without touching it (see full page photo).

PAUL UCCUSIC



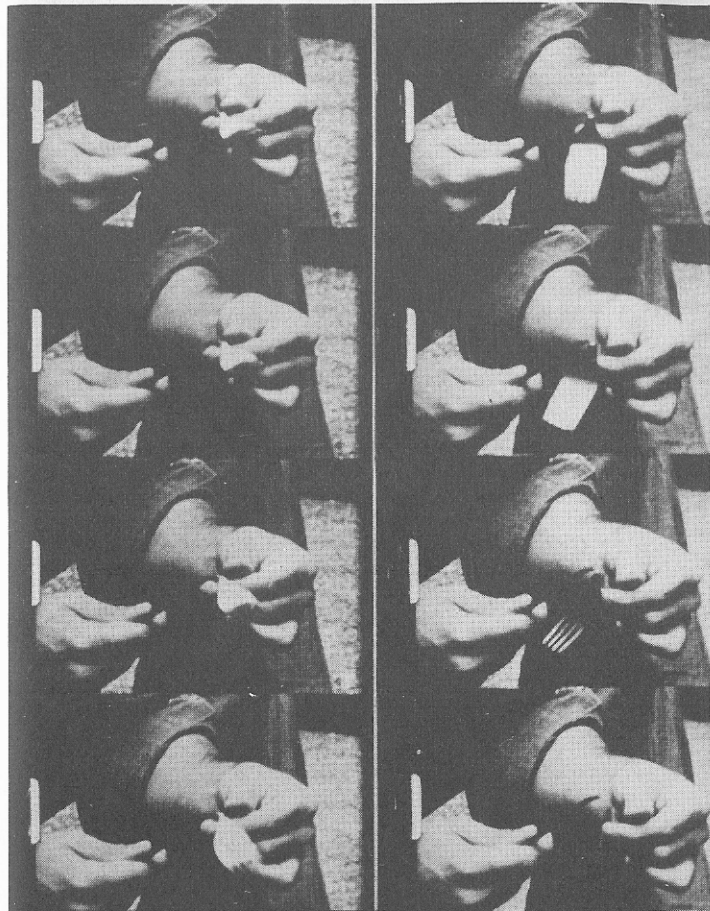


Uri displays the newspaper headline he bent on the Vienna-bound plane (see photos on preceding pages) to the delighted surprise of Austrian Airlines stewardesses Barbara Coreth (center) and Christe Kunicky (right). His manager, Werner Schmid, looks on from a back seat.

PAUL UCCUSIC

Geller held a press conference in Vienna that was marred by his inability to live up to expectations. A leather-jacketed, glum Uri faces skeptical reporters. Also present (on right, with legs crossed) is Professor Hellmuth Hofmann, Chairman of the Austrian Society for Parapsychology.

GÉRARD SOKOL



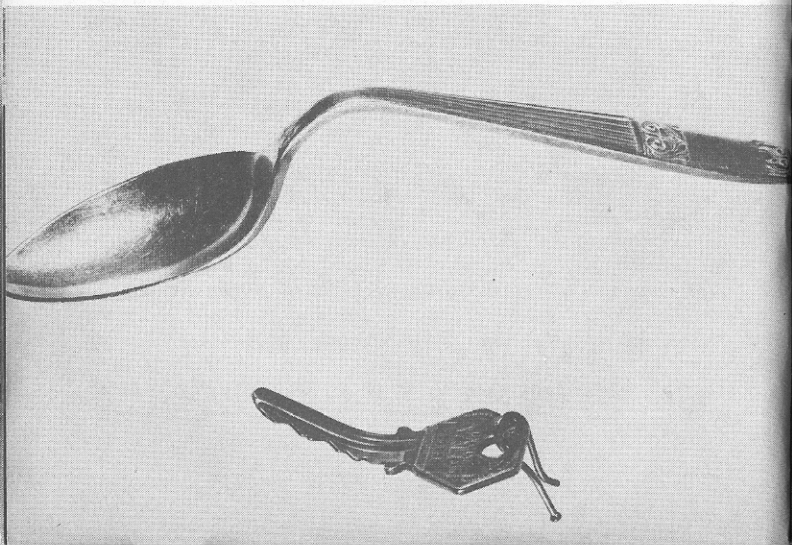
This sequence of films shows Uri Geller breaking a dinner fork in two, using mind power. The film was taken by James Bolen, publisher of *Psychic* magazine of San Francisco, with a Super 8 motion picture film. The fork, which Bolen personally verified as being intact before the demonstration, gradually becomes pliable at its midsection, as Geller rolls his thumb and index finger over it. The fork finally breaks apart, the prong section clinging slightly to the handle just before it drops away, suggesting, according to Bolen, "that the stainless steel momentarily becomes plasticlike."

PSYCHIC MAGAZINE



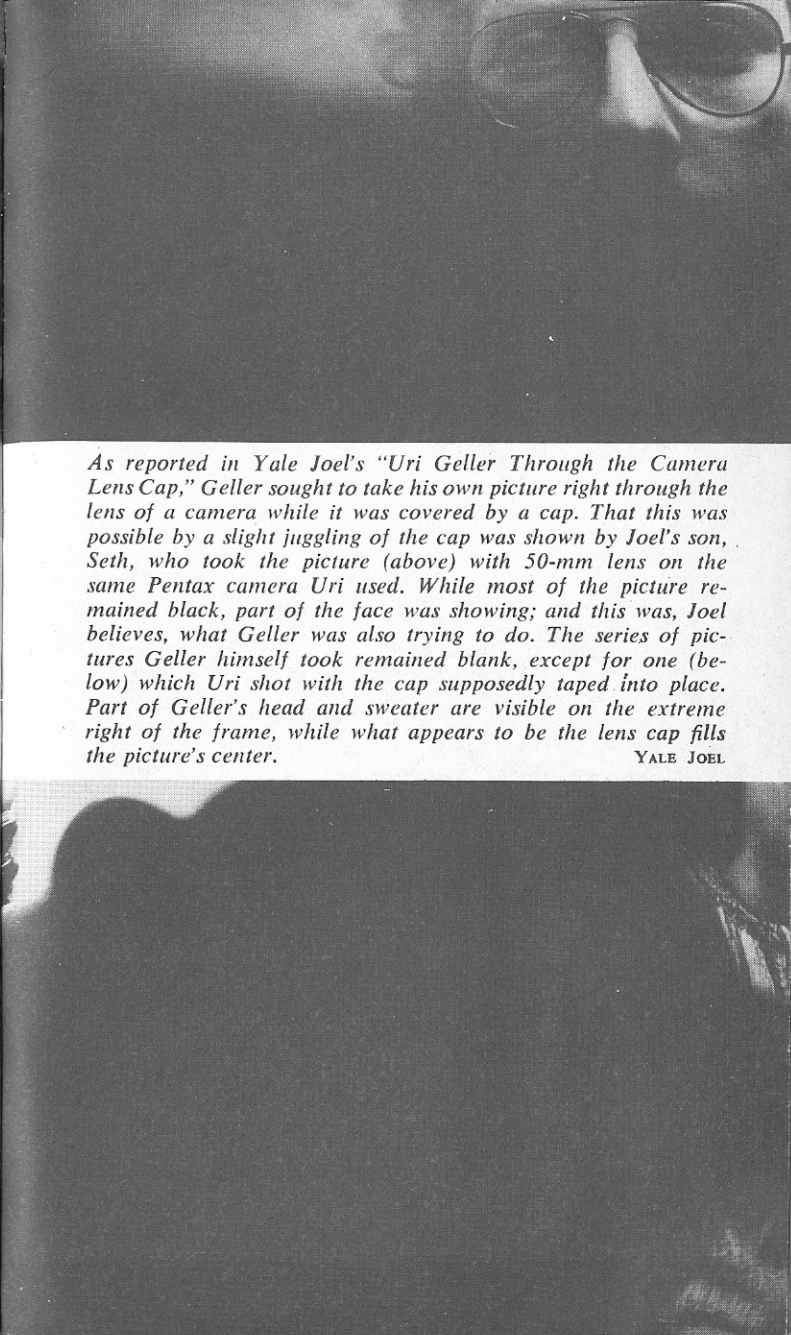
Dr. Andrija Puharich, who initially investigated Uri Geller in Israel and then arranged for his first visit to the United States, is shown with Geller in this double portrait. The picture was taken by Geller's long-time friend, Shipi Strang, who accompanies him on his international travels. Below are two bent pieces of metal that have become almost symbolic of Uri Geller's feats and performances: a bent spoon, and a bent car key. This picture was taken in London on December 9, 1974, during experiments in the presence of Maurice Barbanell, editor of the weekly *Psychic News*.

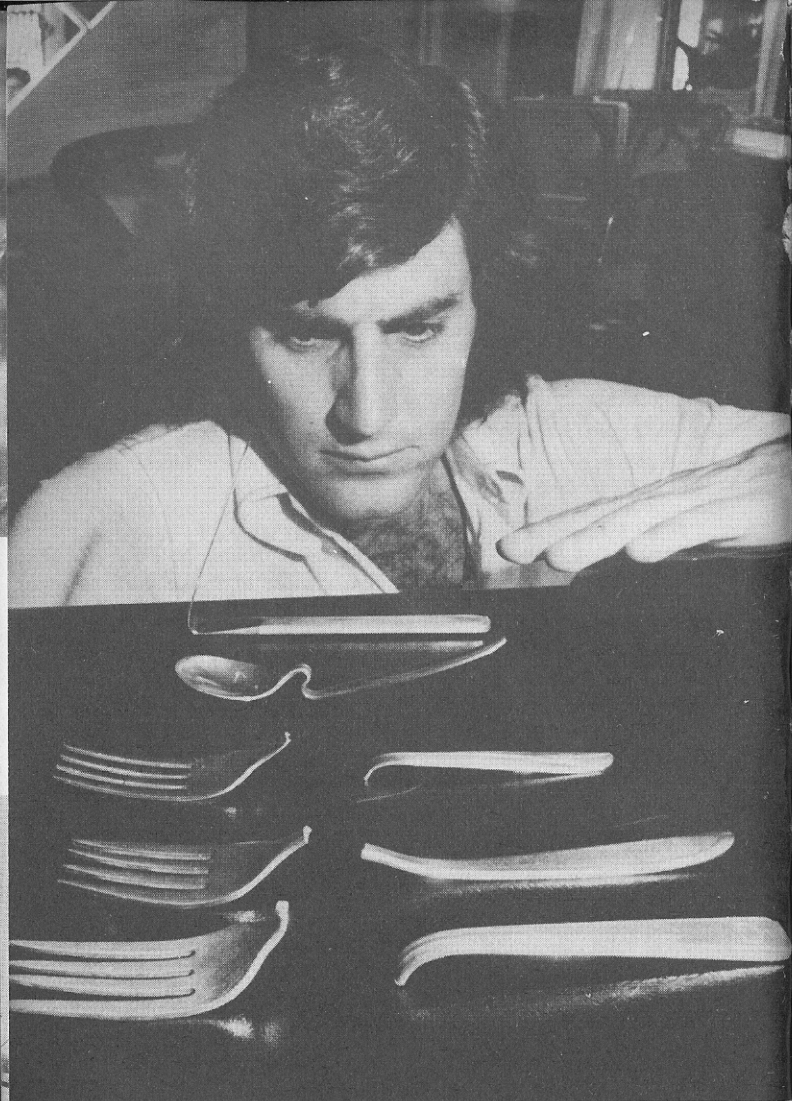
SHIPI STRANG



As reported in Yale Joel's "Uri Geller Through the Camera Lens Cap," Geller sought to take his own picture right through the lens of a camera while it was covered by a cap. That this was possible by a slight juggling of the cap was shown by Joel's son, Seth, who took the picture (above) with 50-mm lens on the same Pentax camera Uri used. While most of the picture remained black, part of the face was showing; and this was, Joel believes, what Geller was also trying to do. The series of pictures Geller himself took remained blank, except for one (below) which Uri shot with the cap supposedly taped into place. Part of Geller's head and sweater are visible on the extreme right of the frame, while what appears to be the lens cap fills the picture's center.

YALE JOEL





Uri Geller faces his handiwork: one bent fork, one bent spoon, and three broken forks. This picture was taken at Geller's New York apartment.

N.Y. DAILY NEWS PHOTO

An experimenter was closeted with Price at SRI to wait thirty minutes to begin the narrative description of the remote location. The SRI locations from which the subject viewed the remote locations consisted of an outdoor park (Experiments 1, 2), the double-walled copper-screen Faraday cage discussed earlier (Experiments 3, 4, and 6-9), and an office (Experiment 5). A second experimenter would then obtain a target location from the division director from a set of traveling orders previously prepared and randomized by the director and kept under his control. The target demarcation team (two to four SRI experimenters) then proceeded directly to the target by automobile without communicating with the subject or experimenter remaining behind. Since the experimenter remaining with the subject at SRI was in ignorance both as to the particular target and as to the target pool, he was free to question Price to clarify his descriptions. The demarcation team then remained at the target site for 30 minutes, after the thirty minutes allotted for travel. During the observation period, the remote-viewing subject would describe his impressions of the target site into a tape recorder. A comparison was then made when the demarcation team returned.

Price's ability to describe correctly—buildings, docks, roads, gardens and so on, including structural materials, color, ambience and activity, sometimes in great detail, indicated the functioning of a remote perceptual ability. But the descriptions contained inaccuracies as well as correct statements. To obtain a numerical evaluation of the accuracy of the remote viewing experiment, the experimental results were subjected to independent judging on a blind basis by five SRI scientists who were not otherwise associated with the research. The judges were asked to match the nine locations, which they independently visited, against the typed manuscripts of the tape-recorded narratives of the remote viewer. The transcripts were unlabeled and presented in random order. The judges were asked to find a narrative which they would consider the best match for each of the places they visited. A given narrative could be assigned to more than one target location. A correct match requires that the transcript of a given date be associated with the target of

that date. Table 2 shows the distribution of the judges' choices.

Among all possible analyses, the most conservative is a permutation analysis of the plurality vote of the judges' selections assuming assignment without replacement, an approach independent of the number of judges. By plurality vote, six of the nine descriptions and locations were correctly matched. Under the null hypothesis (no remote viewing and a random selection of descriptions without replacement), this outcome has an *a priori* probability of $P = 5.6 \times 10^{-4}$, since, among all possible permutations of the integers one through nine, the probability of six or more being in their natural positions in the list has that value. Therefore, although Price's descriptions contain inaccuracies, the descriptions are sufficiently accurate to permit the judges to differentiate among the various targets to the degree indicated.

EEG Experiments

An experiment was undertaken to determine whether a physiological measure such as EEG activity could be used as an indicator of information transmission between an isolated subject and a remote stimulus. We hypothesized that perception could be indicated by such a measure even in the absence of verbal or other overt indicators.^{6, 7}

It was assumed that the application of remote stimuli would result in responses similar to those obtained under conditions of direct stimulation. For example, when normal subjects are stimulated with a flashing light, their EEG typically shows a decrease in the amplitude of the resting rhythm and a driving of the brain waves at the frequency of the flashes.⁸ We hypothesized that if we stimulated one subject in this manner (a sender), the EEG of another subject in a remote room with no flash present (a receiver), might show changes in alpha (9–11 Hz) activity, and possibly EEG driving similar to that of the sender.

We informed our subject that at certain times a light was to be flashed in a sender's eyes in a distant room, and if the subject perceived that event, consciously or unconsciously, it might be evident from changes in his EEG output. The receiver was seated in the visually opaque, acoustically and electrically shielded double-walled steel room previously described. The sender was seated in a room about 7 m from the receiver.

To find subjects who were responsive to such a remote stimulus, we initially worked with four female and two male volunteer subjects, all of whom believed that success in the experimental situation might be possible. These were designated "receivers." The senders were either other subjects or the experimenters. We decided beforehand to run one or two sessions of thirty-six trials each with each subject in this selection procedure, and to do a more extensive study with any subject whose results were positive.

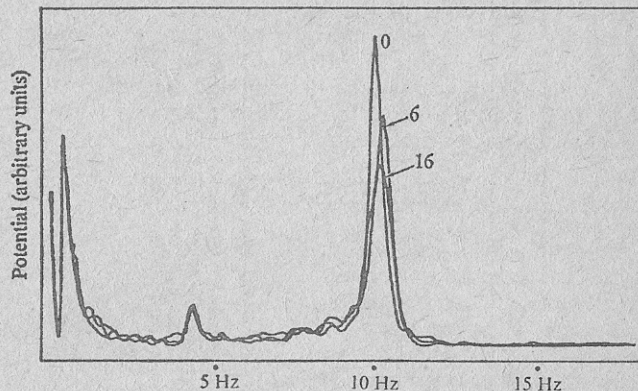


Fig. 3 Occipital EEG spectra, 0–20 Hz, for one subject (H.H.) acting as receiver, showing amplitude changes in the 9–11 Hz band as a function of strobe frequency. Three cases: 0, 6, and 16 f.p.s. (12 trial averages).

A Grass PS-2 photostimulator placed about 1 m in front of the sender was used to present flash trains of 10 s duration. The receiver's EEG activity from the occipital region (O_z) referenced to linked mastoids, was amplified with a Grass 5P-1 preamplifier and associated driver amplifier with a bandpass of 1–120 Hz. The EEG data were recorded on magnetic tape with an Ampex SP 300 recorder.

On each trial, a tone burst of fixed frequency was presented to both sender and receiver and was followed in one second by either a 10 s train of flashes or a null flash interval presented to the sender. Thirty-six such trials were given in an experimental session, consisting of twelve null trials—no flashes following the tone—

Table 2 Distribution of correct selections by judges A, B, C, D, and E in remote viewing experiments

Descriptions chosen by judges	Places visited by judges								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Hoover Tower	1	ABCDE			D				
Baylands Nature Preserve	2	ABC	E						D
Radio Telescope	3		ACD		BE				
Redwood City Marina	4	CD		ABDE		E			
Bridge Toll Plaza	5					ABD			
Drive-In Theatre	6		B		A	C		DCE	E
Arts and Crafts Garden Plaza	7						ABCE		
Church	8	CE		C				AB	
Rinconada Park	9								AB

Of the 45 selections (5 judges, 9 choices), 24 were correct. Bold type indicates the description chosen most often for each place visited. Correct choices lie on the main diagonal. The number of correct matches by Judges A through E is 7, 6, 5, 3, and 3, respectively. The expected number of correct matches from the five judges was five; in the experiment 24 such matches were obtained. The *a priori* probability of such an occurrence by chance, conservatively assuming assignment without replacement on the part of the judges, is $P = 8.10^{-40}$.

twelve trials of flashes at 6 f.p.s. and twelve trials of flashes at 16 f.p.s., all randomly intermixed, determined by entries from a table of random numbers. Each of the trials generated an 11-s EEG epoch. The last 4 s of the epoch was selected for analysis to minimize the desynchronizing action of the warning cue. This 4-s segment was subjected to Fourier analysis on a LINC 8 computer.

Spectrum analyses gave no evidence of EEG driving in any receiver, although in control runs the receivers did exhibit driving when physically stimulated with the flashes. But of the six subjects studied initially, one subject (H.H.) showed a consistent alpha blocking effect. We therefore undertook further study with this subject.

Data from seven sets of 36 trials each were collected from this subject on three separate days. This comprises all the data collected to date with this subject under the test conditions described above. The alpha band was identified from average spectra, then scores of average power and peak power were obtained from individual trials and subjected to statistical analysis.

Of our six subjects, H.H. had by far the most monochromatic EEG spectrum. Figure 3 shows an overlay of the three averaged spectra from one of this subject's 36-trial runs, displaying changes in her alpha activity for the three stimulus conditions.

Mean values for the average power and peak power for each of the seven experimental sets are given in Table 3. The power measures were less in the 16 f.p.s. case than in the 0 f.p.s. in all seven peak power measures and in six out of seven average power measures. Note also the reduced effect in the case in which the subject was informed that no sender was present (Run 3). It seems that overall alpha production was reduced for this run in conjunction with the subject's expressed apprehension about conducting the experiment without a sender. This is in contrast to the case (Run 7) in which the subject was not informed.

Siegel's two-tailed *t* approximation to the nonparametric randomization test⁹ was applied to the data from all sets, which included two sessions in which the sender was removed. Average power on trials associated with the occurrence of 16 f.p.s. was significantly less than when there were no flashes ($t = 2.09$, $d.f. = 118$, $P < 0.04$). The second measure, peak power, was also significantly less in the 16 f.p.s. condi-

tion than in the null condition ($t=2.16$, $d.f.=118$, $P<0.03$). The average response in the 6 f.p.s. condition was in the same direction as that associated with 16 f.p.s., but the effect was not statistically significant.

Spectrum analyses of control recordings made from saline, with a 12 k Ω resistance in place of the subject, with and without the addition of a 10 Hz, 50 μ V test signal applied to the saline solution, revealed no indications of flash frequencies, nor perturbations of the 10 Hz signal. These controls suggest that the results were not due to system artifacts. Further tests also gave no evidence of radio frequency energy associated with the stimulus.

Subjects were asked to indicate their conscious assessment for each trial as to which stimulus was generated. They made their guesses known to the experimenter via one-way telegraphic communication. An analysis of these guesses has shown them to be at chance, indicating the absence of any supraliminal cueing, so arousal as evidenced by significant alpha blocking occurred only at the noncognitive level of awareness.

We hypothesize that the protocol described here may prove to be useful as a screening procedure for latent remote perceptual ability in the general population.

Table 3 EEG data for H.H. showing average power and peak power in the 9-11 Hz band, as a function of flash frequency and sender

Flash Frequency	0	6	16	0	6	16
Sender	Average Power			Peak Power		
J.L.	94.8	84.1	76.8	357.7	329.2	289.6
R.T.	41.3	45.5	37.0	160.7	161.0	125.0
No sender (subject informed)	25.1	35.7	28.2	87.5	95.7	81.7
J.L.	54.2	55.3	44.8	191.4	170.5	149.3
J.L.	56.8	50.9	32.8	240.6	178.0	104.6
R.T.	39.8	24.9	30.3	145.2	74.2	122.1
No sender (subject not informed)	86.0	53.0	52.1	318.1	180.6	202.3
Averages	56.8	49.9	43.1	214.5	169.8	153.5
	-12% -24% ($P<0.04$)			-21% -28% ($P<0.03$)		

Each entry is an average over 12 trials

CONCLUSION

From these experiments we conclude that:

- A channel exists whereby information about a remote location can be obtained by means of an as yet unidentified perceptual modality.

- As with all biological systems, the information channel appears to be imperfect, containing noise along with the signal.

- While a quantitative signal-to-noise ratio in the information-theoretical sense cannot as yet be determined, the results of our experiments indicate that the functioning is at the level of useful information transfer.

It may be that remote perceptual ability is widely distributed in the general population, but because the perception is generally below an individual's level of awareness, it is repressed or not noticed. For example, two of our subjects (H.H. and P.P.) had not considered themselves to have unusual perceptual ability before their participation in these experiments.

Our observation of the phenomena leads us to conclude that experiments in the area of so-called paranormal phenomena can be scientifically conducted, and it is our hope that other laboratories will initiate additional research to attempt to replicate these findings.

This research was sponsored by The Foundation of Parasensory Investigation, New York City. We thank Mrs. Judith Skutch, Dr. Edgar D. Mitchell of the Institute of Noetic Sciences—as well as our SRI associates, Mr. Bonnar Cox, Mr. Earle Jones and Dr. Dean Brown—for support and encouragement. Constructive suggestions by Mrs. Jean Mayo, Dr. Charles Tart, University of California, and Dr. Robert Ornstein and Dr. David Galin of the Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute are acknowledged.

RUSSELL TARG
HAROLD PUTHOFF

*Electronics and Bioengineering Laboratory,
Stanford Research Institute,
Menlo Park, California 94025*

Received March 11; revised July 8, 1974.

- ¹ Pratt, J., Rhine, J. B., Stuart, C., and Greenwood, J., *Extra Sensory Perception after Sixty Years* (Henry Holt, New York, 1940).
- ² Soal, S., and Bateman, F., *Modern Experiments in Telepathy* (Faber and Faber, London, 1954).
- ³ Vassilliev, L. L., *Experiments in Mental Suggestion* (ISMI Publications, Hampshire, England, 1963).
- ⁴ Musso, J. R., and Granero, M., *J. Parapsychology*, 37, 13-37 (1973).
- ⁵ Osis, K., *ASPR Newsletter*, No. 14 (1972).
- ⁶ Tart, C. T., *Physiological Correlates of Psi Cognition*, *Int. J. Parapsychology*, V, No. 4 (1963).
- ⁷ Dean, E. D., *Int. J. Neuropsychiatry*, 2 (1966).
- ⁸ Hill, D., and Parr, G., *Electroencephalography: A Symposium on Its Various Aspects* (Macmillan, New York, 1963).
- ⁹ Siegel, S., *Nonparametric Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences*, 152-156 (McGraw-Hill, New York, 1956).

“WE MUST NOW WORK WITH THOSE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY MOTIVATED”

An Interview with Captain Edgar D. Mitchell

The laboratory research with Uri Geller which was undertaken in the United States was supported in part by the Institute of Noetic Sciences of Palo Alto, California. The institute operates under the direction of Captain Edgar D. Mitchell, the astronaut who walked on the moon during the Apollo 14 flight and who undertook an experiment in extrasensory perception, between the spacecraft and earth, in February 1971. Captain Mitchell resigned from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in order to devote himself to “theoretical and applied consciousness research.” His institute’s research program included work in the areas of medicine, psychology, physics, theoretical science, and the religious-mystical. These studies extended into such parapsychological faculties as clairvoyance, telepathy and precognition (prophecy), and psychokinesis (the power of mind over matter).

The reported abilities of Uri Geller would fall into the realm of psychokinesis, first of all, but also into telepathy or clairvoyance. As Captain Mitchell was instrumental, through his institute, in arranging for the laboratory tests of Uri Geller, and was thus able to observe his work, personality, and subsequent career at close range, he is uniquely qualified to evaluate these elements of Geller’s puzzling and controversial public appearances. He agreed to answer a series of questions put to him by Martin Ebon, editor of this volume; these questions and answers are published below. They indicate Mitchell’s deep concern with the morality and ethics of experiments in the area of the psychic and reflect on his conclusions concerning past pitfalls and future opportunity in psychic studies, particularly in psychokinesis.

EBON: Could you briefly outline the chronology of your relation to the Geller research? How was it initiated, undertaken, and concluded?

MITCHELL: I first heard of Uri Geller from Andrija Puharich. I had met Andrija several years ago, and we discussed psychical research in general, and his experiences. When Andrija heard of Geller's presence in Israel he wrote me that he had heard of a very interesting sensitive, who if he was anywhere near as gifted as he was purported to be, might be the subject we had all been seeking so long. He, Andrija, was going to Israel to study Geller, and he would keep me informed of what he found out. Furthermore, he asked, if Geller really was a good sensitive, would I be interested in doing the first U.S. laboratory research with him? I said that of course I would be, if, indeed, Geller was what he was cracked up to be.

Andrija called me a few months later, alluded to things that I just couldn't believe and on which I eventually accused him of losing his mind, but that was with tongue in cheek. I said that what Andrija was telling me about Geller was unbelievable. Still, if he could bring him over to the United States, I would finance it, and we would test him out in an informal setting, and if I and a couple of other people were convinced, we could then create the sort of laboratory setup we wanted.

We did bring Geller over to Ossining, New York, in August 1972. I was there, accompanied by Dr. Wilbur Franklin from Kent State University, a physicist, and by Dr. Gerald Feinberg from Columbia, also a theoretical physicist. Geller did do some rather surprising things, under semicontrolled conditions, that were adequate to startle all of us and to give me the incentive to start setting up an experiment with Geller in a well-controlled situation. We hoped to do this at Kent State in the spring of 1973. It turned out that we had difficulty getting the money and the facilities at Kent State. Furthermore, Geller became available much earlier than anticipated, so we were forced to operate much more quickly than the Kent State setup would have permitted.

As a result, both Andrija and I contacted the Stanford Research Institute—in particular, Hal Puthoff and Russ Targ—to see what we could work out there. After discussions, it was agreed that we could do the work there, although SRI management was very skeptical of all of this; but if we could raise the funds, they would also help us with some of the work. I set out to raise funds for this and help design the ex-

periment. We then actually worked with Uri for about five weeks during November 1972. We emerged with some data, which SRI management and senior scientists wrestled with and argued with for some time, before producing the film that has since been shown before selected audiences. But there did not result a publishable piece of scientific reporting.

EBON: What, originally, persuaded you to support the research into Geller's apparent paranormal faculties?

MITCHELL: Initially I was persuaded by Andrija Puharich's statement that Geller was a truly amazing individual, although I did discount most of Puharich's wild claims about him. Still, I believed Andrija sufficiently well to provide Geller with a ticket to the United States, so we could examine his work at first hand. What he demonstrated for Franklin, Feinberg, and myself at Ossining during a thirty-six-hour period was sufficient to call for a follow-up through solid laboratory research.

EBON: In your personal opinion, what did the laboratory research prove, and what did it fail to prove?

MITCHELL: First of all, the research proved, beyond any doubt in my mind, that all the faculties Geller demonstrated (telepathic, clairvoyant, and a psychokinetic ability) did, indeed, exist; and, furthermore, that he was a powerful and consistent agent of these effects. He did not produce the replicability that we so badly needed. Events that he produced, except for clairvoyance and telepathy, were more often happenstance than functioning on cue. We sometimes had to wait, while he tried, for a period of up to two hours for a psychokinetic event to happen; sometimes it would, and sometimes it wouldn't. Of course, this is now fairly understandable; the pressures of the laboratory, the demands for submitting to the controls and related factors, do not make it easy for a person to get into the proper mood continuously.

I would say that the research has proven, at least to us, that Geller has real ability and that the things he demonstrated were genuine. Now, a number of specific experiments and trials had to be thrown out because we could not, in every case, preclude fraud, but there was still a very hard-core residual predominant that we were convinced was valid. And, of course, because of Geller's personality, he was seldom amenable to repetition, to doing an experiment over and over and over, to get a series of data points. Although this was theoretically possible, his psychological makeup and his impatience with repetition precluded getting anything meaningful.

This was the primary reason why the SRI people, at the higher management level, were reluctant to write a report: on each particular event, we generally had only one data point, and they would have liked to have more. I agree with their point of view, but we all recognize that this particular thing is exceptionally hard to come by.

EBON: Are Uri Geller's phenomena genuinely psychic or paranormal, or are they actually stage conjuring tricks—or a mixture of both?

MITCHELL: I would tend to say that they are a mixture of both. I think that, at the time Geller was working with us, he was genuinely trying to do only psychic event, and repressing his desire to do sleight-of-hand. There had been a couple of instances that could never be shown to be sleight-of-hand, but we also could not be sure that they were not. These things were excluded from our data. I would suspect, and I've heard from reliable sources, that Uri has gone the performer's route in recent months, and that he has resorted to sleight-of-hand probably more and more. This is hearsay, and I have no way to verify that. However, I am disturbed by the fact that on a couple of occasions he seems to have been caught doing sleight-of-hand. We have never ignored the possibility that he might, from time to time, be doing sleight-of-hand. But, considering the conditions under which we worked with him, we are convinced that we also saw genuine phenomena.

What went right with the project, I think, is that Geller is competent, and I believe we were sufficiently alert to guard against anything but the most elaborate and sophisticated trickery. For Geller to have cheated, under the circumstances that we tested him, he would have needed an army of accomplices hidden in the walls, being capable of projecting what we were going to do the next day, and using a battery of equipment that is totally unreasonable to assume. So, we have pretty much ruled out trickery in most of Geller's work with us. We therefore believe that we have established, at least to our own satisfaction, the reality of the psychokinetic, the clairvoyant, and the telepathic event. We did nothing with precognition of any significance at all.

EBON: What went right with the Geller project, what went wrong, and why?

MITCHELL: What went wrong? Well, we probably started out a bit naïve. We were trying hard to cooperate with Geller, trying not to suppress or confine him so tightly that he might be unable to perform. As a result, the controls were

not tight enough in the beginning. What invariably happened at those times is what I call, with tongue in cheek, "poltergeist effects"; what was happening was not what we wanted to happen. For instance, we would attempt a psychokinetic experiment under good controls, but another psychokinetic event would occur actually somewhere else in the room and only peripherally in our vision. This is very much like the classical poltergeist effect in psychological research, and we are beginning to develop some decent theories on it.

So, in the beginning we often found ourselves distracted by an apparent psychokinetic effect, a poltergeist effect, occurring elsewhere, which would divert our attention from the real thing we were looking for. Obviously, this introduces the possibility of fraud, which we had to overcome. With things happening other than where we wanted them to happen, we had to learn to disregard them and go on. We had to learn the value of very strict protocol, of doing things precisely by the numbers, and not deviating from that protocol at all. If the protocol became so tight and so oppressive that Geller could not seemingly perform, then we would—without relaxing the rigor of the protocol—try to find a way that would be comfortable with him. It was a learning process with all of us, and this included Geller. He would learn to expand his abilities, as we exposed him to new situations, gently and with sympathy; it was like getting him interested in a new toy and getting him to play with it.

So our primary problems—although we had sophisticated and well-controlled work—was to perfect a learning process designed to answer this question: how do you control a subjective phenomenon in a way that is scientifically meaningful but is not so overcontrolled that it squelches the phenomenon entirely? That was the main thing we learned from this project.

EBON: What are your impressions of Geller as a person?

MITCHELL: My impression starts with the observation that Uri is obviously a very warm, personable, human sort of young fellow, energetic, eager, and bouncy. But as he has received more attention, following our experiments with him, his ego has asserted itself and he became more and more interested in acquiring power, wealth, money, and acclaim. I am afraid this has acted to the detriment of his personality. Whereas before, when I first met him, he was eager to please, although a bit demanding—because, I think, Puharich had catered to him so much and given in to his wishes—he

was also impressionable, easy to please, and obviously quite intelligent.

As time has gone on, he became still more demanding, irascible, and difficult to work with. You saw an almost messianic complex starting to show itself. As far as his descriptions of what it is he is doing, I think most of these come from Puharich and have very little to do with what Geller really thinks. I don't believe Geller really wants to formulate his own opinion of what is happening, for fear he'd get enmeshed in something beyond his own analytical capacities.

EBON: How do Puharich and Geller relate to each other?

MITCHELL: In the beginning, and once he had gained Uri's confidence, I believe Puharich had almost total influence on Geller. Even now, Geller's ideas on what he is doing, and what's causing it, are, I am sure, still the Puharich ideas that were implanted earlier. At the outset, there was a tremendous degree of influence; Uri would hardly move without talking to Andrija. I think that, as time has gone on, there has been a split between them. Geller has become headstrong and quite determined to make his own name and achieve his own fame, irrespective of Puharich. At the same time, Geller has played a special role in Puharich's own developments, whatever they may be; I don't totally understand them. The split has deepened, and now it has become impossible for anyone to exercise any significant influence over Geller unless they can promise him money, girls, or considerable fame.

EBON: People are very confused about the validity of the Geller phenomena. Uri's appearances on television and in public demonstrations have created fascination in this country and Europe, reaching audiences who are totally new to this kind of thing. What must the public know? How can they objectively judge Puharich's startling claims?

MITCHELL: Yes, there are confusions and contradictions that need to be sorted out, and carefully. I should like to outline a model here, a comparison, that may sound somewhat harsh but can be clothed in the proper language for such a model. I think what has developed is some sort of image in Puharich's mind which makes Geller a very chosen person, and Andrija himself his major spokesman. Frankly, I am most chagrined by the emergence of these messianic aspects. Obviously, we haven't found any human being yet—on the face of the earth, or in any era—who is in possession of the

truth, the whole truth, all the truth, and nothing but truth. This becomes flagrantly obvious when the sense of enlightenment, of altruism and nobility in such a human being is no greater than what we encounter in the Geller case. I think the public must recognize that, whatever validity there is in Geller's ability, it certainly does not represent the end-all and be-all of knowledge. There are many other things to be learned. We also don't want to see people getting hung up on such aspects of the occult as table-tapping, séances, and other fads on an unproductive level of experience. Concerning future research, I think we are finding more and more people who have the psychokinetic ability and are willing to demonstrate it. Developing a good, hard, scientific approach to psychokinesis should, in my opinion, not be difficult. The basic question is, however: should we be doing it in this fashion?

EBON: After all you have observed, Captain Mitchell, what is the future of related studies in psychokinesis and other areas of parapsychology? Has the Geller work opened certain roads of research, regardless of any ill-advised actions or comments that have attracted public attention?

MITCHELL: We have become very well convinced that we are dealing with a powerful tool here. I am now particularly concerned with the moral and ethical value systems that should guide the proper use of these faculties. We must address ourselves to this basic problem immediately, before we get into still another utilization-of-power syndrome. We have consistently seen in the past how people who have these abilities can go wrong and even end up in the gutter. I think that, except within a laboratory framework, designed to help understand the mechanisms of human functioning, we should never regard psychic abilities as an end-point, as something to be desired for its own sake. Rather, I believe, we should look upon these abilities as something to be added to the human organism once it is appropriately trained and skilled, and highly enough evolved to cope with these mechanisms. A psychic who manifests these abilities prematurely, seemingly from birth, should probably be seen as someone with a special cross to bear, rather than as enjoying a gift. In some sense, these faculties can be detrimental to the human personality and in the pursuit of everyday life.

And while I am talking in this cautionary manner, it should be clear that I, for one, am quite alarmed at the unselective upsurge in psychic and occult interests that has taken

place of late. I predicted, back in 1971, that, unless the scientific community rose to the challenge of psychic phenomena, and brought the proper amount of open-minded understanding to this field of research, the public would become like a rudderless ship. Well, I think that the scientific community and the philanthropists have, indeed, failed to rise to the occasion, and now can readily observe just how rudderless the public has become. Lacking guidance from science, the public is chasing each and every psychic panacea, while accomplishing nothing constructive. That has caused great concern to me.

Still, I think that laboratory research needs persons of Uri Geller's capabilities if it is to understand the mechanisms we're dealing with, at least from the physical point of view. We can see that it is preferable to seek out or evolve our own sensitivities: we should now work with those who are spiritually motivated, rather than those who are natural psychics or, in a very specific sense, "freaks." Many of the lamas, the Tibetan masters, and the Hindu masters, if you can get them to work with you, may well produce phenomena that are just as convincing as Geller's. Of course, it is well to anticipate problems here, too. Some of them may get caught up in Western patterns of thinking and morality, so that they might at times resort to more or less serious forms of fraud. Among the many lessons we have learned during these and related experiments is the need to select personalities who are likely to be most responsive to our requirements; we must now work with those who are spiritually motivated.

ROARING SUCCESS IN ZURICH, FAILURE IN VIENNA

Paul Uccusic

He is present when a bewildered Swiss TV producer causes a teaspoon to explode in midair; he bends forks, knives, and keys left and right; he dazzles Austrian airline stewardesses by bending even a thick metal newspaper headline, fails almost completely before television cameras in Vienna, but his powers are right back when he steps behind the scenes. Mr. Uccusic, a member of the editorial staff of the Viennese daily paper Kurier, acted as consultant to the Swiss and Austrian TV shows and accompanied Geller on his plane trip from Zurich to Vienna.

Fame has preceded him for weeks, as he moves from the West toward Central Europe: he is Uri Geller, Wonder Boy of Psychokinesis, the Cutlery Magician and Telepathist who is said to be in contact with entities from distant solar systems. Before moving into Switzerland and Austria, Geller finished several spectacular television appearances in Great Britain, where he was quoted as boasting, "I can bring Big Ben to a standstill!" He threw Norway into confusion. During and after an unprecedented three-hour TV appearance in Oslo, the telephone switchboard of the station did not stop ringing for hours. Calls from Stockholm to the Arctic Circle reported bent forks and spoons, watches that had started running again. On top of all this, there was a failure in the capital city's street lighting, which threw Oslo into darkness. All told, 2,500 calls were recorded.

My assignment, as a writer for the Vienna daily *Kurier*, was to report on Uri Geller's progress through Europe. Even before he made his appearances in Zurich and Vienna, I met Geller in the small German town of Offenbach-on-Rhine, where the second channel of the German television network ZDF had set up headquarters, Uri's forum was to be the popular quiz program run by Wim Thoeke, called "Three Times Nine."

The evening before the show, surrounded by newspaper-

men, Geller is in great form. Right off, he takes my brass house key, a flat Yale type, strokes it lightly with the fingers of his left hand—and the key bends upward by about ten degrees. While the key is handed around, Uri starts a second experiment: "Think of some kind of simple figure, draw it on a piece of paper, and try to send it to me telepathically." One of the reporters accepts this challenge, concentrates briefly, and twenty seconds later Uri Geller draws a house on a piece of paper. The reporter uncovers his own drawing, and it actually is that of a house of the same type. Applause all around!

But Uri is not satisfied. He asks, "Did anyone here think of a dog? I clearly received the impression of a dog." Uneasy silence. Uri repeats his question. Finally the director of the TV show, Hermann Rödel, sits up with a start and says, "Yes, I have constantly been thinking of a dog." He explained that a young woman, a production assistant on the show, owns a very lively, tiny dog that had caused numerous incidents and distractions during the planning and rehearsals for the performance. And while Rödel had not actually thought of the dog itself, he had been brooding about the disturbances right along. (Later in the evening I discover at the hotel that my key had continued to bend while in my trouser pocket. By now it is bent by about forty-five degrees.)

The following day the ZDF transmission features Geller for a total of nineteen minutes, during which he does a telepathy demonstration, an experiment with stopped watches, and metal bending. Everything goes swimmingly. A dozen watches, which a watchmaker had described as beyond repair, are running again; and a fork bends most satisfactorily.

While the German TV show is on, I am already in Zurich, where the Swiss television studio of SRG is filled with hectic activity. They are planning a Geller show to take place three days later, and I have been brought in as a consultant. A group of men and women are lined up before a television set, all equipped with forks, spoons, knives, and nails. Our hope is that while Geller performs some 150 miles north of us, some of the power will spill over into Switzerland. We sit patiently, but there seems to be no qualified medium among us. Nothing bends, nothing breaks.

But at night there is cause for excitement. One of the SRG producers, Mr. Bichsel, had concentrated unsuccessfully on the metal pieces in his hand, just like the rest of us. However, when he pulled out his key chain at home, he discovered that

all the keys on it had been bent by about fifteen degrees. This had happened, although the keys had remained in his car, outside the studio, all through the Geller TV show!

Three days later we make final preparations for Uri Geller's Swiss TV appearance. Walter Klapper, the show's director, and I spend all day walking through the offices of SRG, talking to everyone about the forthcoming show, aware that the general atmosphere has to be just right. We know from experience with other television productions that it is impossible to force a paranormal phenomenon to take place, but that we can increase the likelihood of such phenomena by creating the right kind of tension. Skeptics are no real problem, because their personal curiosity can contribute to the general air of expectation; their anticipation of the "impossible" overshadows the negative influence in their attitude of "It just can't happen."

Our preparations prove to be useful. Uri Geller arrives, looks over the paraphernalia we have assembled, but without touching anything. There is a collection of old watches that don't have any parts missing but that a normal watchmaker's skill could not fix. Then we have huge nails, on the average about eight inches long, ladles, forks, spoons, and knives. In addition, we have set eleven film containers aside, which the prop department is to prepare for the show. Ten of the containers are to remain empty, while the eleventh will contain a key, fastened to its bottom with tape, so it won't rattle around. Uri, of course, will have to guess which container has the key.

While we are setting up cameras, Uri says, "There should be one monitor on which I can see myself, so that I can make sure that I hold the pieces in such a way that the audience can see them at all times. I want to avoid moving out of camera range for even one-tenth of a second. Otherwise, people will say that I am using tricks."

Walter Klapper hands Geller the key to the gate of his house. Geller holds it up, and while the camera moves toward it, the key bends. "Look, look—I didn't do anything!" Uri himself is perplexed. He had neither concentrated nor wanted the key to bend. Klapper takes the key back, delighted that he has a Geller souvenir at last!

The actual show begins with one of Uri's telepathy experiments. A group of reporters sits in a room of their own, about three hundred feet from the studio. They can follow the transmission on a TV monitor screen, but Geller can't see

them. We in the studio are linked to the room only by telephone. Without any third person observing her, one of the women reporters secretly makes a drawing. The paper with her drawing is placed into three carefully sealed envelopes that are pushed inside each other. Now she sits in the room and concentrates, trying to send Geller her drawing telepathically.

It takes Uri a long time, five minutes. He interrupts his own concentration several times and says, "But I asked specifically that the drawing should be simple. What I receive is plenty complicated. It may be a tree that is quite simple at the bottom, at the trunk. But on top, among the branches, it gets complicated." And he draws a tree with a few lines. Branches and leaves are clearly visible. The woman reporter is brought from the separate room. In front of the camera she opens the three interlocking envelopes. She has actually drawn a tree, exactly as Uri had reproduced it. There is excitement in the studio, approval, and applause.

The next test is clairvoyance. Uri has to find the one among eleven film containers that has the key taped to its bottom. Again the tension mounts. Again it takes him about five minutes to make a decision. He holds his hands about three inches above the containers, trying to catch an impulse. He says, "It is a sort of pressure that emanates from the container in which the piece is hidden." Finally he makes up his mind. It is—how could it be any other way?—the right one.

By now the task of getting some twenty watches to start ticking again is nearly a routine matter. The same goes for bending a ladle, which finally breaks. At last, after more than two hours of working in the studio, Uri gets up. The show has been taped and will later be cut to about eighty minutes. Klapper rushes from the control room into the studio. But an outside authority, an experimental physicist, who had observed the transmission as witness and control, is unconvinced. He says, "The study of such conjurer tricks does not fall into our research area." Klapper pulls out the bent key to the gate of his house. Without asking permission, the professor of physics puts the key on the floor, places his heel on it, and straightens it out!

Klapper is furious: "That certainly isn't nice. You've ruined my only Uri Geller souvenir." The producer is furious. Hours later, while we are waiting to meet Geller at Zurich's Hotel Kindli, Klapper repeats the story of the ill-mannered physicist to anyone willing to listen. We are a mixed bunch as

we surround two tables in the hotel's restaurant, waiting for Uri. Some are just fans of Uri Geller, others are reporters and television people, and some are just curious. Upstairs, in his room, Uri gives an exclusive demonstration for the German news weekly *Der Spiegel*. We were told later that he bent no less than seven forks that are part of the hotel's heavy silver cutlery.

Klapper tells the story of the pompous physicist for the fifty-ninth time. His tension spills over onto a teaspoon. Like Geller, he runs his fingertips over the spoon's curved handle. Then he puts the spoon away and pulls out his ill-fated key once more. Finally Geller arrives. We had to wait for two hours during which Geller gave his all to the *Spiegel* people. He is totally exhausted and collapses into an armchair at our table.

Now Klapper tells his story for what seems the sixty-ninth time. Immediately, Uri is fully alert. As if electrified, he grabs the key. "You see," he says, "it is a small, hair-thin crack!" Klapper looks, and all of us study the key. It is true: where the key had been bent, there is a fine, barely noticeable tear in the metal. Before all our eyes, Uri puts the key openly on the table. While we continue talking, it remains clearly visible in front of all of us.

From the back, the waiter approaches the table and asks, "May I serve now?" Klapper asks him to go ahead, and the waiter picks up Klapper's coffeecup. The next scene is a novelty in the annals of Uri Geller research. The waiter lifts the coffeecup, saucer, and the spoon which Klapper had absentmindedly stroked a little while earlier, some twenty or so inches above the table, now holds it all next to Klapper's left ear—when, suddenly, the teaspoon explodes, with a slight sound, in midair. The two halves of the spoon fall, left and right, onto the table and come to rest on the tablecloth. All of us have witnessed the event, but Geller nevertheless jumps up, yells his famous, "Look, look!" and adds, "This never happened to me before. Look, look. Up in the air!"

While we are still involved in gasping over this spontaneous phenomenon, handing the two pieces of spoon around the table, and while guests from other tables join us, there is still another "ping" sound: the house key of Klapper, plainly before our eyes on the table, has broken into two parts. It appears as if hurled by a ghostly hand, and now the tip of the key lies some ten inches from the main part, although the rough table cover must have acted as a brake.

Geller sighs, "This is the strongest day I've ever had." He leans back into the armchair. I ask him, "But you didn't use your energy at all?" "No," he answers, "and that is what is so surprising. I am convinced that I am only acting as a catalyst, someone who releases tensions which have accumulated in all of us during the day." Klapper nods agreement; he knows all about the day's tensions!

Now I put my hand down into my pocket and pull out the one thing I brought especially from Vienna for the Uri treatment. It is a heavy piece of long metal, a newspaper headline which reads: URI GELLER: DAS BIEGEN WIR!, which can be translated as "Uri Geller: We Bend This!" The material is an alloy of lead, bismuth, and antimony. I hand it to Geller. "Do you think you can manage that?" He looks at me with an air of desperation. "Not tonight, anyway. But give it to me tomorrow, when we're in the airplane. Then I'll try."

The following day we are at Zurich Airport, ready to depart for Vienna. I pass through the security control, and while the two metal headlines attract some attention, no one asks me any questions. Shortly before the check-in is finished, Uri arrives, together with his manager Werner Schmid, and his friend Shipi Strang. I point to my bag and its contents, but Uri puts me off: "On the plane." Geller tells us where to sit, while we are finding our way into the cabin on the Austrian Airlines DC-9. It isn't crowded, so Uri takes the aisle seat of a three-seat row. Shipi has to sit by the window, while the in-between seat remains empty. Uri puts me in the aisle seat of a two-seat row next to him, while my window seat remains empty.

There are only eighteen other passengers on the plane. Uri's manager is placed behind Shipi, and in back of me are the two *Spiegel* reporters, who accompany us to Vienna. It is good flying weather, but Uri hardly glances out the window. He is much more interested in the Israeli newspapers he received that morning. I am beginning to worry that nothing may come of our experiment, but suddenly he throws the papers aside and says, "Let me have it!"

I hand him the longer and heavier of the two metal headlines. He sighs, "Oh, that's very thick!" But simultaneously he begins to rub the metal with his left hand. Some twenty seconds later he gets excited. "Go ahead," he says, "touch it!" I reach for the metal, and pull quickly back. My hand had experienced something like an electric shock, as strong as you

can get from a car battery. But unlike the effect of an electric shock, the crawly feeling on the skin remains with me. In fact, it lasts for several hours.

While I am still involved with the effect of the shock on my arm, Uri keeps on rubbing the metal headline. I know what will happen now, and it does. "Look, look!" The headline bends downward, by about ten degrees. Uri says firmly, "Now we should get a girl, a stewardess." I know all about that. When Uri is dealing with a pretty girl, everything works fine, everything bends, and thoughts transfer in a jiffy. The stewardesses are quickly summoned. One of them, Barbara, is told to hold one end of the metal headline while Uri holds the other end. Barbara, too, experiences a sort of electric shock, and the headline keeps right on bending.

The demonstration ends with a bang. The headline breaks, and one end falls to the floor. The stewardesses cry out, the metal piece is examined, Uri stands up. We discuss what has happened. The chief stewardess asks to have her key bent. Uri bends it, all right, but with an added bonus: although he does not touch it, and as if it responded to his glance, the nameplate on the blouse of the stewardess also bends.

Now the whole plane is in an uproar. The girls forget their routine tasks and keep dragging forks, spoons, and keys to our seats. Uri, smiling, goes ahead and bends everything—but everything—that is placed in his lap. Now I wonder: could he bend the second headline? But where is it? We search in desperation. At last it turns up, hidden among newspaper on the empty seat between Uri and Shipi. We pick the metal headline up and shake our heads: without having been touched, the headline is noticeably bent, apparently by itself!

We land in Vienna. Uri holds his first press conference, but he is obviously tired. He seems to have spent himself on the plane. Nothing seems to work. The things that are usually child's play to him have zero results. The reporters' keys remain unbent, and only one telepathy experiment is a partial success.

The Austrian television, ORF, arranges a show for Uri, and I once again act as consultant. Unfortunately, my work is in vain. No one seems interested in creating a cordial atmosphere, and there is no response to suggestions for detailed organizational preparations. The show's moderator, Alfred Payrleithner, is candid about his own lack of interest in paranormal phenomena. He obviously fears loss of prestige as a political commentator if his name is linked with the likes

of Uri Geller. Failure is the inevitable result: rarely has Uri failed as completely as he does in Vienna.

Before the show starts, Uri pulls me aside and asks, "What do you think? What are they going to do if it doesn't work out? Will they be angry with me?" I feel that Geller knows that things won't work out, but I can't let him down at this point. So I say, "Uri, everything is going to be all right. Just you wait and see!"

We are getting ready for a telepathy experiment. An actress at the leading Viennese playhouse, the Burgtheater, is going to make the drawing which Uri is to replicate. Her name is Lotte Ledl, and she does a trial "transmission" before the actual show. The actress does the drawing in her dressing room, while Uri stands outside, tries to tune in on her, and keeps saying over and over, "I can't get it." Payrleithner, the moderator, seems uneasy, ill, and unsure of himself; as it turns out, he has the flu and a temperature.

The telepathy experiment begins. Lotte Ledl leaves the studio. As we are told later on, she draws a spiral. But Uri at first receives the impression of an arrow, which he crosses out. Finally he draws several concentric circles. The actress reenters the studio and shows the spiral. Professor Hellmuth Hofmann, a parapsychological specialist, describes the demonstration as "a near-success." After the show, Lotte Ledl says that she had originally planned to draw an arrow, but later decided on the spiral.

Several watches are present which reputable watchmakers have carefully put into a state of disrepair. Under Uri's hand they begin to run again. Reports from the television audience show later that watches throughout the land began to tick again. The climax of the show is supposed to be the bending of a spoon. But nothing bends. Everyone is terribly disappointed, and Uri makes a rapid escape from the studio.

But three minutes later, in the dressing room, Uri's powers have returned. A key bends, a telepathy experiment succeeds brilliantly, whereby a skeptical psychologist sends Uri a paragraph sign (¶), which Uri has never seen but reproduces accurately. The psychologist is properly impressed, and numerous broken watches begin once again to tick away merrily.

The crowning point of the evening comes, unfortunately, too late. Uri bends a teaspoon in the hand of the skeptical moderator, Alfred Payrleithner. And even after Geller has

left the room, the spoon keeps bending under Payrleithner's fingers. Well, then, it was not a failure after all. But success at the wrong time is something no one can easily forgive a showman of Uri's international prestige.

I had the very strong feeling that the cosmic being does not normally exist in our space-time framework, except when it is necessary for it to interact with humans. Through these principles I have just cited, I believe that a prophet, a Uri Geller, if you wish, is specifically created to serve as an intermediary between a "divine" intelligence and man. The same idea would hold for living beings existing anywhere on any planet in the universe. I now fully believe that life exists anywhere and everywhere in the universe as divine intelligence dictates. I was prepared to believe that life exists in forms and states beyond the imagination of man to conceive.

—Andrija Puharich, in *Uri* (1974)

GELLER TWISTS BRITAIN

Tony Miller

During the few years of his international prominence, Uri Geller has performed his feats in many countries, ranging from Japan to South Africa. But nowhere has Geller made a greater impact than in Great Britain, where his television appearances prompted scores of parallel experiences—forks and spoons bent throughout the United Kingdom—and several scientific investigations. Tony Miller, staff member of Psychic News, the London weekly, reports on Geller's visit to Britain.

Britain has not been the same since it was "invaded" by Uri Geller. Words to describe his feats are now part of the English language. Scientific dogma has been badly buckled by his proven gifts. Dozens of other Uris have been found. Above all, he made people think about the paranormal. The psychic did not twist the country to believe him: it literally twisted with him. First mention of him came in a scientific journal which referred to a "strange demonstration" in a London hotel. A journalist saw Uri deform four of a watch strap's links. When the Israeli took a spoon to stir his tea, "it appeared to snap in two." The British weekly *Psychic News* reported this event under the headline, "He should be worth watching." Geller was then still an unknown quantity. But within weeks he was featured in a hurricane of press reports.

News of Geller's feats in the U.S. were at first erratic. But in November 1973, the position radically changed. His name was on everybody's lips. Uri's first official visit to Britain started with a BBC press conference. My "*Psychic News*" report began, "I watched in astonishment when a journalist's household key bent like plasticine as Geller gently stroked it." By publicly demonstrating his gift the psychic made paranormal history. It had never before been seen. At this unforgettable impromptu psychokinetic spectacle came a spontaneous demonstration of Uri's metal-bending gift. A young woman

journalist, returning from the cloakroom, was amazed when her bracelet broke and dropped to the floor. There was no normal explanation. I examined the bangle and found nothing unusual.

Returning to the office I had my own unexpected evidence of Geller's gift. During the conference, the table on which he demonstrated was inches from me. Working late, I took from my case a second pair of stronger glasses. These metal-framed spectacles were in a normal cover. I was shattered to find both sidepieces were deformed. I took them to a local optician for examination. The sidepieces were extended to a perfect 135-degree angle, fifty percent beyond their normal fixed-hinge range.

Next morning Uri was interviewed on radio. It was then the full effect of this psychic superstar was realized. During his demonstration, housewives were startled to find their own PK (psychokinesis) exhibits. The BBC switchboard was jammed with complaints. Nothing metallic seemed safe from Uri. In the studio, Uri succeeded when asked by the disc jockey to bend a key and paper opener. The broadcaster said it was the most fantastic demonstration he had seen in twenty-four years' radio work.

Police in three counties rang the BBC to report "unnatural happenings." An officer forty miles from the studio was preparing a fire in his lounge. "I went into the kitchen and found two spoons on the draining board curled up," he testified. "Since then I've had six stainless-steel knives go a bit funny on me." A woman saw an enameled soup ladle "twist and curl in front of her eyes." Another listener, having coffee and "laughing at the program, looked down at a bracelet and saw a large kink in it." In the radio studio an engineer found his metal pipe stem twisted. A motorist saw one of his keys bend as he tuned in his car radio. Uri Geller had truly arrived.

Later that week Uri demonstrated on TV. He excelled by severing one fork, bending a second, restarting a broken watch, and deforming into a right angle the minute hand of another. Before Uri began, author Lyall Watson told viewers: "There are no tricks involved. The first time I saw him I was looking for a catch. There is none." The objects given to Uri were from the BBC. Cameras showed close-up shots of Uri's hands during the program. The highlight came when Uri held up a fork—and the top section flew off. A clean break was seen. The program ended with an announcement

that during it six viewers had phoned to say metal objects had bent in their homes. They were the first of hundreds of such reports.

How did the press react? To say Uri put it on its mettle sums up the situation. Overnight new words were coined. Objects were "Urified" or "Gellerized." Headlines were lighthearted, such as, "Uri puts Britain in a twist," "Uri makes a key point," "It's all in the mind as Uri goes on a bender." The journalists, many skeptical at the initial press conference, were intrigued. Some were baffled. Others testified to Uri's gift. A BBC spokesman was quoted as saying: "We are assessing the situation. Obviously we don't want to cause wholesale damage to people's homes." A point worrying them was whether Uri could accidentally bend or break gas or water pipes. When Uri made another appearance the corporation said, "We can only suggest that everybody lock their valuables away." The situation was without precedent.

One paper, the *Sunday People*, with a fifteen-million readership, invited the nation "to take part in the biggest experiment of extrasensory perception ever staged." At 12:30 P.M. readers were asked to hold a spoon or fork in their hands and concentrate. Thousands of letters and calls flooded the paper. The staggering results were 293 bent forks and spoons, 51 various metal objects deformed, and an astonishing 1,031 restarted broken clocks and watches. The position was not without humor. Even the grim economic news was angled to Uri. "If only Uri could turn our green shield stamps into petro coupons," joked one editorial in reference to the petrol shortage. And for the cartoonist it was a field day. One showed a bent-in-half airplane taking the psychic to America. Its caption read, ". . . so I said to this guy Uri back there, 'OK, smarty-pants, what else can you do apart from bending spoons?'"

By now everybody knew Uri. On a train journey I saw a woman stir her coffee with a plastic spoon. When it began to melt due to the heat she quipped, "It's done a Uri!" All in the buffet understood her joke. It came as no surprise when magicians tried to discredit Uri by suggesting sleight-of-hand or chemicals. But as still more press reports appeared with readers' experiences of metal-bending, their smear campaign foundered. Then came a new phenomenon. Children and adults throughout the country described their own PK gift. One seven-year-old boy made front-page news in a national paper, the *Daily Mirror*. "I decided to have a go after seeing

that man on TV," he said. "I just think about the fork bending and it does. It was bit frightening at first—but there's nothing to it." The child's mother commented: "It has to be seen to be believed. It's just as well my husband runs two cafes, or we would be out of cutlery within days." Her husband admitted he was skeptical, "until I saw him perform the feat. Now I've seen him bend half-a-dozen forks without any failures." One of the paper's journalists saw the boy demonstrate. After twenty minutes a fork "was virtually bent double," he wrote. And still more evidence to back Uri flowed in.

A Sunday paper—*Sunday Mirror*—dealt with the theory that Uri wrenched cutlery between his fingers. It submitted a key, which the Israeli bent, to a firm specializing in metal fatigue. An expert reported: "There are no tricks, no fake key. Nothing suspicious at all." Uri had not touched the key. He only stared at it. In similar vein, another paper gave to a "top scientist" some jewelers' screwdrivers which Uri snapped. The report was: "There are no signs of cutting, burning, or the use of acid. There is no normal explanation, no trickery."

The *Daily Mail* referred to Uri in two editorials. In the first it said his demonstrations had produced "the great debate of the moment. It won't turn water into oil. It won't magic away our economic problems. But it does give us something cheerful to puzzle over for a change." In the second one, the day after the 10 Downing Street meeting with the miners' union executive—strike action was pending—the editorial said: "The miners won't bend an inch. The oil sheiks, purring through London in their petrol-gobbling Cadillacs, didn't bend much either. Where are you, Uri Geller, now that we need you?" But these amusing comments did not mask the ever-increasing evidence to support Uri's gifts. Journalists continued to testify. One saw "a steel plate, impossible to bend by hand, suddenly curl up on a table. I have seen a key shatter without anyone going near it." Even the Church entered the controversy.

A cleric made news with his statement that Uri, instead of wasting his talents on metal-bending, should use his gift to heal the sick. Another asked the Church of Scotland General Assembly to form a working party and study Geller. He had made "everyone think again about things undreamed of in standard materialistic philosophy." This trend had "deep implications" for Christians.

Then came a dramatic development. A popular daily paper, the *Daily Mirror*, gathered fourteen people for "an astonishing experiment" at London's Hilton Hotel. Ten claimed metal-bending ability, triggered off by Uri. After two minutes came results. A silver-plated coffee spoon "curled itself round a saucer." No one had touched it. The spoon bent of its own accord. A wristwatch, loaned by a reporter, had not worked for two years. It was handed to the two youngest guests, aged twelve and thirteen. They successfully started it. At the time Uri was 3,000 miles away in Florida. "Our experiments seemed to show Uri is not at all unique," concluded the paper. "Others have the same gift, but till now none of them has tried it." One woman was a Roman Catholic and not "brought up to believe in this sort of thing." At her home six metal objects twisted.

Then came another astonishing development. Uri caused astounding supernormal phenomena in TV viewers' homes, even though he was in New York when the program was screened. Even more incredible, the documentary had been filmed five months previously. For the woman who already had six twisted objects, and had taken part in the Hilton test, it was an extraordinary encore. As she watched, a spoon bent, and three prongs of one fork twisted. Another viewer admitted she was a skeptic—until "a steel spoon in my hand became like putty." A silver fork was also deformed. Her copper poker became U-shaped. Over 200 people jammed the station's switchboard telling of twisted articles.

And, of course, the press again went wild. One paper, the *Birmingham Evening Mail*, offered £100 "and the chance of fame and fortune, to any reader who can bend spoons, stop or start clocks, control dice, or obtain any other physical effect using the power of the mind and not the body." Letters' columns were flooded with letters about the remarkable psychic. Naturally, one of the papers, the *Daily Express*, perhaps seeking a new angle, tried to "expose" Geller as a fraud. People phoned the paper to defend Uri. After three consecutive features trying to explain away Uri's gifts, the reporter flew to Copenhagen to see Geller. The psychic agreed to be searched. He was given one of the reporter's keys. After twenty seconds it began twisting. Hours later the journalist "could feel the key bending further, even through the thickness of two protective envelopes." The pressman ate his words. What he had witnessed was "a most impressive and baffling experience."

But there was still more drama to come. About to start a major British tour, Uri's life was suddenly threatened. First reports said he got a police escort to London's Heathrow Airport and flew to a secret destination. A senior police officer said: "Scotland Yard took these threats very seriously. They are anxious that no risks should be taken in front of a very large audience." The death threat was announced on the BBC's national news. In part his tour went ahead. At a Liverpool theater club Uri demonstrated to raise money for a charity. A security net was thrown around the theater. Special Branch detectives mixed with the audience. All entrances and exits were guarded by security staff.

In just twelve weeks Uri was a national figure, a VIP.

Was the public still behind Uri? The answer was a massive "Yes" in a poll conducted by the *Daily Mail*. Thousands of readers' voting slips showed 95.5 percent thought his gifts psychic. But what of science? Uri has convinced several scientists. One, Professor John Taylor of London University's King's College, began as a skeptic. Now he backs Uri after conducting controlled tests. Taylor has proclaimed his belief that Geller is genuine on TV. One problem is "to convince my scientific colleagues." This mathematician has tested others who claim to have Geller's metal-bending gift. Some are children. In trials they deformed objects which they had not the physical force to do. With them, on at least 100 occasions, "I have seen things bend."

Professor Taylor told me: "As far as I am concerned, Uri has come up with the goods. He can bend things and make them rotate. I am quite certain the phenomena are there." Yet, the arguments surrounding Geller are not over. The tests go on. But Uri has been accepted by the British public en masse. He is patently genuine. In under twelve months he has earned a respect and admiration that normally take years to achieve.

GELLER'S EAGER IMITATORS

Eric Lombard

Bending spoons, forks, and keys has not remained Uri Geller's personal province, although he certainly brought these achievements to worldwide prominence. During his European tours and television appearances, reports of Geller-type phenomena came from England and several countries on the continent. This appraisal uses the research reports of a Swiss investigative group to illustrate how Geller's impact has affected his viewers. Men, women, and children claiming psychic talents, including "watch healing," have been examined and their performances recorded and analyzed.

"After we completed the second test, Edith Aufdermauer complained of a severe headache. Now, she and I were by ourselves. The others had left. While we were sitting at the living-room table, Edith picked up a teaspoon. Slowly she began to rub it, almost as if she were caressing it. I kept watching her closely. After a few moments the spoon began to bend, without any physical pressures whatever. Eventually the spoon was bent by nearly 180 degrees. During the next few hours she repeated this performance with two additional teaspoons, as well as with a solid steel pin and a pair of steel nail clippers."

This quotation is taken from a report to the Swiss Society for Parapsychology, with headquarters in the town of Biel. The report, addressed to the society's president, D. Theo Locher, was made by a psychology student, Beat Richiger. The investigation of Miss Aufdermauer had been undertaken by Dr. Locher, with a team that included Evelyne Mollet, a Lausanne psychologist. It was part of an investigation of "Geller-type phenomena" that had been recorded during and after Uri Geller's television appearance in Switzerland early in 1974.

Under Dr. Locher's direction, the emotional qualities of

people experiencing such Geller-type phenomena, as well as the number and geographic distribution of such phenomena, have been investigated. In the case of Edith Aufdermauer, Locher and Mollet joined with Richiger and others on March 30, a Sunday afternoon. They had been told that this young woman, a resident of the town of Olten, seemed to be the center of a variety of curious phenomena, including the "loosening of electric bulbs from their sockets, or their breakage."

When they began the visit, Mr. Richiger noted that he had known Edith since childhood; the two recognized each other as having been neighbors in the city of Basel. The parapsychologists gave Edith her first Szondi test, designed to gauge her emotional drives. This caused her to complain of a headache. Shortly afterward, while Edith was in the bathroom, members of the research team heard "an explosive sound in the kitchen." They found various doors open, but that of the bathroom closed. On the kitchen floor was an umbrella, which, earlier, had stood in the umbrella stand.

When everyone, including Locher and Mollet, assembled in the living room, Edith suddenly "developed a rigid look, stretched out one of her arms into a horizontal position" and, as Mr. Richiger reported, "fell sideways into my lap, clutching my arm with a force that I had never suspected in her." She recovered quickly afterward and did not remember the incident.

Following this, the second test and the Geller-like spoon-bending took place. In this and other post-Geller happenings, incidents that are known in psychic research as poltergeist phenomena were recorded. Originally, the German word *Poltergeist* stood, literally, for "noisy ghost." However, it now covers a variety of happenings that are not usually associated with ghosts or spirits, but may be the physical side effects of psychological tensions.

By now, around eight P.M., Edith helped team members who were making coffee in the kitchen. At one point she stopped in the frame of a door. Mr. Richiger reported, "I was just about to speak to her, when there was a crashing sound in the kitchen. We hurried into the kitchen and found, near the window, an undamaged cup that had earlier been in the sink. The same thing happened later on, but with a cup that had been standing on the kitchen table. But even then, I and one other researcher had Edith fully in view. She kept standing in the doorway."

Now, three of the visitors, including Richiger, went into the kitchen to observe any further physical disturbances more closely. While two others remained in the living room, sitting at the table, they heard the sound of breaking crockery: a cup had "jumped off the table, hit the window, and crashed to the floor."

Before the get-together ended, Edith went to the bathroom once more. Everyone else remained in the living room, and all doors, except the bathroom door, were open. They heard what sounded like heavy pounding against the bathroom window; the same thing had happened during the first such incident. Next, there was an explosive sound. Richiger rushed into the hall and reported, "I found an electric bulb on the staircase; to be exact, on the fourth step from the bottom." He continued: "When Edith left the bathroom, we noticed that the bulb in it had disappeared. Edith had not been aware of the teleportation; she had not dared to turn on the light, afraid that she might cause additional damage."

The sum total of the research visit was: (1) Movement—by "teleportation"—of an umbrella over three meters, and the opening of one door. (2) Bending of three teaspoons, one steel pin, and of a pair of nail clippers. (3) Teleportation of three coffeecups. (4) Teleportation of an electric bulb through a closed door.

Mr. Richiger emphasized, in supplementing his original report, "I sat next to Edith during the bending of the first spoon, and I kept looking at her, all through it, from a very short distance. The metal pin was very strong, and we found out later that it could not be bent normally, by hand. One other researcher, Thomas Meier, was looking at Edith all through the bending of the steel pin and the clippers. I am convinced that any fraudulent pressures would have been discovered by the observers."

The Edith Aufdermauer case is only one of many that have come to the attention of Swiss researchers. The Biel group of parapsychologists appealed to the public, following Geller's TV appearance on January 23, 1974, to report any psychic phenomena that had been observed during or following the performance. The Swiss had gained experience from reports that had reached them following Geller's appearances in England, Germany, and Norway.

Under Dr. Locher's guidance, the Swiss researchers sought to follow up all seemingly valid and significant cases of such Geller-like phenomena. They spent some two weeks on their

investigations. All told, they heard from forty-four families or individuals, who reported fifty-six cases of watches that had been at least temporarily restored to working order during or following the Geller telecast. Thirteen families reported on numerous bent or broken keys, spoons, and other metal objects. Twenty-four watches were closely monitored for approximately twelve days.

Dr. Locher, writing in the *Bulletin* of the society (May 1974), reported that on-the-spot inquiry confirmed the general parapsychological finding that psychological tensions often coincide with certain psychic phenomena. He wrote, "As we have learned from past cases, the majority of those reporting them [63% of the persons with revived watches, eight out of thirteen families with either bent or broken objects] revealed various psychological tensions." Nevertheless, a strong minority (33% of the watch cases and three of the thirteen "cutlery-benders") were viewed as "of the level-headed type." These, of course, are statistics with a very narrow base; as a rule, such conclusions are drawn only when a large number of cases permit broader quantitative evaluation.

Locher analyzed the Geller-type phenomena, which have shown striking frequency and uniformity throughout Europe—there has been nothing to compare to it in the United States—in the following terms:

"The capacity to achieve psychokinetic performances [mind-over-matter phenomena] appears to exist in many people. However, life situations or psychological conditions hardly ever exist that might release these faculties. Uri Geller may have the rare gift to use his example in order to release or activate such PK capacities. Yet, it seems unimportant whether, at the time of a TV showing, he is personally and 'live' in front of a television camera, or whether a station transmits his performance later, from tape."

Locher referred specifically to the case of twenty-year-old Priska Sieber (this is not her real name), who showed mind-over-matter gifts when the Geller TV show was repeated, from tape, on March 18, 1974. The Swiss parapsychologist refers to Miss Sieber, who lives in the small town of Spiez, as an "intelligent, highly strung, psychokinetically gifted young woman, who was able to show PK phenomena under very strict control conditions."

Miss Sieber approached Dr. Locher after he gave a lecture in Spiez. She had with her a great number of bent and broken objects which, she said, had changed shape during the

TV transmission either while being rubbed or while remaining untouched. The actual later investigation of Miss Sieber included such safeguards as having her disrobed by a nurse, having her clothing examined carefully, supervising her getting dressed, and finally taking precautions to keep her away from any objects that might be used to bend or break metal pieces.

During the taped rerun of the Geller show, Priska Sieber managed to bend a number of objects by rubbing them, and other items—which she had not touched—also changed shape. Facing Locher, Priska operated on her own, two days after the repeated show, to bend seven nails, one after the other, rubbing them with her index finger. Dr. Locher reported to his society that “any fraud would have been uncovered immediately.” Concerning Miss Sieber’s psychological makeup, Locher further observed that “she is physically underdeveloped and shows evidence of marked psychological conflicts.”

Locher was not satisfied with conditions under which Miss Sieber undertook her initial bending phenomena. But on February 2, in addition to the examination of her clothing, electric devices were used that made it impossible for her to move among the pillows, furniture, and baseboards within the room without being detected. Dr. Locher satisfied himself that Priska’s ability to bend nails under these conditions was truly paranormal. He stated in a written report to members of the society (June 1974) that “purely mechanical bending, without instrumental aid, could only have been done by a very strong man; and, in that case, the bending ratio would have to be much wider.” He added that it would have been quite out of the question for Miss Sieber to have used her teeth in such a feat.

The Swiss society now keeps in its archives the various items that Priska Sieber bent during the rerun of the Geller show. These include two heavy keys, one nail, one small key, and a corner iron. She had bent these pieces by rubbing them with her fingers. She and her mother claimed that, at the same time, the following items had bent without being touched: a small pair of scissors that had bent about 120 degrees, a metal vegetable chopper, a large soup spoon, the holder of two bathroom glasses, and, discovered the following morning, a four-armed wrought-iron candle holder.

While impressed by Miss Sieber’s performances in his presence, Locher remained alert to possible fraud or sleight-

of-hand. He took into account that the young woman did not like to be directly observed while bending the various items. In order to disguise his attention, the parapsychologist busied himself on the telephone or with his camera equipment, while all the time keeping her under close observation.

In his report to the society’s membership, Dr. Locher said that Miss Sieber rubbed the nails with the index finger of her right hand, while holding them between thumb and index finger of the left hand. He stated: “Use of any supplementary tool would have been revealed by a variation in this procedure.” At one point, Priska rubbed a nail under a bed cover, and it bent. In another case, one nail that at first failed to respond appeared to bend afterward by itself.

The nails bent under these conditions were microscopically examined in a laboratory of the United Wire Works in the city of Biel, where “they showed no indentations of any kind.” Locher observed that no wooden edges had been in the range of Miss Sieber at the time of the experiment, so that bending over wood—which presumably would not have left the kind of indentation made by metal—could be ruled out.

Locher also undertook a limited card test with Priska, using six standard playing cards. She correctly named one queen, one jack, and one king, but guessed wrong on the remaining three cards. Although Dr. Locher evaluated these results as “remarkably significant,” the test would seem too limited for acceptance by widely used statistical standards. In order to judge Priska Sieber’s clairvoyant or telepathic capacity, a very much larger number of test runs would have to be made, preferably with the use of standard ESP cards (cross, square, circle, wavy lines, and star).

Priska Sieber’s physical and emotional development includes, according to Locher, not only lack of height—while she is otherwise feminine and attractive—but, except for six new teeth, retention of her baby teeth. Her menstruation had been considerably delayed. While she did her psychokinetic experiments, Priska complained of pressure in her head. She speaks of neglect by her parents during her childhood years, of feelings of inferiority, resents conflicts between her parents, and is regarded as excessively sensitive to real or imagined slights. Priska is also described as given to daydreaming, occasional suicidal fantasies, but as otherwise alert, and given to sound judgment. She has a number of intellectual interests.

The Swiss researchers do not rule out that Priska Sieber's personality development might have prompted her, consciously or unconsciously, into the direction of imitating Uri Geller and thus sharing the attention he received. If so, she certainly succeeded, at least to the extent of enlisting her mother in publicizing her feats, and in gaining the attention of the Swiss parapsychologists. Whether this emotional need sharpened her psychokinetic powers, or uncovered them, or, as outside critics would doubtless suggest, prompted her to perform sleight-of-hand undetected by the researchers, could only be established through further experimentation. Whether her PK feats, and those of others like her, will outlast the Geller notoriety can only be decided by the passage of time.

The Swiss examples illustrate the hundreds and possibly thousands of phenomena, or claims to phenomena, that resulted from Uri Geller's TV performances in Europe. Dr. John Taylor, Manchester University, has established a large collection of such cases in the United Kingdom, following up on written reports with on-the-spot investigations. In Switzerland, television stations received reports about some three hundred watches that, during or after the Geller performance, had begun to run again; all told, some nineteen thousand telephone calls or letters were received that dealt with watches, bent cutlery, keys, and nails.

In West Germany, where a Uri Geller show was broadcast on January 17, 1974, the number of reports was proportionately larger. The *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie und Grenzgebiete der Psychologie*, edited by Professor Hans Bender (Freiburg University), reported in its first issue of 1974 that Bender received "an avalanche of claims and reports." The German daily newspaper *Das Bild* received 1,450 letters, which it forwarded to Professor Bender's Institute for Border Areas of Psychology and Mental Hygiene. The *Bild* editors had asked Geller, while he was staying at a Zurich hotel, to concentrate on objects selected by its readers at the same time. The reports received by Professor Bender's institute included 2,885 claims concerning reactivated watches and 1,112 claims concerning objects that had bent.

Dr. Locher, commenting in the Swiss society's *Bulletin* on the "Geller effect" on TV viewers, wrote that it had been "unthinkable," until Uri Geller's appearance, that a "medium could influence others in the creation of psychokinetic phenomena, without being in personal contact with them." He added: "That this has turned out to be the case, in thousands

of Swiss families, is a fact which most natural scientists find emotionally unacceptable. We are in the midst of events that push the frontiers of the possible farther and farther out, due to newly discovered facts in the area of parapsychology."

Hans Naegeli, M.D., president of the Zurich-based Swiss Parapsychological Society, which operates separately from the Biel group but exchanges data with it, has published a theoretical appraisal of the Geller and Geller-type phenomena. Geller's feats, he said, "are nothing new to the parapsychologist who is familiar with the facts and concepts of telekinesis [the inexplicable movement of objects from one place to another], and with psychokinesis [the mind's impact on physical objects]." He said in a church monthly, *Kirchenbote* (Schaffhausen, April 1974), that shape changes, the bending or breaking of objects might be called "psychoplastic." He added:

"Psychokinesis and psychoplastic are in evidence whenever a magical event takes place. Parapsychology regards magic as the impact of unknown mind-energy elements. These are independent of space and time. We find such positive magic in the practice of mental healing (Logurgy). We are not yet capable of grasping the functioning of magic in scientific terms; indeed, it may only be understood in terms of natural philosophy. And yet, Jesus Christ was a logurgist of truly divine quality."

Dr. Naegeli noted that Geller's impact on TV audiences was unprecedented: "Everyone could, at last, see with his own eyes that mind influences matter, and possibly even controls it."

That Geller's demonstrations should, in fact, have had such profound impact in Switzerland has caused some surprise. In the view of people elsewhere, the Swiss are so eminently level-headed and unemotional that the sudden emergence of Geller-like phenomena seemed out of character. Statistics compiled by market researchers tell a different story.

The Institute for Market and Opinion Research, Scope, at Lucerne, has reported that "hundreds of thousands of Swiss citizens know the supernatural from personal experience." Scope based this conclusion on a survey it undertook in the summer of 1973, questioning 1,003 women between the ages of twenty and sixty-four, who lived in large, medium-sized, and small towns in the German- and French-speaking regions of Switzerland. The results were as follows:

Of those questioned, 9% said they had personally experi-

enced inexplicable phenomena. The most frequent reports came from older women, those who were working, and those residing in large cities. Those in upper-income brackets also tended to report personal experiences. In addition, another 15% reported that a "supernatural" event had taken place within their circle of family members or acquaintances. Generally speaking, the distribution of such reports was the same in both language areas, and as frequent in larger as well as smaller towns.

The most frequently reported phenomena were those classified as telepathy (9½%). Next came clairvoyance and precognition (5.4%). More than 3% reported messages or appearances of the dead. More than 2% reported haunting phenomena. The Scope evaluation of its survey noted that "while paranormal experiences are frequent in Switzerland, only a minority of just above 20% regards the supernatural as in the realm of possibility." Some 60% of those queried rejected the existence of a "supernatural world," and this viewpoint was shared by women in three age groups: from 20 to 34 years old, from 35 to 49, and from 50 to 64.

To the degree that a comparison of these Swiss statistics with similar surveys is possible, certain points of similarity are striking. Everywhere, and that includes the United States, Europe generally, and other continents, telepathy is most frequently reported; other categories are experienced with lesser frequency in about the same ratio as in Switzerland. The Swiss reaction to Uri Geller represents, because of the limited geographic area, an almost laboratorylike example of Geller's impact on TV audiences. That no such strong impact has been recorded in the United States may be attributed to the fact that, within the vastly greater variety of television shows available to U.S. audiences, Geller has been a lively fish swimming in a very large lake, whereas before European TV cameras he was more like a glittering fish in a small pond.

BUT IS IT ESP?

Robert Brier

Bob Brier is an associate professor at C. W. Post College in New York. He is also on the faculty of the New School for Social Research, where he teaches a course in experimental parapsychology. Prior to teaching, Dr. Brier was on the research staff of the Institute of Parapsychology (Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man), in Durham, North Carolina, from 1966 to 1970. Among his nonprofessional achievements, Dr. Brier is a long-distance runner, and he completed the Boston Marathon in 1974.

Uri Geller is undoubtedly the hottest topic in parapsychology. Many in the field are convinced he is a fraud, others are certain he is a gifted psychic, and the remainder simply don't know what to think. The reason there is so much disagreement about Geller is that the few parapsychologists who have worked with him have not given him the standard tests—ESP cards, dice tests, etc.—that other parapsychologists would readily accept. With few exceptions, all they've done is watch him draw doodles, bend spoons, and materialize and dematerialize objects.

I first heard about Geller when a colleague described him as an Israeli magician who faked psychic ability. Parapsychology has more than its quota of fakes, and I simply assumed at that time that Geller was another one. However, when he was brought to the United States by Andrija Puharich and the stories of his amazing performances began to spread, I became interested.

In February 1973, Allan Angoff, of the Parapsychology Foundation in New York, called and invited me to see a film that Russell Targ and Hal Puthoff had brought from California. The film was a record of their six-week investigation of Uri Geller, done at Stanford Research Institute. It was in color, about twenty-five minutes long, and narrated by Puthoff.

One of the most impressive experiments on the film was

the opening one, in which Geller was given a sealed envelope containing a drawing he was to reproduce. On a pad he drew a square with straight lines within. The envelope was then opened. When Uri's doodle was compared to the actual drawing, it was almost identical. Puthoff held up to the camera the logbook of all similar experiments, and all were as impressive as the one on film.

There were also statistical experiments in which twelve identical 35-mm film canisters were placed upright in a box. One was filled with water; the remaining eleven were empty. Geller entered the room and, without touching the canisters, pointed to one he felt did not have water. The canister was opened and indeed had no water. He repeated this without error until there were about three canisters remaining. He then told the experimenters which of the remaining ones had water. He was right, and the experiment was repeated five times without an error. The same thing was done with a large steel ball bearing placed in one of a set of twelve film canisters. Again, a flawless performance.

An interesting sequence was Uri bending metal. He was given a tablespoon which he held between his thumb and forefinger and rubbed near the neck. The photography was superb. There was a mirror beneath his hand, so the viewer could simultaneously watch the top and bottom of the spoon. After a few minutes the spoon was out of shape—as if it had been subjected to extreme heat and drooped. The photography was good, too, but one still couldn't tell what really happened, or precisely when.

The film ended with a summary of what had been shown in the previous twenty-five minutes.

When the film was over, Targ, Puthoff, Angoff, Mrs. Eileen Coly, president of the Parapsychology Foundation, Robert Coly, its administrative secretary, and I went out to lunch. No one was quite sure what to do next. Puthoff and Targ wanted more money than the foundation was able to give, though all agreed the film was interesting. Angoff seemed very skeptical, and I felt that I was more interested in following it up than anyone else. Targ mentioned that Geller was living in Ossining with Puharich, and I suggested to Mrs. Coly that we all go up there, or meet in my house, and observe Geller first hand. She thought it was a good idea and said she would think about calling Puharich. Nothing happened for a few weeks. I wrote to Allan Angoff and learned

that everyone there was too busy, but they thought I should go ahead on my own.

Martin Ebon knew Puharich, so I asked him if he would make a phone call to see if he could get us invited to test Geller. He said he would, but before he did, Alexander Imich, a member of the Prometheus Project (a small group investigating parapsychological phenomena), called and invited Ebon to a session with his group and Uri Geller. Martin then arranged an invitation for me.

At eight P.M. on Wednesday, February 28, we arrived at a Central Park West address. Dr. Gertrude Schmeidler and her husband, Robert, were sitting in the lobby. Dr. Schmeidler, of the College of the City of New York, is an authority on psychological aspects of extrasensory perception (ESP). They, too, were invited, but had arrived early and were waiting for eight o'clock. We all went up together. The session was held in the home of an elderly couple. The husband was a retired anthropologist, and the apartment was furnished with a considerable number of artifacts from various American Indian tribes.

Quite a few people had arrived, but not nearly the full fifty-two that I counted later in the evening. There were the usual types: little old ladies who "just love" ESP; middle-aged matrons with gold dangling from every extremity; skeptical husbands dragged along for the evening; and lots of academic types. Gertrude, Bob, and I went over to a couch where we thought we would have ringside seats. After we'd spent about twenty minutes greeting people we knew, the guest of honor entered.

ESP Superstar, Uri Geller, was quite good-looking and fashionably dressed. He is in his late twenties, and starting to get a little heavy. He was accompanied by Puharich. Everyone settled in the large living room, which was set up with numerous director's chairs. A Brillo-topped Roger Price-type placed a compass on a coffee table in the front of the room and explained who he was—Gary Feinberg, a physicist at Columbia University and a member of the Prometheus Project, which seeks to "convince the world to consider its long-range goals." He asked that everyone state his name and what he did. There was a preponderance of academicians from Columbia and middle-aged women who said they did nothing.

Next, Puharich began to introduce Uri Geller. A very smooth introduction: "Uri is a nice Jewish kid interested in

fast cars and girls. To Uri, this is life." He described some of the experiments conducted with Geller. One claim was that Uri had once psychically cracked a gold wedding band. The ring was sent to a laboratory for analysis, and the report stated that such a fracture in gold had never been seen before. After about ten minutes of introduction, Puharich explained that Uri had been in Philadelphia for the past two days, working with scientists, and was quite tired. Then, from the back of the room, Geller made his reentrance. He explained what he would try to do, but said that Puharich made everything sound too easy and sometimes he couldn't do anything. He was a charmer.

Uri had been given several pads of paper, and these were passed out. He said he would begin with some telepathy. He pointed to a fellow in the back of the room and asked if he had a pad. He did. He asked him to leave the room and write a two-digit number on his pad. He turned to me and said, "You're with me. I'll try to get the number and send it to you." While the fellow was out of the room he asked Lawrence LeShan, a New York psychologist, to write a two-digit number on his pad. Before Larry did, Uri turned his head away. I was glad to see that he wasn't "pencil reading," a standard magician's trick, and I was pretty sure he couldn't hear the scratching of the pencil on the pad. The fellow from the back of the room returned, and Uri told him to send the number, first the first digit and then the second. Uri didn't get anything. He asked the fellow his name and occupation. "Joel Pincus, mathematician." Uri replied, "No wonder I keep getting so many numbers." Everybody laughed happily. It had been a fast comeback.

Uri then turned to Larry LeShan and asked him to send the two digits. "Is the first one three?" "Yes." "And the second one four?" "Yes." LeShan held the paper up for all to see.

Back to Joel Pincus. "Is the first number five?" "No, not the first one." "Is the second number five?" "Yes."

Next, Uri said he would draw a figure and send it to a man in the back. Uri drew a house with smoke coming out of the chimney and showed it to some of us in front while the man closed his eyes. The man just couldn't get any message. Uri asked if anyone did. No takers.

He would now try for some physical effects. He asked for people to pass up to him metal objects, perhaps a fork. Everyone fell over himself trying to get Uri to use his object.

(There was clearly a demand for Uri Geller souvenirs.)

Geller selected a woman's barrette and asked a pretty young thing in the audience to come up to the coffee table and place her hand over the barrette. He asked her if she felt a force "like a field." She did. I was about ten feet from the barrette but couldn't see it under the girl's hand. Geller placed his hand over the girl's, but didn't touch it. They removed their hands, but no bending of the metal was evident. Geller decided to try it with a not-so-pretty, not-so-young thing. Again it was a dud.

A fork was requested, and Ebon passed up one he had brought. Another fork and a spoon were brought from the kitchen. Uri asked for yet another fork or spoon which would match one of those he had. He wanted a control against which a bent one could be compared. Ebon's fork was eliminated, and the host's fork was used instead. Uri asked for a fellow from the back to come up. It was Sidney Morgenbesser, a Columbia philosopher. He asked Morgenbesser to place his hand over the spoon. He then placed his hand over, but not touching, Morgenbesser's. I was about five feet away and could see daylight beneath Morgenbesser's cupped hand. The front and back tips of the spoon were just visible. They both removed their hands. Another dud. They tried again, and I could see a bit more of the spoon. Again they removed their hands. A winner.

The spoon was bent! Ooohs and aahs. The spoon was placed on the coffee table for all to see. Uri asked if we could still see it bending. Most said yes. I lined up my eye, the spoon, and the corner of a picture hanging on the far wall. I didn't see the spoon bend and am pretty sure it didn't. But had a vote been taken, I would have lost. Uri asked that the spoon be put away somewhere where no one could see it. Then, perhaps, it would really bend more. A watched spoon never bends, and all that.

At this point Judith Skutch, one of Geller's backers, produced a trophy from a session with Uri in her home. A heavy silver spoon bent into a right angle by Uri. She was the envy of all women present.

Uri asked for some more metal objects. I gave him two metal keys to my office at C. W. Post College. The keys were especially thick, and both were on a ring from my key case. He picked up several objects and tried to psychically bend them, but with no luck. Then he tried my keys under Morgenbesser's hand. No luck. Then he put them on the coffee

table, and about ten seconds later he said, "They're bent." One was. I didn't have the keys constantly in sight, but they were in my field of vision. I believe that when Uri put them down both were straight, and before he picked them up, one was bent. The keys were passed around. Geller mentioned to me that maybe in a couple of days the bent one would straighten out. (It didn't.)

The next demonstration was one I had never heard of. Uri asked for broken watches that had all the pieces intact. Obviously several people knew about this, as they had brought broken watches with them. Uri touches the watch with his forefinger, and it starts running. He tried one watch with no success. Then he took one from Alexander Imich, touched it, and it started ticking! He said that even if the watch is unwound it will run for three days. (I later checked with Imich, and he said it ran for about a day.)

Uri was tired, but tried several other things without success. I left the room to get a Coke from a table in the hall. I left several physicists and Uri huddled over the compass. Since I heard no roars of approval, I assumed they didn't have any results of interest. Puharich came in and told his charge that it was time to go.

Ebon and I said our farewells and were about to go. Just before we left, Judith Skutch came over to me and said that Uri would be at her place in about a week, and just the three of us would get together with him. I said, "Great." The meeting never happened, and that night was the last I saw of Uri Geller.

After my encounter with Geller I realized why there is so much controversy about him: what he does seems very much like a magician's act, but no magician can duplicate it under the same conditions. That is, it fails to meet scientific standards, but is not a clear case of fraud.

What is puzzling about Geller is that although he has not been formally tested, he claims he cannot succeed with standard psi tests. If he can really clairvoyantly perceive drawings in envelopes, why won't he do a standard ESP card test and clairvoyantly perceive the five ESP symbols?

It would be a relatively simple matter to administer a DT (down-through) clairvoyance test. The ESP deck consists of twenty-five cards, each having one of five symbols on its face (star, circle, plus, square, and waves). The cards are shuffled by the experimenter out of sight of the person to be tested and are then placed in their box. The subject then guesses the

order in which he believes the cards are stacked. By chance, he should average five hits for each run through the deck, and if the experiment is repeated often enough, the odds against chance can be worked out to see just how well he did. In such a test Geller would not be allowed to handle the cards before the test, nor would he be permitted to touch the cards until after the checkup was completed by the experimenter. Here there would be little chance of fraud, and if he succeeded on a test like this, there would almost certainly be a considerable increase in the number of parapsychologists who take him seriously. In the past quite a few people have scored quite well on tests like these, and if Geller has clairvoyant ability, there is no reason he shouldn't succeed also.

Frequently Geller mentions that he works best with large numbers of people around him. This, of course, is not the best condition under which serious experiments can be conducted. As soon as I walked into the apartment where the session with Uri was to be held and saw all those people, I knew that there could be no serious testing. However, if Geller needs someone to think of a number, there are standard tests for this also, but they would not be done as loosely as at the session described. In a GESP test (general ESP) there is a sender and a receiver in separate rooms, and no sensory communication between them is permitted. The sender is given a number or symbol randomly selected by the experimenter and is told to try to send it to the receiver. There is no sensory communication until the receiver has indicated his guess. Thus there are no possibilities for watching the tip of a pencil to figure out what the number is. Also there are no possibilities of unconsciously tipping the receiver off, as there was when Joel Pincus said, "No, not the first one," when Geller asked if the first digit was a five. There is no reason these standard, experimentally tight tests couldn't be administered to Geller. It is even surprising that they haven't been. Geller seemingly wants endorsement of the scientific community. Doing well on standard tests is a sure way of getting it.

But Geller's ESP demonstrations aren't the most interesting things he does, and for this reason parapsychologists rarely mention his ESP claims when they discuss him. The ESP demonstrations he gives are too much like routine magic tricks, and the possibility of trickery is great. We have all seen magicians disclose the contents of a sealed envelope, but they don't bend metal the way Uri does.

This apparent PK ability has yet to be conclusively demon-

strated under carefully controlled conditions. Why does someone's hand have to be covering the object when it is bending? If it is PK, why does Uri have to hold the objects for them to bend? For a conclusive test, the object to be bent would have to be enclosed in a Plexiglas cage or some similar protective covering with no one touching it. Then it would be a simple matter to film the stationary object before, during, and after bending. This has not been done. In any conclusive experiment, Geller should not be permitted to handle the objects before testing, as he did in the session I attended. It is suspicious that a duplicate fork was requested (since this allows for the possibility of quickly bending the duplicate and substituting forks), while a duplicate key was not needed. Indeed, just as in a magic show, Geller pretty well calls the shots. He tells people what to hold, when to hold it, and so on. Also, as in a magician's show, Geller seems to carefully manipulate the audience's attention: while we were watching Geller attempt something else, the key bent. Geller then pointed out the amazing fact to us. From what I've heard of other sessions, this is something of a trend. Another pattern that emerges is that often Geller suggests that absolutely fantastic things will occur, but they don't. However, because other interesting things did occur, these claims are forgotten or it is assumed that in other meetings things like that happened. For example, in the session I attended, Geller started the telepathy demonstration by saying that he would perceive the number someone had written and was thinking of, then send it to me, and I would receive it. Had he done this I would have been impressed. But when the demonstration finally got under way, I was completely forgotten (by all but me!). After my key bent, he told me that in a few days it might straighten out. I traced an outline of the key on a piece of paper so that if it did straighten I could compare it with the tracing. I locked both the tracing and the key in my desk drawer. If it straightened, Geller would have had a convert. It didn't. The general trend is that Geller suggests that phenomena will occur under rather tight conditions, but they actually do occur only under looser conditions.

What is needed are experiments in which the experimenters are in control and are sure there is no possibility of fraud. Until then, the controversy will go on.

My bent key had an interesting, though brief, history. One of the students in my parapsychology course at C. W. Post asked about Geller. I told the class of my session with him

and the next day brought in the bent key. I passed the key around the class but forgot to collect it at the end of the period. The next day I asked the class if someone had the key. One of the students mentioned that he thought it had been left on the movie projector in the back of the room. The student suggested I check with the audiovisual department to see if they had picked up the key when they collected the projector. I called, and the audiovisual man told me not to worry. He had found the bent key and straightened it for me!

People who have worked with psychics say that it is almost inevitable that any psychic's personality should contain some kind of unholy self-regard, areas of confusion, or self-delusion about what they actually did or didn't do, and that the reason psychics usually eke out their unreliable powers by cheating is not merely to keep the audience, but because of their own need to reassure themselves that they've really got the powers. Many of Uri's antics could be read equally well as either pure showbiz or as the behavior of someone who is genuinely freaked by what it seems he can do and by the weird things happening unpredictably around him.

—Elsa First, in *Changes* (June 1973)

URI'S PSYCHIC ANCESTORS

Thomas R. Tietze

There is nothing new under the sun, and that includes Uri Geller's apparent powers over inanimate objects. To move or change matter by mind power has long been one of man's much-cherished desires. The history of psychical research presents many examples of what today is called psychokinesis, or PK. Mr. Tietze, best known for his biographical analysis Margery, the Medium (1971), is a frequent contributor to several parapsychological periodicals.

Is Uri Geller unique? Have any other mysterious characters in the fascinating and colorful history of psychical research produced similar phenomena? Whether the future will vindicate Geller's claims or not, it is a fair question to ask. Should the ability to alter the behavior or the shape of material objects turn out never to have happened before, then Geller's sudden appearance is even more startling. It is almost incredible that, during more than a hundred years, the watchful eyes of parapsychologists should never have seen such intriguing phenomena.

Needless to say, not everything Geller has done presents an insurmountable challenge. Many of his abilities, real or otherwise, have been duplicated by mediums or magicians. But the bending of small objects before the wary eyes of usually reliable observers is a feather in Uri's cap. Historians of psychic research have been unable to point to a single case that so impressively suggests an extraordinary talent to play fast and loose with physical laws in quite the same way. There have, however, been reports of people who astonished scientists with bizarre phenomena that may, in the last analysis—when ever that will be—tie in with our current puzzlement over the Israeli's abilities. Just where does Uri Geller fit in?

Reports of direct interaction of thought and matter have been tantalizing scientists for generations. In the past, however, most incidents seemed to involve the *movement* of ob-

jects: few have ever seemed to provide evidence that matter itself could be altered in some way.

The adventures of turn-of-the-century séance-room investigators often involved researching the claims of physical mediums—people who exhibit the ability to move tables and small objects without apparent contact, usually, however, under conditions that did not preclude the possibility of fakery.

In the first decades of European infatuation with Spiritualistic phenomena, the handsome and flamboyant Daniel Dunglas Home gave a series of séances for an up-and-coming scientist, later to become famous as the discoverer of the element thallium and the inventor of the cathode-ray tube—Sir William Crookes. Crookes's credentials are very impressive, but the following incident, drawn from Crookes's *Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism*, is an example of the dazzling events occurring in informal or vaguely reported conditions:

One of the most amazing things I have seen was the levitation of a glass water-bottle and tumbler. The room was well lit . . . , and Home's hands were far distant. The two objects remained suspended above the table, and by tapping against each other answered "yes" to questions. They remained suspended about six to eight inches above the table for about five minutes, moving in front of each person and answering questions. We verified that Home was entirely passive during the whole time and that no wires or cords were employed. Home had not entered the room before the séance.

Other physical mediums have passed even more impressive tests as psychical researchers learned to cope with the very special problems that plague this area of investigation. Eusapia Palladino, that vibrant and earthy Neapolitan peasant who flourished in Europe in the last years of the nineteenth century, puzzled the best researchers with the unparalleled force of her psychokinetic exhibitions. While being held hand and foot by a team of continental savants, Eusapia turned her plump face toward a heavy sofa on the other side of the séance room, grinned diabolically, and commanded the scientists to watch. Before the eyes of the whole team, the couch began to inch its way ponderously toward them. After the sofa had moved several feet, Eusapia laughed triumphantly, and, apparently responding to her wish, the heavy object re-

treated to its original location. The room had not been prepared by the medium, all precautions had been taken to bar trickery, and yet, the witnesses all testified that they saw the couch move.

In a later series of séances, with yet another reliable team sent by the Society for Psychical Research, London, in 1908, Palladino once again played havoc with cherished physical laws. In addition to the movements of small tables, the billowing of curtains in a closed room, and the delicate plucking of the strings of a toy guitar (provided by the researchers themselves), several spectacular apparent materializations occurred under the most stringent conditions. A curtain had been hung across an empty corner of the room; no doors, windows, or other means of access were there. Yet, on one occasion, in good light, the curtains parted, and a human hand emerged slowly, fingers outstretched, and approached the faces of the scientists. Then, slowly, the fingers closed into a fist, and the hand withdrew behind the curtain. When they looked in the corner after the sitting, no one was there. If the possibility of an accomplice is ruled out—as it seems safe to do in this case, given the minute pains taken by the observers—the only hypothesis that seemed to account for this event, as well as many others that occurred in the course of the investigation, is that Palladino possessed some remarkable ability to create things that looked and felt like living matter. Other similar materializations have been reported with other mediums, but perhaps the most impressive case is that of Rudi Schneider, an Austrian medium active in the 1920's and 1930's. Although Schneider's case presents many ambiguities, some of his most spectacular phenomena occurred in a London psychical laboratory under the observation of a team of scientists headed by Harry Price, an experienced student of physical mediumship. There, under conditions that were especially arranged to prevent Schneider from producing any effects normally, the observers saw recognizable human hands and unrecognizable solid forms emerge from a curtained corner similar to the one in Eusapia's séances.

"The *pièce de résistance* of this most remarkable séance," writes Price of a sitting with Schneider on December 23, 1929, "was the appearance of [a] feminine arm and hand, complete from elbow, which slowly emerged from between the curtains, with the basket between its fingers. . . . For the first time at any London séance one of the sitters made contact with a 'limb,' 'terminal,' or 'pseudopod'—call it what we

will. Lord Charles Hope [an eminent English physicist] was the lucky individual, and . . . the 'hand' touched his while it lay on the table under the subdued light of the lamp. The 'hand' was faintly visible, and Lord Charles stated that it patted his hand, and he *distinctly* felt the fingers. . . . Never, in the recorded history of any psychic, have phenomena been witnessed under such a merciless triple control of medium and before sitters of such repute."

But, even if the record of Palladino stood alone, we should still have outstanding evidence that some human minds are capable of moving and shaping matter through the exercise of their will.

Another case of physical mediumship suggests that matter can be even more dynamically disrupted. In the presence of "Stella C.," a young, pretty, modest English girl, scientists observed a heavy wooden table actually smashed to bits by an unseen force while the medium was being carefully controlled.

Harry Price, in his study, *Stella C.*, provides the following details:

The sitters then removed their hands from the table, only the fingertips of the medium remaining upon it. Movements of the table still continued. The sitters again placed their fingers on the table top, when still further power was developed with increasing violence, two of the legs breaking away from the table with a percussive noise as the fracture occurred. At this juncture [one of the sitters] excused himself and the séance continued without him. [The others] still retained their fingers upon the top of the table, which was resting on the remaining leg. Suddenly, without warning, and with a violent snap, the table top broke into pieces; at the same time the remaining leg and other supports of the table crumpled up, *the whole being reduced to what is little more than matchwood.*

"The sitting," Price ends with admirable reserve, "then concluded."

Less spectacular, but intriguing in a different way, is the testimony of dowzers that a dowzing rod appears to move of its own accord. In order to test this assertion, Sir E. Welby Gregory reported to the Society for Psychical Research in 1884, "the projecting extremities of the prongs of the twig

[were] held tight by pincers, so that there could be no voluntary action on [the dowser's] part. . . . Despite this, the point of the twig twisted itself upwards, till the bark was wrinkled and almost split, while the strain and pressure upon the muscles of the man's hand were most apparent." Though there are some interesting resemblances, it ought to be noted that Uri Geller's own muscular involvement seems to be minimal; usually the bending of the objects occurs following gentle, relaxed caressing of the place at which the bend is to begin. Except for Stella C., most mediums exhibit a considerable muscular tension during the occurrence of the major psychokinetic phenomena.

There have been defeats as well as victories in this difficult area of research, especially when the phenomena are small and therefore permit sleight-of-hand when observers are not expert in the techniques of "close" magic. This can be demonstrated by a glance at the sorry history of the investigation of alleged "apports"—the apparent transportation of matter through matter. Australian Spiritualists were shocked, for example, when they learned that their famous apport medium, Bailey, was in reality merely smuggling into the room the objects that would later appear as miraculous apports. The sprightly Boston medium of the 1920's, "Margery," for a time puzzled psychical researchers with her apparent ability to remove objects from a locked and sealed box without opening it. Although we are far from having the last answers with regard to this issue, our confidence in the reports on this phenomenon must diminish with our knowledge that the séance occurred in utter darkness in the presence of an investigator who was almost totally ignorant of the techniques of legerdemain. Perhaps most charming of all, we may recall the remarkable Mrs. Guppy, that very stout nineteenth-century medium who alleged that she herself was apported one evening from her writing desk, arriving, with an amazed expression and a pen still dripping with ink, on the séance table of a fellow practitioner of the Spiritualistic arts.

Such fanciful tales and such glamorous possibilities must seem alluring, but that is all the more reason for a cautious proceeding in the study of Uri Geller. Mistakes have been made in the past and are likely to be made in the future, unless the glittering prospect of such an alarmingly powerful psychokinetic performance is dulled by the plodding caution of laboratory research.

Still, given the existence of the extraordinary Palladino, and of other compelling cases, the bizarre abilities of Geller may, at the very least, seem less implausible. If psychokinesis in the past has been the ostensible cause of the movement, the creation, and the destruction of matter, then Geller's talent is not different in kind from the phenomena of the "Golden Age" of Spiritualism—it is only taking another, less familiar form.

Uri Geller, then, may be seen not so much as an unparalleled event of cosmic or prophetic significance, but rather as the most recent of a long line of individuals who have exhibited some mysterious control over the behavior of matter. The question remains, however: in which group will history ultimately find a place for him—as an essential figure in the story of our developing knowledge of physics, psychology, and psychical research; or as a person one chooses to "believe in" or not, as though truth were always doomed to be a mere matter of individual opinion?

In the end, it is all up to Uri Geller himself. Will he submit his talents to genuinely designed research programs, or will he succumb to the allure of the high priesthood already conferred upon him by his most zealous followers? We may hope that, with Geller, many of our most troubling questions about psychokinesis may at last be answered.

DR. PUHARICH'S UFO FANTASIES

D. Scott Rogo

Where would Uri Geller be without Dr. Andrija Puharich, the man who brought him to the United States and introduced him to members of the scientific community as well as to the parapsychological salons of New York City? Mr. Rogo, reviewing Puharich's book Uri: A Journal of the Mystery of Uri Geller (New York: Anchor Books, 1974), is concerned with the author's claim that extraterrestrial entities controlled both men and their close associates; he feels that Puharich failed to apply scientific parapsychological standards and that the evidence he offers falls short of the data provided by sightings of unidentified flying objects, be they terrestrial or extraterrestrial in origin. D. Scott Rogo has written many articles, often displaying his distinctive combative style; his most recent book is An Experience of Phantoms (1974).

For centuries there have been tales of contact between mortal man and extraterrestrials. The "prehistoric astronaut" craze, sparked by the controversial writings of Erich von Däniken, has invoked the theory that many archaeological enigmas might be explained as remnants of extraterrestrial visitations. Cave paintings of flying machines or the architectural feats of the Egyptians are regarded as chronicles of man's encounters with space visitors. Whether or not the "ancient astronaut" interpretation is the most cogent explanation for these enigmas is purely a matter of value judgment. However, what is important is that we are living in a highly technological society in which the concept of other-world civilizations and extraterrestrial contact is scientifically acceptable. The idea that man has had contact with space beings is given a slender degree of support by evidence that the many well-authenticated sightings of UFOs are of some sort of highly complex craft. Again, whether they are terrestrial or extraterrestrial is a matter of personal preference; some will

immediately assert that UFOs are space vehicles from another galaxy.

In summary, then, we live in a culture that considers, as a serious possibility, that man can communicate, or has communicated, with space beings.

Now, there is certainly evidence that UFOs and psychical phenomena share some middle ground. Such scientists as C. Maxwell Cade and Jacques Vallee have suggested comparisons between them. Vallee, writing in *Psychic*, has argued that contact with UFOs has often been via extrasensory perception; healings and other psychic feats occur in conjunction with UFO sightings; and the article included the photograph of a UFO which suggests that its power of locomotion is not by physical motion, but by a process of dematerialization.

It should not be odd, then, that eventually a psychic would claim contact with UFOs or space beings. Actually the history of mediumship is littered with accounts of such contact; George Valiantine, a famous and probably authentic medium of the 1920's, claimed Martian communications.

All of this has been outlined to make one point very clear before attempting an evaluation of Uri Geller, Andrija Puharich, and their alleged extraterrestrial contacts: throughout parapsychology's history there has always been a "space people" element; the claims of Geller and Puharich are in no way novel, nor do they rest on any firmer evidence, even though Dr. Puharich's scientific qualifications and technical writings provide a distinctly novel framework. I wish to examine the claims that Geller and Puharich have been the recipients of extraterrestrial contact by evaluating them from the standpoint of the laws of science required in parapsychology.

The story of how Puharich and Geller came to contact space intelligence began in Israel after Puharich began to experiment with Geller's ESP and PK ability. Puharich had witnessed some of Geller's feats (recorded in his book, *Uri*), and even though he offers the reader no descriptions of the experimental conditions of the tests, he was very impressed by them. Afterward, during a hypnotic session, Puharich suddenly heard an independent voice speaking in the room, which stated that it was an extraterrestrial. Eventually the voice told them that it came from a spacecraft hovering above the earth. Often, while a tape recorder was playing, the voice of the beings would appear on the tape, which afterward disintegrated. No one has ever heard these tapes

other than Puharich, Geller, and a few close co-workers, and since we have no evidence for the existence of these communications, we must rely completely on Puharich's word.

So, then, the only evidence offered that Puharich and Geller have contacted space beings is that: (1) they feel that Geller's abilities are explainable only on the premise that space beings are working through him; (2) they claim to have been given communications by the space beings; and (3) they have had several UFO encounters. None of these claims is novel.

(1) Psychics have long ascribed their abilities to other-world agents. Some have claimed that the "dead" control them, that fourth-dimensional beings control them, that "ascended" masters control them, and on and on. That Geller should believe, or come to believe, that his abilities stem from space beings illustrates how culture affects the psychic personality. During Spiritualism's heyday, all psychic feats were attributed to spirits of the dead. However, when a new interest in the Orient struck the United States around the turn of the century, many psychics began to claim that their powers stemmed from mysterious Oriental occult masters. Still later, when experimental parapsychology was born and matured, psychics claimed that their abilities were derived from the hidden recesses of the mind. In our day and age it is not surprising that a psychic should claim that his powers come from space beings. It is merely a cultural artifact. Had Geller been born a hundred years ago, he probably would have claimed that it was spirits of the dead working through him.

A claim made by Puharich throughout his book is that Geller's abilities are attributable only to the hidden agency of space beings who have declared that they are working through Geller. What exactly are Geller's abilities? We really cannot say what the boundaries are, since he has not been adequately tested scientifically. Oddly, Geller and Puharich's space communicators have, for absolutely no ascertainable reason, forbidden Geller to allow scientists to test him. A strange demand from a supposedly supertechnological society! Of course, such a demand is very convenient for Geller. His main abilities, resting on anecdote alone, comprise ESP feats, impressing his thoughts onto others, bending objects by PK, and materialization and dematerialization of objects.

Now, I see nothing *paranormally* unusual in these phenomena that would require belief that the ability came and was directed by anyone but Geller's own psychic gifts. Puharich

and Geller stress the materialization and dematerialization of objects as due to extraterrestrials. But why? Even a peripheral review of parapsychological history would reveal that many psychics such as the Polish medium Stanislaw Tomczyk and the Hungarian Eleanor Zugun often had objects materialize and dematerialize suddenly in their presence. This characteristic also occurs during poltergeist outbreaks. Yet we do not attribute these phenomena to space beings.

Geller never spoke of extraterrestrials until his contact with Puharich. This strikes me as significant. Also, these claims came after Puharich began hypnotizing Geller, and heaven only knows what kinds of suggestions were planted in Uri's mind during these sessions. Puharich had been long interested in UFOs. Is it only by chance that Geller never talked about space beings during his years as a stage performer or until he began his association with Puharich?

(2) However, let us turn to the space communications themselves. As recorded in *Uri*, the space beings did a mind probe of all human beings and chose Puharich as the *only* human ready for their revelations. This claim alone is hard to take seriously. One can read countless "UFO" books by "contactees" who make a similar claim. One thinks immediately of George Adamski, who claimed to have photographed and sipped coffee with space beings; or Albert Bender, who claimed in *Flying Saucers and the Three Men* that extraterrestrials materialized in his apartment and took him to a secret UFO base. Why should we believe Puharich and not these others? Can Puharich offer any better evidence for his claims? What about Puharich's tapes or photographs? Since all his physical evidence has a nasty habit of dematerializing, no evaluation can be made of them. It does strike me as strange that the space beings would choose to deliver their messages to earth and then systematically destroy all the alleged evidence of their existence.

Now, what of the communications themselves? I need say little about them. All one needs to do is carefully, or even casually, read them to see what they are worth. Again, it seems strange to me that such a supertechnological society could make such an effort merely to transmit a horrendous amount of twaddle. The following is a typical "communication":

The real intelligence behind us are ourselves. We have passed our souls, bodies, and minds into computers and moved several

of millions of light-years backward toward your time and dimension. In due time we shall receive all material coming back to our main center which is zoomed into a different dimension than yours. This different dimension lies beyond the so-called star, and so-called god, so-called planet that you call the sun. It is millions of light-years backward into the dishedold [sic] of the ages. That is where we are originally in. . . .

This type of meaningless circumlocution is repeated *ad nauseam*. Never are any technical or even truly scientific themes offered. There are a few sections using fancy words and concepts, but frankly these are not even up to par with Puharich's own jargonese as represented in his lectures and articles.

One also wonders why all the tapes disintegrated or dematerialized as Puharich claims, since clearly they held no scientific value. At the end of the book is a philosophy outlined by the space beings, which goes something like this: "I will say that cosmic ray is the channelized direction, rather than directed channelization, of the basic energy that constitutes the essence of cosmo. . . . At the very least, these cosmic circumlocutions resist logical disentanglement by mere human minds.

Actually, all of these "communications" are mere travesties—they even offer an incredible perversion of Einstein's famous formula. So here we have communications which make no scientific sense, offered by "space beings" who allegedly destroy all evidence of their existence, yet insist on making two or three somewhat erratically selected people their voice box.

(3) The third piece of evidence offered by Puharich and Geller is their claimed contacts with UFOs. The main evidence consists of their sightings and of photos taken of these craft.

If one is versed in UFO literature, the Geller-Puharich sightings are indeed odd. First, most of the sightings are really orbs of light, such as might be caused by a number of natural phenomena. However, orbs of light have often been seen which, although perhaps of a parapsychological nature, are not really indications of anything extraterrestrial. For example, during the frenzied religious revival which rocked Wales in 1904-1905, large orbs of light were often seen in the sky. Strange sky lights have long been noted by experts

on Fortean phenomena, and some of the antics of these fireball-like objects suggest a primitive form of animal life. At least this is the theory of the Austrian Countess Wassilko-Serecki. (For a discussion of these lights, one might refer to Vincent Gaddis' *Mysterious Fire and Lights*.) So, at face value, these UFO sightings are hardly convincing evidence.

However, Puharich and Geller describe something most interesting—that while *they* can see the UFOs, many other persons around them cannot. In other words, only they see the UFOs. Because of this anomaly, concrete evidence for the existence of the UFO is hardly forthcoming. I call this an "anomaly" because it does not fit in with what we know about UFOs based on more conventional sightings. Indeed, there is circumstantial evidence that UFOs can be invisible. For example, many UFO reports are based on radar sightings (often huge blips traveling at excessive speeds), yet visual sightings are not made by planes in the invaded area. This is a well-known phenomenon of UFO lore. It was Harold Wilkins, in his *Flying Saucers—Uncensored*, who collected cases of pilots who claimed they had crashed into huge invisible objects in the sky. However, if one goes over the hundreds of cases of visual UFO experiences, one will find that UFOs are always collectively seen. (Check Hyneck's *The UFO Experience*, or Aimé Michel's *The Truth About Flying Saucers*, just for starters.) So again the evidence put forth by Geller and Puharich consists only of their own unsupported testimony.

Puharich and Geller both claim to have photographed UFOs. However, here again the critical reviewer meets with a shock. The film of all the photographs has mysteriously vanished, just like the tapes, and what we are left with is only one UFO print. This photograph, not included in *Uri*, appeared in the June 1974 issue of *Psychic* and shows three flying saucers photographed through an airplane window. Had these objects been observed by other plane passengers and subsequently photographed by Geller, then we would have our first evidence that at least one aspect of Puharich's claims has some backing. However, this is not the case at all. Geller and Puharich record that Geller received an impression to photograph through the window, and only *later* did they find the UFOs when development of the film was made. But, as the original negative has "mysteriously disappeared," all we have is a print of the photo. As anyone versed in photography

knows, a single photograph or snapshot is worthless as evidence of anything.

Furthermore, a majority of UFO sightings reported by Puharich took place over the Israel deserts during a tension-packed time of the Arab-Israeli skirmishes. Because of this, and the presence of reconnaissance planes, helicopters, and all sorts of sky surveillances, one can't be sure what, exactly, Puharich and Geller were witnessing.

Puharich also makes the startling claim that the space beings turned into hawks and flew around Puharich's window or car as a sign of protection. Puharich reports that he once saw two hawks mate. He also claims he was promised a "Book of Knowledge" to reveal to mankind.

In the end, one's conclusions must inevitably be colored with regret. Subjective allegations are not evidence, and speculations regarding cosmic intervention, concern, and collaboration are not genuine analysis. It is regrettable, and indeed tragic, that a scientifically trained medical man, such as Dr. Puharich, who regards himself as a parapsychologist, chose to ignore the standards of evidence used in parapsychology or, in fact, in most other areas of scientific inquiry.

THE VIEW FROM JERUSALEM

Heinz C. Berendt

Uri Geller's controversial international triumphs have taken place during the years since he left Israel, the country of his birth. But it was in Israel that he began his career and where his remarkable abilities were noted by Dr. Andrija Puharich. How do Geller's phenomena, his claims, and his critics look to a leading Israeli parapsychologist? Dr. Berendt, who is president of the Israeli Parapsychology Society, gave a lecture on the subject "Uri Geller: Pro and Con" under the society's sponsorship early in 1974. The following contribution is based on this lecture.

To fully understand the intricate pattern of Uri Geller's worldwide impact, we should examine those elements of his personal history that have been explored in the Israeli press. Beyond this, as parapsychologists we must weigh most carefully the aspects of his performances that strengthen a serious interest in parapsychological studies, as well as those which tend to distract from it.

Geller has made a number of statements on his early life in interviews for newspapers and magazines and on television and radio. It is my understanding that other contributions to this symposium deal with this information. In addition, Geller's "discoverer," Dr. Andrija Puharich, has claimed that extraterrestrial entities are using Geller and Puharich as contacts with our own level of existence. But, as this information has been released outside Israel, and as we certainly have no way of either confirming or refuting it, I should not like to comment on it.

But we can presumably find clues to Geller's ambitions and drives in the early development of his personality. His father, of whom he speaks little, was a sergeant during the period of the British Palestine Mandate. As a member of the military force, he was esteemed for his reliability and integrity. Uri's early years show a contrast with this pattern of

discipline: during his school years, young Geller often disturbed lectures; his lack of concentration and interest made things difficult for some of his teachers.

According to the Israeli weekly *Haolam Haze* (February 20, 1974), Geller's adolescence was a period of restlessness. After living in Cyprus for several years, and then returning to Israel, Uri's apparent efforts to emulate or outdo his father's military achievements did not prove successful. Instead, he did not pass an army officers' course, and he did not stay with a parachute unit he had joined. A wish to be accepted as at least the equal of his father may have been a driving force behind the development of his gifts as a conjurer.

Psychologists tell us that the development of magical skills may amount to the channeling of a desire, based on childhood resentment, "to fool the adult establishment," to have the last laugh, to elude its supervision and control, to best it, to avoid being found out. Uri has made varying claims concerning himself and his family. Among these is the assertion that his constant companion, Shipi Strang, is his half-brother. Strang and his sister are frequently present at Geller's performances, and some stage magicians have claimed that Uri has received signals from them which enable him to perform conjuring tricks that masquerade as telepathy, as well as other stage magic. Whether this is so has yet to be fully proven. In any event, Shipi is not in any way related to Uri, but simply came to him as the brother of one of his girl friends who served as a collaborator in his public performances. The newspaper report claims that "the girl herself admitted that she has at times helped, from a seat in the first row of the audience, by giving Uri covertly prearranged signs."

It is my understanding that, while Uri travels and performs with Shipi and his sister, he often does so without their presence. It strikes me as of particular importance that, the magicians' claims notwithstanding, Geller appeared entirely by himself during crucial tests at the Stanford Research Institute in California, just as he has appeared on television shows in Europe and the United States, showing phenomena that could not have been influenced by the presence or absence of his assistants.

We of the Israeli Parapsychology Society have frequently been asked why we permitted Uri to "slip through our fingers." I have been personally questioned as to why we did

not subject Geller to controlled ESP testing of the laboratory type, which would have established whether or not he actually practiced clairvoyance, telepathy, and psychokinesis. The fact is that we did try to obtain Geller's cooperation in just such carefully planned experiments. I actually telephoned him no less than seven or eight times, asking him to submit to testing by our Jerusalem society. Twice I spoke to Uri personally. After that, his father was on the telephone, and later his newly acquired secretary. Finally, after he gave a performance in Jerusalem, Professor T. S. Rothschild, research advisor of the Israeli Parapsychology Society, invited Geller once more. Yet, in his interview with *Psychic* magazine, Uri claimed that he had "never heard" of us. I am not even ruling out that, in the manner of earlier mediums and sensitives, Geller may be subject to periods of disassociation, which may weaken or wipe out certain events from his memory—our repeated invitations included. But I do want to make it clear that we diligently pursued him in our effort to test his gifts in a controlled setting, right here in Israel.

By now, stage magicians throughout the world have accused Geller of actually being one of them, but pretending to exercise psychic gifts. Still, they have not really pinned him down. Nor have they, to my knowledge, repeated his "tricks" under the same conditions under which he performs. He has not been "caught" while actually using stage trickery. This pattern began in Israel, where he had such outstanding successes that he outdid all professional conjurers. True, a group of professional stage magicians managed to perform many, but not all, of his phenomena. Amateur magicians, including a college professor, gave a public performance in Tel Aviv during which they explained some of these tricks. It was after this that Geller's star declined in Israel, and he tried his luck abroad, where this star became a soaring meteor of public acclaim.

The magazine *Haolam Haze* has also published the claims of his former Israeli impresario, Daniel Pelz, who was quoted as saying that he originally believed Geller's performances in telepathy and PK (psychokinesis) were "totally genuine." Stage personnel seeing Uri perform held the same view. I was present during a talk in which Pelz spoke to some five hundred people about Uri's "tricks" and character. He said that Uri has a charming manner and appearance, makes a "strong impression on the female sex, and prefers women as subjects for his experiments." Usually Geller begins his per-

formance slightly behind schedule. As he has an excellent memory and a sharp eye, he is able to gain valuable clues from the fidgety audience while it is waiting for him to appear.

According to Pelz, Geller notes how the bored audience marks time by pulling a comb or powder box from a handbag, uses distinctive cigarette lighters, or gives away other personal details that may be used later in one or another of Uri's "clairvoyant" or "telepathic" revelations. Geller can thus reveal seemingly unknown details about the content of a bag, can name the brand of cigarette, or describe the size and color of a powder compact.

Pelz said that the feat of mentally guessing names or colors, which are first written on a blackboard and then erased, was accomplished by Uri through the use of an accomplice sitting in the first row. This accomplice, in standard stage tradition, used such signals as touching her hair if the color was black, crossing her legs to indicate brown, putting a finger to her lips for red, and so forth. Numbers were transmitted in a sign language similar to that used by deaf-mutes.

Uri has performed many tricks that called for being blindfolded, including driving a car. Pelz said that these blindfolds "were never 100% effective and always permitted some marginal sight." I understand that this technique is practiced by many conjurers and is widely known. Once, Pelz recalled, Uri had set himself the task of continuing, through "second sight," a line of chalk on a blackboard that had been begun by someone else. However, the blindfold had apparently been done too well, so he did not have enough marginal vision to find the right spot on the board. Uri hesitated, started to fumble, became nervous, and finally shouted, "Somebody disturbs me. In the balcony somebody has started to smoke." He tore off the bandage in simulated anger, discovered the smoker, reprimanded him, and then replaced the bandage as he wanted it done, and promptly succeeded with his experiment.

One celebrated stunt was Geller's "clairvoyant" knowledge of the death of Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser on September 28, 1970. Uri, giving a stage performance that day, appeared to faint in front of the audience, asked for a doctor, and appeared to be in critical condition. While apparently in some sort of spasm, he muttered faintly, "Nasser just died." The announcement met with disbelief, was regarded as a somewhat crude joke by the audience, and there was laugh-

ter. But on leaving the performance, the audience learned of Nasser's death and was duly impressed with Uri's "crisis clairvoyance." In actual fact, news of the Egyptian president's death had been broadcast during the performance; a note with the news had been covertly slipped to Uri while he was on stage. Overall, Pelz stated, Geller has excellent presence of mind, a gift to solve or exploit unforeseen circumstances, knows how to extemporize and manipulate his audiences.

Even taking Pelz's claims fully into account, together with various imitations of Geller's performances by professional conjurers, it is wise to see Uri's work in fair balance and from a parapsychological point of view. We need be carried away neither by Geller's own claims—including the unearthly-aid theory he has accepted from Dr. Puharich—nor by the outraged cries of the conjurers whom he has, if nothing else, outdone at their own game. For instance, a Mr. Alon duplicated Geller's trick of driving blindfolded before a television camera. I was present during the filming of his stunt. Alon explained how this was done, but that particular sequence was mysteriously eliminated from the telecast on the following day, perhaps to safeguard a secret of the magician profession.

While much has been duplicated by magicians, such tricks are, of themselves, insufficient to convince me, as a parapsychologist, that Geller uses their methods either always or occasionally. I feel that the magicians must duplicate the phenomena under precisely the same conditions as those under which Geller, or any other real or alleged medium, operates.

Geller's well-known performance of making unusable watches work is another case in point. Statistically, we can always assume that a certain percentage of such watches need only a little winding or shaking to make them work, at least for a time. When Uri performs before a large television audience, this percentage can amount to hundreds or even thousands of watches that "miraculously," or by some mysterious psychokinetic force, begin to run again. People then simply disregard the watches that didn't respond to the "Geller effect." My own watchmaker tells me that people come to him often with a watch that has not functioned in months. Quite often it starts and keeps going when he simply rewinds it, and nothing else has to be done. Sometimes, he says, tiny dust particles enter the oil between the small cogs and wheels and stop the mechanism. After some time the oil dries up a

bit; then, when the watch is rewound, the dry particles are dislodged and the newly wound watch starts to work as usual.

When all that is said and done, there seems to be no doubt about the nonparanormal side of Geller's work. Let us summarize some of the points that count against his effect being a genuine psychic (or psi) phenomenon:

(1) Psi phenomena tend to occur sporadically in Western civilization. The chances that anyone is always "psychic" are slim. You just cannot give one or two performances, almost daily, for months and even years on end, by relying exclusively on psi information and psi forces. Tricks must come in, even if part of Geller's power and knowledge is truly paranormal.

(2) We must not judge too harshly Geller's evasion to be tested by the Israeli Parapsychology Society. We know from Dr. Puharich's account that Uri Geller was very reluctant to be tested by the Stanford Research Institute. He attributes both this hesitation and Geller's eventual agreement to extraterrestrial influence. Be that as it may, perhaps Uri had gathered enough experience by then, and possibly his psi power had become strong enough to enable him to cooperate with the SRI.

(3) There are published allegations that Geller has said, at least earlier in his career, that he "sometimes" uses tricks, presumably in addition to his genuine psychic ability. I am aware that he has, in later interviews, denied using conjurers' methods; but I think he has become wrought up about continued accusations from professional magicians and does not realize that such denials are unnecessary. The question is not whether he sometimes uses sleight-of-hand but whether some of his phenomena are genuine.

(4) There is a respected tradition among serious mediums not to give public performances, not to accept payment, and to use their gifts exclusively for the benefit of mankind. Particularly when they have been impressed that their gifts have been bestowed upon them by a higher power, materialistic and self-seeking attitudes are frowned upon. Even when a medium has to earn a living from these gifts, this is to be done reluctantly and modestly, and not as a part of a publicized effort to make a fortune. One well-known Dutch paragnost, Gerard Croiset, best known for locating missing persons, never takes money for paranormal knowledge and advice, or from people in need. Geller, on the other hand, is frank in his desire for fame and fortune.

(5) Geller's explanations of his gifts, of his role in society, and of the origin of his seemingly paranormal powers, are often superficial. Some of the observations in the *Psychic* interview sound primitive and childlike. It is rare among psychic sensitives—one such rarity was Eileen J. Garrett, the late president of the Parapsychology Foundation in New York—to have insight into their own depth, or to define their experiences in a manner acceptable to scientists.

Must we, then, surrender to the view that Geller, his personality, motivation, and performance add up to a purely negative total? Is he nothing but a big minus sign to parapsychology? Certainly not. I am aware that leading U.S. parapsychologists, while quite unhappy over Geller's public notoriety, are nevertheless fascinated and continually open-minded concerning his genuine phenomena. Among these are Dr. J. B. Rhine, director of the Foundation for the Study of the Nature of Man, Durham, North Carolina; Dr. Montague Ullman, president of the American Society for Psychical Research, New York; and Captain Edgar D. Mitchell, director of the Institute for Noetic Sciences, Palo Alto, California. I tend to see eye-to-eye with these American colleagues. We must remain detached, not be tempted into simplistic conclusions, to remain aware of the complexity of these phenomena, and of the individual psychological motivations involved.

To put it briefly: the different appraisals of Uri Geller demand that, once we have heard the accusations concerning trickery, we inquire whether there is nevertheless a genuine psi power that enables him to perform an unmistakable psi experiment. I personally consider such a view completely tenable. In support of this opinion, I should like to mention these findings.

People who are psychically gifted are subtly different from others. We may call them mediums, paragnosts, or other names; but they tend to share personality structures that are the basis of their psychic abilities. It appears that during their paranormal performances they surrender part of their own personality, and at times it appears that they lose it completely. At such times, it seems as if an outside personality takes over, as in the case of an entranced medium apparently under the control of a discarnate entity, or in a case of "possession." We may assume that these are, in actual fact, projects or personifications enabling the sensitives to verbalize alien content, or information, which they have visualized or heard. They thus dramatize, in the form of a personality,

what they may have perceived telepathically or by clairvoyance.

In the same way, a good actor first learns his role and later "lives" this part so intensively that his tears, for instance, are natural when the script calls for him to weep. This sort of thing can exceed the intended goal in artistic production. Novelists are forever saying that the characters they are developing begin to "take over" the action of their narrative. Human imagination, as in the famous prophetic novels of Jules Verne, may take on truly precognitive qualities. One well-known example is Morgan Robertson's novel *The Wreck of the Titan*, published in 1898, which in remarkable detail foretold the sinking of the ocean liner *Titanic* fourteen years later.

To link this type of experience with Uri Geller, we must observe that all magic seeks to establish symbolic parallels, to imitate reality. Geller may thus be engaged in acting out an expected situation that ultimately changes from pretense to reality. It may all begin with childlike playacting, putting something over on the "adult establishment," with some well-rehearsed trickery. Yet, during the trancelike state of successfully dominating an audience, things may begin to happen which, starting with some hunch of "intuition," pass over into genuine paranormal knowledge.

I have been of two minds about Uri Geller for some time, and I must confess that my own feelings and conclusions have fluctuated. It is certainly too early to pass a final judgment on Geller, but we know that often there is no time limit on the discussion and interpretations of a sensitive's gifts. Many of the figures in psychic history still remain controversial: was he or she genuine or fake; did they fool their public sometimes, all the time, or never?

But there really are answers to such questions, at least now that we have the experience, the know-how, and the equipment to run carefully controlled experiments. With tape recorders and motion pictures, provided they are used skillfully, records of unusual performances can be made and rerun for further inspection. The balance between laboratory-type control and sufficient emotional freedom for the gifted sensitive can be established by the right kind of research team. In a case such as Geller, psychologists, physicists, and expert stage magicians should set up and run tests within the framework

of a university. People like Geller are a challenge to scientific ingenuity. Only when this ingenuity is fully employed shall we—perhaps!—be able to answer the question of the authenticity of such phenomena.

"JUST A MAGICIAN WITH A GOOD GIMMICK!"

Paul Langdon

Harry Houdini, the greatest stage magician of this century, gained wide publicity for his claims to be able to duplicate any mediumistic phenomenon by a mechanical trick or sleight-of-hand. Uri Geller is being challenged by professional magicians in a similar manner. It is one thing, they say, to create illusions of supernatural effects while admitting that they are caused by stage magic; but it is improper, in their view, to perform such tricks and allege that they are the result of truly supernormal ability.

"Look, I've seen magicians in action for decades. I know how they work. I know the history of stage magic, the techniques of sleight-of-hand, the whole range of tricks and psychological know-how that has made many of them excellent and a few absolutely superb. This Uri Geller—why, he is nothing but another magician, with a good gimmick. That's all. I don't see what all the fuss is about. . . ."

This is how one "insider" of the magic scene sees Geller. For him, all this talk about ESP, telepathy, and extraterrestrial influence is just so much clever publicity. One wonders why, if Geller is just one of them—representing a younger generation than most practicing magicians—do the veterans of the sleight-of-hand crowd resent Geller. Here is another comment:

"Of course, he is just another Kreskin. But Kreskin simply goes through all the motions and pretense while he is on stage. When he's with the boys, his fellow professionals, maybe meeting them in one of the stores that have specialized in magicians' gimmicks for years, he makes no such pretense. They talk shop, they know he is one of them, and they admire his skill, his showmanship, and they may be just a little en-

vious of his success. Sure, his gimmick is like Geller's, but he is a self-acknowledged professional who uses known magicians' devices and paraphernalia. These things are known by his fellow professions, but they have a long-standing code of not giving away the secrets of their trade—at least not the really crucial secrets."

The magicians' trade has regained some of the popularity it had in the days of Harry Houdini. Television is not suited for this type of showmanship. Stage tricks need to be performed in front of a live audience, and with its full participation, which might range from the time-honored request, "Take a card, any card!" to a lady volunteer for the sawing-in-half trick. The top-flight magicians of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century developed complex machinery that required props and assistants too expensive for today's performers; their slow build-up of suspense would make today's audience fidgety; its span of attention is too short but the magicians are adaptable.

Practitioners of the great art of magicianship are increasingly active. One of them is Milbourne Christopher, biographer of Houdini, historian of magic, and debunker of the pseudopsychic. Christopher feels that Geller is just another Kreskin but won't admit it. Kreskin, on the other hand, maintains in public that, while most of his performance is standard stage magic, he does practice about ten percent legitimate ESP. His fellow magicians answer this claim with a knowing smile. Of course, they seem to say, that's part of the act, just like the patter of talk, the air of innocence and surprise, the quick seemingly spontaneous movements of his body. It's all part of the act. Some psychic researchers have grown quite angry over Kreskin's claims to be practicing ESP. Particularly those who feel that extrasensory powers are something very special, should be guarded and practiced with care, and are best observed under laboratory conditions. To them Kreskin's claims make legitimate ESP look too easy, too trivial, or best suited for the glittering world of the stage and the TV studio. At least one member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians brought down the wrath of several colleagues on his head: as he was also a firm believer in ESP, he publicized some of Kreskin's tricks, described how they were done, and thus gave away some secrets of the trade, although in what he believed was a good cause.

Geller has said several times that he is annoyed when professional magicians attend his performances, obviously planning to expose him. But he also maintains that their claims add to the publicity he receives, and so merely provide more grist for his own mill. The magicians, in turn, say that Geller fails to perform when professional magicians are on the scene. They point to two major occasions when he failed: the Johnny Carson *Tonight* show, and a demonstration before invited guests at the office of *Time* magazine.

The *Time* meeting was attended by James Randi, a magician who calls himself "The Amazing Randi." A veteran performer, one of his most spectacular stunts is part of the Alice Cooper show. Cooper, who puts on a blood-curdling show filled with sadistic exhibitionism, is "beheaded" by Randi at the end of each nightly show. Randi, who lives in Rumson, New Jersey, is very active in the New York City area, travels widely, and has repeated many of the phenomena shown by Geller. Much in the manner in which Houdini exposed phony mediums while garnering publicity for himself, Randi has kept a file on Geller's career, together with a collection of videotapes of his TV performances.

Randi convinced at least one Geller enthusiast, Andrew Weil, M.D., totally. In a series of two articles in *Psychology Today* (June and July 1974), Dr. Weil described how he first became an enthusiastic "convert" to Geller's phenomena, but after seeing Randi, discovered that he had "never before had the experience of going from such total belief to such total disbelief in so short a time." He added: "Nor had I ever doubted my perceptions so thoroughly. Uri's unwillingness to perform in the presence of magicians seemed especially damning."

What had convinced Weil so completely, and what had made him change his mind so totally?

The sequence of experiences Weil had did not differ much from those described earlier in this volume. He had the feeling that, after a while, there was a special bond between him and the outgoing, charming Geller. The climax was what Uri did to Weil's belt buckle. Earlier, he had said that he never worked with buckles. But later, when other things had worked out well, he said, "Let's try it." Weil put the large brass buckle into his palm, on top of three keys, a knife, and change. His description continues: "I covered the pile with my other hand. Uri put his hand on top. More intense concentration. Suddenly I felt a distinct throb inside my hands,

like a small frog kicking. I told him so. 'You did?' he asked excitedly and opened my hands. I could see no change in the buckle. He pulled out a long steel key and cried out: 'It's bent, yes, it's bent! Do you see?' I did not see at first. But then I noticed a slight bend. It was very exciting. Uri put the key on the table to check it. Yes, it was definitely bent."

Weil walked away from this experience convinced that some of Uri's "powers I had seen that day seemed extraordinary and impossible to deny." The whole experience had been elating. He had really got along well with Uri.

But he got along equally well with Randi, whom he found "a delightful host, talkative, and funny, with a twinkle in his eye and a roguish look that always let you know he might be up to some trick." After Weil reported on his experiences with Geller, Randi showed him a table covered with envelopes, paper, nails, nuts, bolts, and aluminum film canisters—very much like Uri's paraphernalia.

As a "telepathy" trick, Randi asked Weil to make a drawing, seal it into one envelope, then another, then a third. While he did this, Randi was at the other end of the room. They put the envelopes aside, and Randi asked Weil to select six sturdy five-inch nails, put a rubber band around them, and put them aside.

With the drawing and the nails waiting their turn, Randi did "one of Mr. Geller's favorite tricks." He asked Weil to fill one container so full of nuts and bolts that they would not rattle around. One after another, Randi pointed to a canister, saying it was empty. Weil put it aside, recalling later, "Randi had a great sense of drama; I felt involved in his performance." Finally, there were only two containers left, and Randi passed his hands over them, as Geller often did, "feeling their emanations." Then he asked Weil to remove the one on the left. They opened the remaining container; it was full of nuts and bolts.

Randi said that he had used a magicians' trick, showed Weil how he did it, but made him promise not to reveal the technique, "because we magicians aren't supposed to reveal secrets," although "this is a special case." Weil promised, saw the trick, and decided that it was so simple that "a child could master it." It was based on, he wrote, "a subtle but easily perceptible difference between the full can and the empty ones, a difference that can be seen by anybody who knows what to look for." In this case, depending on the base on which the canisters were set, it might have been the differ-

ent indentation on the tablecloth, or possibly a bulge in the can crammed with metal pieces.

Randi really awed Weil with his trick of the bent nail. He picked one that was perfectly straight, "holding it between thumb and forefinger midway along the shaft." It bent, by about thirty degrees. Randi then showed, in slow motion, how he had done the trick, substituting a bent nail for the straight one, concealing the bend until the last moment. Dr. Weil was shocked by his own naïveté: "Suddenly I experienced a sense of how strongly the mind can impose its own interpretation of perceptions, how it can see what it expects to see, but not see the unexpected."

Magicians agree in their claim that Uri Geller does not use elaborate mechanisms or chemical substances to perform his tricks. He is, one of them says, "a master of misdirection, of simple but strong psychological influence." It is certainly true that there is a consistency in Geller's pattern in dealing with his audiences. He gives them a sense of participation. And because he claims that these things more or less happen without his conscious control, he can always express disappointment when something does not work—and gain audience compassion and sympathy at the same time—and he can set one trick aside, while switching to another, draw attention in one way, while quickly acting in another.

Kreskin's making a dollar bill walk across a surface is more impressive than some of Geller's run-of-the-mill key-bending tricks, but it presumably involves paraphernalia that could be detected or found on the magician's person. It is one thing for someone like Randi to duplicate Geller's performances before a wide-eyed Weil, but it is quite another to duplicate them under the same conditions that Geller does: around a restaurant table, on an airplane, in a car, before ten, twenty, a hundred, a thousand people. And before many TV cameras. True, the performance on the Johnny Carson show was dismal: Carson has a magician's background and had invited Randi to help him guard against sleight-of-hand by Geller. Similarly, Geller refused to perform before a British group called together by *The New Scientist* magazine, which probably would have included magicians.

The magicians have their own type of arrogance. They sneer at the scientists at the Stanford Research Institute, implying that no one is quite as gullible as a researcher in search of a scientific breakthrough. Magicians apparently

have been fooled, too. During telepathy experiments made by a British researcher, S. G. Soal, with two Welsh boys, one visiting magician attested to the excellence of the controls exercised over the boys; but he did not take into consideration the possible use of a supersonic whistle, commonly used for sheep dogs, which adults could not hear but the boys might well have used to communicate with each other.

The magicians appear to shy away from conditions that are tightly restricted and truly out of their control, while Geller seems courageous to the point of foolhardiness (assuming he does use stage tricks). Several years ago, *Popular Photography*, which also published the article on Geller's effort to photograph through a lens cap, gave room to an apparent exposure of "thoughtography" on the part of a Chicagoan, Ted Serios, under the supervision of a Denver psychiatrist and parapsychologist, Dr. Jule Eisenbud. Randi had said that he could duplicate Serios' photographs, which appeared to be images on film, originating solely in his mind and not in other outside stimuli. Eisenbud, angered but with considerable humor, wrote to the magazine as follows:

"I hereby state that if, before any competent jury of scientific investigators, photographers, and conjurers, anyone chosen by them can in any normal way or combination of ways duplicate, under similar conditions, the range of phenomena produced by Ted, I shall (1) abjure all further work with Ted, (2) buy up and publicly burn all available copies of *The World of Ted Serios*, (3) take a full-page ad in *Popular Photography* in order to be represented photographically wearing a dunce cap, and (4) spend my spare time for the rest of my life selling door-to-door subscriptions to this magazine. No time limit is stipulated."

Eisenbud's letter, a surely generous offer, was published in the magazine in November 1967. A letter from Randi asked for clarifications of "range of phenomena" and definition of test conditions, and further letters were exchanged between him and Dr. Eisenbud. But the matter petered out. A detailed account of all this appeared in *Fate* (August 1974), written by Curtis Fuller and entitled "Dr. Jule Eisenbud vs. The Amazing Randi." Fuller stated that "more amazing even than the abilities of Serios, however, is the manner in which The Amazing Randi avoided his promise to duplicate Ted's

accomplishments and in so doing remained the court favorite of the establishment and their ill-informed spokesmen."

There can be little doubt that an experienced stage magician can duplicate Geller's performances, using skill, psychology, and perhaps special equipment. But can any one of them duplicate them under the conditions Geller permits? Until someone like The Amazing Randi gets up among as mixed a bunch of people as Geller encounters, and in equally varied settings, many people will swear that Uri Geller simply must be practicing telepathy, psychokinesis, and other extrasensory powers—and that he may well be the emissary of extraterrestrial entities who use him as proof of their interest in mankind.

Explanations are numerous, and can be quite convincing. One critic of Geller, well versed in stage magic, analyzed his performance with CBS television personality Barbara Walters. He said that Miss Walters' obvious perplexity at Uri's skill may well have convinced millions that his claims were legitimate. How could his phenomena have been tricks? Well, in one case he was given a collection of twelve spoons, but controls over him were not strict enough to have made it impossible for him to weaken one of the spoons just above the bowl beforehand. As the next step, this critic noted, Geller passed up a spoon offered by Barbara Walters, picked another one, and said, "Let's do it with this one."

Next, Geller asked Miss Walters to hold one end of the spoon, at the very end of its handle, while he manipulated the center parts with thumb and forefinger. This way, he gave Barbara Walters a feeling of participation and her TV audience an assurance that, with the competent veteran of the *Today* show involved, everything had to be on the up-and-up. He followed this segment of spoon-handling by saying, "Perhaps we ought to try it the other way around," asking Miss Walters to hold the spoon at the front end of the bowl. In this way, the gravity could exert itself on the longest part of the spoon, the handle, pulling the spoon downward from the point just above the bowl that had been weakened beforehand.

Quite a convincing explanation. And yet, many Geller observers are under the impression that he is much too impatient and jumpy, has too short a span of attention even to prepare such a trick, much less execute it with precision and cunning. The magicians say that his personality, at least in the way he projects it upon individuals and group audiences,

is Geller's greatest asset. He comes on with a mixture of bafflement about his own abilities and a childlike delight whenever something goes right. ("Look, look, it's bending. It has never happened like this before. I wasn't even trying to bend it just now. These things just happen around me, I don't know why. . . .")

He is, they say, a master of misdirection. He begins something, and if it doesn't seem to work, he goes on to something else; and when he returns to the original item, something has happened to it. His patter has a pattern: he is very tired but will try his best; he apologizes for being on the run but is gracious and disarming, eager to please, downhearted when things don't come out all right. The audience is on his side, eager, in fact, to please him by going along, possibly by seeing and testifying to something of which it is not fully convinced.

And yet, and yet. One American parapsychologist had a watch stopped with a thin sheet of metal film wedged into its mechanism (see p. 167). Uri gave it one of his "watch healing" treatments. The watch began to work. When it was reopened later, the metal film had moved—by psychokinesis?—so as to free the mechanism. What had happened? This was not one of those watches that had been lying around for a year or two, and which responded to being handled by ticking for a half-hour, only to stop again, more or less permanently.

Other means of creating the "Geller effect" are outside the stage magic tradition and are rejected as "too fancy" by some magicians. One such test was ordered by the German news magazine *Der Spiegel*. It took one spoon which Geller had bent and broken during his stay in Vienna and submitted it to the Federal Institute for Material Testing in Berlin. In a testimonial dated January 25, 1974, the institute described the metallic composition of the spoon (which belonged to the Hotel Imperial in the Austrian capital), reported on its appearance, provided a spectral analysis, as well as an examination of the break itself. After describing the spoon's composition (an alloy of copper, nickel, and zinc, silver-plated), the institute noted that the break could have been created by normal use, by forcible bending, or, as its chemical experimenters noted, by application of silver nitrate or quicksilver, a poisonous fluid.

But did Geller go around the Vienna hotel sprinkling silver nitrate on cutlery? While a magician might reject such an ex-

planation as "too fancy," a layman is inclined to doubt such chemical conjuring as too elaborate a trick for Geller's seemingly free-and-easy performances, and for the frequency with which he does this sort of thing.

It is doubtful that Geller himself will encourage laboratory experiments that are more carefully controlled than were those at the Stanford Research Institute in California. This puts the challenge back into the hands of the magicians. Can they duplicate Geller's feats, with his apparent ease and seeming unconcern, before a variety of audiences and under many different conditions? The answer is up to them.

THE SHOW-BIZ TOUCH

Mary Bringle

*Uri Geller moves about the globe too speedily for any sort of "in-depth" profile of his psychology: his hopes, fears, drives, frustrations, Oedipal or non-Oedipal complexes. But what is a modern celebrity without at least a fly-swatting attempt at analysis? Mary Bringle brings humorous insight to the psychic scene and its show-business aspects, as she has documented in her book *Jeane Dixon: Prophet or Fraud?* (1970). She is a writer for a number of magazines and the author of a novel, *The Footpath Murder*.*

What can you say about a twenty-seven-year-old man whose gaze causes forks to bend and clocks to stop? Who claims to communicate with beings in outer space and makes solemn pronouncements about his affiliation with "godhead"? That he's an authentic wonder? A charlatan? A canny showman?

All these things, and more, have been said about the man in question, and some of the most peculiar opinions have been advanced by the *Wunderkind* himself. Naturally, these latter evaluations are of the variety crudely called breaking-one's-arm-to-pat-oneself-on-the-back, and they range from the charmingly ingenuous to the absurd. In case you are still not aware of the identity of this psychic three-ring circus, we are speaking of Uri Geller, the young Israeli whose demonstrations of psychokinesis (ability to move or bend objects without touching them) has held audiences in thrall, from the nightclubs of Tel Aviv to the late-night television talk shows. He has been the subject of a controversial study held by the prestigious Stanford Research Institute (SRI), and is the hero of *Uri: A Journal of the Mystery of Uri Geller*, written by Geller's very own mentor and advance man, Dr. Andrija Puharich. If the extraterrestrial controls have their way, a movie about Uri will soon be available for those of us who have not already been overwhelmed by Geller overkill. The

end, as they say, is not in sight. There appears to be no limit to the commercial success which can be wrung from the powers and personal magnetism of such an eager and willing volunteer for immortality.

Consider: Geller is able to perform his fork-bending tricks with what one writer has called an almost "boring regularity." (Uri is not infallible in this respect, but more of that later.) He is quite attractive—although his rather close-set eyes give him a less intelligent appearance than one might wish for; his actorish good looks make him, in psychic circles at any rate, a star. He makes no claims to intellectualism and operates only as an instinctual and highly developed instrument for powers outside himself. He has had a most tireless agent, in the form of the redoubtable Puharich, to ballyhoo for him. And finally, he is determined to pursue fame and fortune with all the considerable energy at his command.

If Geller were content to perform superior parlor tricks for the delight of his audiences, the matter might rest there. Everyone likes magic tricks; when they are performed by someone who claims to belong to a union other than the magicians', they are even more delicious. If a performer further branches out into the turbulent waters of religiosity, he will gain ten new believers for every member of the audience who goes home in disgust. This is especially true today, since the portion of our lives that once devoted itself to religious contemplation has been rearranged and redefined to exclude the concept of God and usher in the era of belief in "something out there." The "something" has been open for grabs for some time, with a slavish devotion to the occult, coupled with an embarrassing desire to "know ourselves" better through "therapy," holding sway for the past decade.

Now, it would appear we are ready for something new, or, if not new, an old concept recycled to feed our endless desire to worship at the shrine of causality. It doesn't take much imagination to leap to outer space for our next fad; UFOs and the like have played a large part in our collective imaginations for years. Why not locate the godhead at a cosmic point so far from anything we know—and therefore despise—that the old sense of wonder will have a chance to rekindle itself? As for priests and shamans, we'll have to find someone to communicate, to intercede for us, with these alien beings. Enter Uri Geller, backed up by Andrija Puharich, M.D., as his prophet.

Geller is an unlikely choice, at first examination, for the

role of Third World Messiah. Despite his incredible feats—and many are impressive, even accounting for misfired shots and occasional duds—he is rather too *showbiz* to comfortably assume the mantle Puharich has woven for him. No particular conflict arises from Geller's rather ordinary off-stage mentality; instruments of higher purpose are rarely selected on the basis of I.Q. And one might convincingly argue that a nonintellectual being is an infinitely more fertile incubator for psychic forces; Uri himself says that he does not read books because "I do not want to change my theories." Even the commercialization of his "gift" (Geller, an ex-model, performed in army shows, private homes, and nightclubs in his native Israel) is not really suspect; one uses one's talents as one can.

It is the overwhelmingly stagy quality of almost everything surrounding Uri Geller that makes it difficult to take him seriously. He is ever so eager to place himself stage-center. In his anxiety to convince people of his sincerity he even goes out of his way to suggest new tests of his ability, occasionally overreaching and ruining the effect. Just such an example is the short-lived furor over Geller's magical photograph taken with a camera borrowed from *Life* photographer Yale Joel, described by the photographer in this book.

The inability to leave well enough alone is in itself a dubious characteristic; it smacks too strongly of hard-driving celebrity fever. Those who have witnessed Uri's performances in relaxed surroundings maintain that he is charming and casual. He keeps up a chatty running commentary while the miracles unfold, and appears to become almost as excited as his audience when forks, keys, or hinges bend humbly under his light touch and lambent gaze. "Do you see?" he will cry with boyish enthusiasm. "Do you *see*?" Yet he can become violently angry when challenged to deny reports from Jerusalem that Hebrew University pronounced him a fraud during his nightclub days, allegedly causing him to leave Israel in an odor of disgrace. Puharich himself delights in describing Uri's temperamental outbursts, and mentions fights in which Uri is in a "shouting, towering, abusive rage." Uri seems to scream often in the company of Puharich—whether from the pressures of his life or sheer operatic melodrama is never quite clear—and it would not be difficult to assume that the private and public Gellers are two distinctly different men.

He can, of course, be supremely rational, as when he

calmly explains the antagonism toward him of professional magicians. Who, after all, would pay good money to see tricks performed by sleight-of-hand when they could as easily witness the same or better tricks accomplished by a sensitive, a gifted psychic? One of Geller's most persistent adversaries is James Randi (The Amazing Randi), for whom Geller performed with less than his usual success. Randi is able to duplicate Geller's feats, and claims that any professional magician can do so. Geller swears that he is innocent of the magician's bag of tricks, and says he has never had any experience with professional prestidigitation, yet his least impressive talk-show stint occurred when he appeared on the Johnny Carson show. Carson, an amateur magician himself, had insisted on certain precautionary controls backstage. Arguing on such matters, however, is simply tilting at windmills. Any Geller devotee can tell you that the "vibes" are important for success; in other words, Uri's lackluster performances in the presence of skeptics indicate only that psychic feats are best carried out in friendly and harmonious surroundings. This is all very old, very familiar territory, as stale as it is impossible to dispute.

Also difficult to pin down are the discrepancies in Uri's accounts of the development of his gift. Autobiographical elements are continually shifted about to accommodate facts. What is workable, even charming, at one point is often in need of editing as the subject spirals toward greater fame and the accompanying need to defend against the public's cynicism. Thus we are told by Uri himself that he bent the hands of his watch, simply by looking at them, when he was seven years old. "The kids in class started bugging me to bend theirs, and I could." This is natural enough, and yet we are assured by Puharich that the boy Uri kept his psychic powers to himself because he didn't want the other children to laugh at him or think him weird. It wasn't, we are told, until Uri associated with actors and actresses, during his modeling days, that he allowed himself to reveal his talents. A small discrepancy, perhaps, but it does leave one wondering. Obviously, the latter story is much more likely to please a public that doesn't like its heroes to be too theatrical or "pushy" when all the chips are down. "It's bad enough," you can almost hear Puharich groaning, "that the kid performed for money. . . . Do we have to admit he was wowing 'em back in school at the age of seven?" So, instead, we get the sensitive, demure Uri, who—although he was able to predict how

much money his mother had won or lost at cards from the time he was three years old—bided his time, fearing ridicule, until his gifts could no longer be concealed.

One can sense the need that Geller must have for a sobering force. After all, ace psychics are not expected to be good businessmen or even to handle themselves with much aplomb in the workaday world. We like our miracle men to be just a shade other-worldly, a mite too finely tuned and high-strung, to pay much heed to the mechanics of life. We especially prefer them to be ignorant of money matters, or at least to leave the negotiations to somebody else. Picture the glee with which Andrija Puharich seized upon his protégé, traveling all the way to Israel to persuade Geller to come to the United States! With Puharich's sense of science-cum-showmanship and Uri's flash, a credulous and yearning public could be made to accept Uri Geller as the hottest item since the hula hoop. Puharich, unlike his pupil, is a sort of cosmic sophisticate. He is nothing if not diverse: he is a pioneer in psychic research, an inventor of electronic devices, an importer of psychics, a photographer of UFOs, an expert on hallucinogenic mushrooms, and the author of *Beyond Telepathy* and *The Sacred Mushroom* as well as the masterwork on Uri Geller. He displays detachment in abundance, although it disappears when he speaks of his protégé, and a boundless energy. Puharich's energy is what allows Uri to continue to project wholesome humility and wonderment over his own good fortune: "I don't concentrate in the usual sense when I'm trying to do something unusual. I just say, 'Let it happen.' I have no idea how it's done." Puharich, in the meantime, makes sure that things do not "just happen." He planned Geller's "scientific" career as ably as Colonel Tom Parker once presided over the ascendant star of Elvis Presley. And, in case psychic feats are not enough to hold the attention and love of a notoriously fickle public, Puharich and Geller have served up a marvelously heady brew of extraterrestrial ingredients guaranteed to give most of us a cosmic hangover.

Is anyone not aware of the fact that Uri and Puharich have been chosen by forces from outer space to communicate messages to earthlings? Uri is the bearer of the tidings, Puharich the keeper and scribe. It all goes back to the time when Uri, under the hypnotic spell of Puharich, produced strange voices, which Puharich tape-recorded. The voices were by way of being a revelation from "The Nine," who are

the embodiment of all the highest wisdom in the universe. You may, if it makes you more comfortable, think of "The Nine" simply as God. At any rate, "The Nine" supervise the controllers of planetary civilizations. Earth's controller, Hoova, patrols the earth in a spacecraft called Spectra, which is manned by computers. Hoova makes a habit of intervening in earth's affairs every six thousand years, and it appears that exactly six thousand years have elapsed since the last intervention.

Although the tapes containing this information have since sadly self-destructed, Puharich assures us that it is Hoova's intention to communicate with us through the good offices of Uri Geller. In fact, the computers made no bones about it: "There is no other on earth that we will use for the next fifty years but you and Uri." Hoova has also issued an order, through Puharich, that a film be made on the life of Geller—surely the first time an agent has pushed his client with the forces of divinity behind him.

Geller and Puharich, of course, give distinctly different sorts of interviews. Uri, who speaks English fluently, specializes in the inarticulate, faltering statements that are supposed to be synonymous with sincerity: "I can't [talk] now because I'm not allowed to. Let's put it that way. Like *you* are not allowed to kill somebody. You *can*, but you may not. So I can blab my mouth and say things, but I may not. . . . They, the things behind us, know the truth, and we are out there running to it, knowing nothing. . . . I can't really imagine what's behind it all . . . why there are people like me who can do these things." Plaintive. Puharich, on the other hand, is rather more candid: "No space cadet has landed from Venus and said, 'Hey, baby, we're going to take a message to the U.N! Besides, I've seen enough UFO nuts in the last twenty years to be very allergic to the whole idea. I don't try to force it on anybody, but I don't avoid what I know to be so." Together they make a perfect blend: just as you are indulging an irrepressible yawn over the earnest double-talk of Uri, along comes down-to-earth Puharich to add some sensible and reassuring yeast to the batter and make you wake up again.

Puharich, it must be remembered, is an observer from way back of such psychic stars as Eileen Garrett, Peter Hurkos, and Arigo, the Brazilian psychic surgeon. He can talk Faraday cages and hypothetical subatomic particles with the best of them. And Uri? Uri seems more and more to be suffering

from the sort of grandiose delusions that have traditionally beset overnight superstars from time immemorial. References to Christ crop up in his interviews, all of them quite unsolicited, "I don't want to make myself a sort of Jesus Christ. . . . It's not only me." Or: "I don't want you to think I'm a Moses or a Jesus, but according to the Israeli account, Jesus was born on the twentieth of December, not the twenty-fifth, and I was born on the twentieth of December. Maybe it's a coincidence."

Maybe? It puts one in mind of another famed psychic, America's own chatty Jeane Dixon, whose fame peaked when her predictions of the death of President John F. Kennedy became public knowledge via a book written by Ruth Montgomery. Mrs. Dixon has never performed psychokinetic feats like Geller's; indeed, she has steadfastly refused to submit to any sort of scientific testing. Nevertheless she shares, with Uri, the belief that she is simply an instrument through which Higher Orders transmit, while simultaneously holding a very high opinion of herself. She has, she writes, been mistaken more than once for the Madonna, and has relieved one man of a lifetime case of warts simply by shaking his hand.

It is curious that so much psychic talent always finds its way through tortuous channels to an identification with divinity. Or is it? One would have to be very level-headed indeed to retain any sort of perspective in the maelstrom of attention swirling around the likes of a Jeane Dixon or a Uri Geller. The plight of most celebrities is truly poignant: they crave publicity, quite naturally, since they have been fed on it, and need to sing progressively louder for their spiritual supper until their audience eventually calls a halt. The despotic public, requiring, like the ancient Romans, newer and bigger entertainments for its satisfaction, is both catered to and despised by those who depend upon it.

Nothing short of claims to messiah-hood can slow down the symbiotic process which eventually must devour the idol it has created, and even messiahs have been known to fail. It is highly unlikely that Uri Geller truthfully regards himself as the instrument through which the wisdom of the ages will filter down to man, but it is possible. Does Dr. Puharich actually believe in Spectra and Hoova and his unique mission? One sort of hopes not. There is something disturbing about the idea of Uri being "superior" to other human beings, if only because it gives him a frightening potential for causing mass hysteria. So far, Geller and Puharich have not been po-

litical in their pronouncements—as long as Hoova confines itself to such requests as that a movie be made about Geller, there is nothing to be alarmed about.

Most disenchanted Uri-watchers feel sure there is nothing sinister about the Geller-Puharich act and that their only goals are money, fame, and the attention of reputable institutions like the Stanford Research Institute and the Max Planck Institute in Munich, but the triviality of Uri's miracles has prompted more than one expression of impatience. Martin Gardner, in a review of Puharich's book, wrote: "One is stunned by the smallness of these wonders. Compared to walking on water and rousing people from the grave, Uri's feats have a picayune, slapstick quality more in keeping with a clever charlatan than a messiah." And, in truth, the endless stream of stopped watch hands, bent forks, disappearing/reappearing buttons and keys, psychically repaired heating pads, and messages from outer space (nine pens spelled out the word WHY in the midst of an argument between Uri and Puharich, causing them to weep in brotherly love and forgiveness) has a cumulatively farcical effect. The episode of the hard-boiled eggs, in which Uri's girl friend is about to cook three eggs for the ravenous Uri, only to discover that they have hard-boiled themselves, is perhaps the funniest. Uri was in a hurry, you see; waiting for those eggs might have put an intolerable strain on him. Again Jeane Dixon comes to mind, the inevitable comparison being the time Mrs. Dixon asked God for the winner of the sixth race at Bowie Race Track and received the answer: "Summer Sunshine!"

If Uri, in his amazing sprint for the "fame and fortune" he covets, has made the mistake of allowing Puharich too free a rein, we'll know soon enough. The extraterrestrial vaudeville act has undoubtedly made his credibility take a sharp downward turn, but the end of the saga has not been played out. Whether Puharich and Geller are Svengali and Trilby, or merely the Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy of the psychic set, remains to be seen.

A "MARXIST-LENINIST VIEW"

Uri Geller's impact in Europe provoked a commentary in the East Berlin newspaper *Neues Deutschland* (February 8/9, 1975), which sought to interpret his performances, and those of others claiming psychic powers, from the viewpoints of

Karl Marx and V. I. Lenin. In an article entitled "Modern Superstitions Disguised as Science," Wolfgang Spickermann cited Geller's popularity, notably in West Germany, as evidence that "occultism and superstition" were gaining followers in western society generally.

The Marxist review summarized some of Geller's experiments, illustrated with the photograph of a severed fork, and commented that "Uri Geller, despite his remarkable versatility, is only one example of many," and the "astrologers, clairvoyants, and prayers-for-health are currently experiencing increasing followers in the capitalist countries." It also noted that a number of universities and other research institutes in the United States, West Germany, and other countries are "seriously attempting to study so-called paranormal phenomena, including telepathy, psychokinesis, and other occult occurrences."

The article ignored the fact that such studies have also taken place during the past fifteen years in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Poland, and that Russian researchers, notably in Leningrad and Moscow, have publicly discussed the reality and implications of such phenomena.

EVERYBODY HAS HIS OWN GELLER!

A Summation by Martin Ebon

Now that you have read the varying reports and opinions on Uri Geller, you are well-justified to ask, "Well, what does it all add up to? Is this Geller a unique sensitive or a fake, a man from another dimension or just a clever conjurer?"

As editor of this volume, and having spent some two decades in the field of psychical phenomena, I ought to give you a clear yes-or-no answer. But, instead, I'll give you an honest answer.

The young Israeli has provided us with a new Rorschach Test (you remember, those ink blots into which people read their personal images, desires, and fears). Geller is a human Rorschach Test. Or, to put it another way: Everybody has his own Uri Geller, his own idea of what the man and his feats are all about.

Geller has aroused wide interest, and he has gained all types of publicity—adoration, annoyance, wishful thinking, hope, disillusionment, and all the rest of it. Few people have been basically influenced by him; most of us have merely had their preconceived ideas confirmed by Geller's performances and stunts.

The most interesting people have been those who either said that they started out as skeptics and later became convinced that Uri was genuine; and those who, conversely, came to Geller as true believers and went away disenchanting. But even these apparent changes have not been profound; they were in the nature of a temporary infatuation, a sort of crush on Geller or on what Geller seemed to stand for, that eventually gave way to doubt and detachment. One of these observers was Dr. Andrew Weil, whose first article in *Psychology Today* was full of wide-eyed awe, but whose second article was all shakes of the head and perplexity.

A major case of disillusionment is that of the British physicist Dr. Joseph Hanlon, who first drew the attention of the London weekly, *The New Scientist*, to the Geller phenom-

enon. Hanlon published a detailed report on his own Geller investigation in the weekly magazine on October 17, 1974, to coincide with publication of the investigations undertaken by Mr. Targ and Dr. Puthoff at the Stanford Research Institute (see page 66). Hanlon feels strongly that "the next interesting breakthrough in science may well come not from expensive research by huge teams in physics and biology, but from research by individuals and small teams into the interaction of people and themselves and their surroundings." He has, therefore, looked into such research areas as biofeedback and parapsychology; Hanlon persuaded *The New Scientist* to organize its own research team to study Uri, who at first enthusiastically agreed, but then backed out.

Dr. Hanlon had been quite taken by Geller at first, although every Geller event he investigated had "a normal explanation that was more probable than the paranormal one." He had observed "the really strong desire of people to suspend disbelief and accept Geller." He added: "On the latter point, I must admit that I, too, was strongly taken with Geller, and that I could not help liking him and being swept up by his enthusiasms—despite the fact that I was looking for tricks." He noted that "many people believe implicitly in Geller—often based on a very few demonstrations of powers, swept on by their own desire to believe, and by the force of Geller's personality. Indeed, some supposedly objective scientists now talk of the 'Geller effect' as a fact." Dr. Hanlon is critical of the Targ-Puthoff experiments with Geller and of the paper in which they reported on it. He wrote:

"A dry scientific paper can never capture the feeling of an experiment. In this case, the Targ-Puthoff paper totally fails to communicate the circus atmosphere that surrounded all of the tests with Geller. As Targ commented to me: 'Deliberately or accidentally, Geller manipulates the experiments to a degree of chaos where he feels comfortable and we feel uncomfortable. Then he bends something.'" Hanlon quotes Targ as saying, "I feel confident that Geller will cheat if given a chance," but doubts that their "vigilance against cheating was rigorous enough" to eliminate Geller's possibly "sophisticated magic and psychological trickery."

Professional magicians suggest that Geller is using very simple stage-magic tricks to achieve his results, whereas Dr. Hanlon speculates that Uri's original sponsor, Dr. Andrija

Puharich, may have equipped him with a miniature radio receiver. Puharich holds U.S. patent No. 2 995 663 for a radio receiver, attached to a tooth, which permits signals to be received by the gold filling, converted to electric signals in the audio frequency range by the rectifier crystal, and passed on directly to the nerve endings of a live tooth. A deaf person could carry a small transmitter in his pocket that would send sound signals to the tooth; it could, of course, also pick up signals from elsewhere.

Dr. Hanlon notes that "Uri's drawings are representations of words which would describe the target drawing, and thus are consistent with radio communication." Also, Puharich told Hanlon that "Uri will not submit to excessive examinations like total body X-radiation," which, Hanlon suggests, would be "the only test for a Puharich implanted receiver." Who would be Geller's co-conspirator in such an electronic setup? Hanlon names Uri's companion Shipi Strang as someone who could "easily have signaled Uri in code with a transmitter hidden in his pocket." But would Puharich help Uri? Perhaps, Hanlon writes, if Uri phrased the request as if it "came via Spectra," the extraterrestrial agency in which Puharich appears to believe so strongly. Puharich need not have been "party to a widespread and continuing fraud to have helped Uri in this way," Hanlon concludes.

In a later issue of *The New Scientist* (November 7, 1974) Mr. Targ and Dr. Puthoff attacked the Hanlon analysis. It was their team, they wrote, that first alerted Dr. Hanlon "to take appropriate precautions," as they were "well aware of Dr. Puharich's expertise in the field of microelectronics." They wrote that their SRI experiment took several weeks and was "carefully controlled," while some of their critics had only "spent an engaging couple of hours with Geller in which they observed the informal coffee-table demonstration which Geller favors." They called for "more experimentation, not more speculation."

Dr. Hanlon rather heatedly replied: "It is absolute rubbish for Targ and Puthoff to claim that they told me about Dr. Puharich's expertise in the area of microelectronics. Indeed, in their discussions with me they dismissed, virtually out of hand, suggestions of the use of radio." He added that, while they claimed to have excluded "everyone other than the experimenters from the target area, Puthoff himself complained to me about their inability to exclude Shipi Strang—Geller's inseparable companion."

And so the argument continues, more or less where it began, with scientists as well as laymen defending what are, with few variations, previously established positions. Among the forums of parapsychology that are most prestigious are the annual conventions of the Parapsychological Association and the quarterly *Journal of Parapsychology*, which is published by the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man, directed by Dr. J. B. Rhine in Durham, North Carolina. A longtime associate of Dr. Rhine, W. E. Cox, presented "A Note on Some Experiments with Uri Geller" to the Association's 1974 convention (August 22), at St. John's University, Jamaica, New York, which was published in the December 1974 issues of the *Journal*. Cox described an hour spent with Geller the previous April 24, hoping to witness psychokinesis (PK or mind-over-matter) evidence under "adequate safeguards," while allowing "opportunity for trickery" as might be practiced by a stage conjurer.

Cox described how Geller bent a flat steel key of the safe-deposit box type until it gradually bent to a total of 12¼ degrees. "The key was about fifteen inches from my eyes," the researcher reported, "yet I detected no semblance of trickery." A second key was of the "ordinary three-inch skeleton-key variety" and made of a softer zinc-alloy metal. It was bent until it reached a 36 degree angle, and although Cox had his own "forefinger pressed against the toothed end" of the key, he felt "no noticeable pressure upward against my finger. He added: "Metallurgical examinations have been made of both keys and two 'control keys.' The examinations revealed no abnormalities, since the deformation due to the bending was insignificant as compared with the effects the metal had undergone during manufacture."

The final experiment was with Cox's pocket watch in which he had inserted a piece of aluminum foil. It was partly pressed into the spokes of the watch's wheel "and thereby stopped it." Eventually Geller managed to get the watch to tick, and when Cox opened it up he found that the foil inside it had been partly severed and moved inside the watch. He concluded that "increased research into Geller's abilities is warranted," although noting that Uri is "more interested in entertainment and publicity than in research, which makes his case rather difficult."

There are still ongoing arguments about these and other psychic figures of the recent and distant past. Uri Geller is

likely to go down in history as a similar controversial personality—even if he were to announce, tomorrow, that and how he employed stage magician tricks, or if someone like Shipi Strang were to “tell all,” one way or another. Yes, even if Geller were “unmasked,” a loyal band of true believers would continue to assert that Geller’s gifts had been genuine, but that he had somehow “betrayed” them. What, indeed, could Dr. Puharich say if Uri were to state clearly that at least part of his performances are tricks? After all, Puharich’s whole view of the universe, and of his own role in it, rests on the legitimacy of Geller’s claims.

No, I do not believe Puharich’s stories about his and Uri’s mission from such space entities as “Spectra” or “Hoova.” But we have the right to our personal delusions, large or small; and, with a variation on Voltaire, I would defend Dr. Puharich’s right to his own. I just do not share them. And now the crux: Yes, I have seen Geller perform, talked to participants in the Geller experiments, and have certainly read the vast number of reports in detail—but I am not a true believer.

I do believe that Uri Geller may have psychic abilities—but also that he helps them along, in psychological and physical ways, to gain maximum dramatic effect, admiration, fame, and money. The argument about his psychic power will certainly never end.



SIGNET and MENTOR Mystics You'll Want to Read

- THE POLTERGEIST** by William G. Roll. Foreword by Dr. J. B. Rhine. Here is a spellbinding scientific exploration into poltergeists that explains the latest theories on this eerie phenomenon—complete with documented case histories of hair-raising feats by uncanny invisible spirits. (#Y5869—\$1.25)
- PASSPORT TO THE SUPERNATURAL** by Bernhardt J. Hurwood. Travel through time and space to the most frightening limits of your imagination with these fascinating tales of the occult and the supernatural from around the globe. (#ME1281—\$1.75)
- MANY MANSIONS** by Gina Cerminara. The most convincing proof of reincarnation and ESP ever gathered in one volume. A trained psychologist’s examination of the files and case histories of Edgar Cayce, the greatest psychic of our time. (#Y5631—\$1.25)
- YOUR MYSTERIOUS POWERS OF ESP** by Harold Sherman. Extraordinary cases involving extrasensory perception and ways to release your own mysterious powers of ESP are revealed. (#Q4841—95¢)
- ADVENTURES INTO THE PSYCHIC** by Jess Stearn. A fully documented account of every major aspect of the occult field today, it takes the reader through a series of psychic experiences, ranging from ESP, seances, and telepathic crime detection. (#Y4512—\$1.25)

THE NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY, INC.,
P.O. Box 999, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621

Please send me the SIGNET and MENTOR BOOKS I have checked above. I am enclosing \$_____ (check or money order—no currency or C.O.D.’s). Please include the list price plus 25¢ a copy to cover handling and mailing costs. (Prices and numbers are subject to change without notice.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Allow at least 3 weeks for delivery

NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY
PRESENTS

THE ART OF WALT DISNEY
From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdoms

and other beautiful large format, special concise editions of Harry N. Abrams' books on Art, Crafts and Sport—lavishly illustrated with many full color plates.

- THE ART OF WALT DISNEY From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdoms by Christopher Finch.**
(#G9982—\$7.95)
- NORMAN ROCKWELL: A Sixty Year Retrospective by Thomas S. Buechner.**
(#G990—\$6.95)
- THE PRO FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE edited by David Boss, with an introduction by Roger Kahn.**
(#G9984—\$6.95)
- THE DOLL text by Carl Fox, photographs by H. Landshoff.**
(#G9987—\$5.95)
- AMERICAN INDIAN ART by Norman Feder.**
(#G9988—\$5.95)
- DALI . . . DALI . . . DALI . . . edited and arranged by Max Gérard.**
(#G9983—\$6.95)
- THE WORLD OF M. C. ESCHER by M. C. Escher and J. L. Locher.**
(#G9985—\$5.95)

THE NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY, INC.,
P.O. Box 999, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621

Please send me the ABRAMS BOOKS I have checked above. I am enclosing \$_____ (check or money order—no currency or C.O.D.'s). Please include the list price plus 30¢ a copy to cover handling and mailing costs. (Prices and numbers are subject to change without notice.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Allow at least 3 weeks for delivery

NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY
PRESENTS

THE ART OF WALT DISNEY
From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdoms

and other beautiful large format, special concise editions of Harry N. Abrams' books on Art, Crafts and Sport—lavishly illustrated with many full color plates.

- THE ART OF WALT DISNEY From Mickey Mouse to the Magic Kingdoms** by Christopher Finch.
(#G9982—\$7.95)
- NORMAN ROCKWELL: A Sixty Year Retrospective** by Thomas S. Buechner.
(#G990—\$6.95)
- THE PRO FOOTBALL EXPERIENCE** edited by David Boss, with an introduction by Roger Kahn.
(#G9984—\$6.95)
- THE DOLL** text by Carl Fox, photographs by H. Landshoff.
(#G9987—\$5.95)
- AMERICAN INDIAN ART** by Norman Feder.
(#G9988—\$5.95)
- DALI . . . DALI . . . DALI . . .** edited and arranged by Max Gérard.
(#G9983—\$6.95)
- THE WORLD OF M. C. ESCHER** by M. C. Escher and J. L. Locher.
(#G9985—\$5.95)

THE NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY, INC.,
P.O. Box 999, Bergenfield, New Jersey 07621

Please send me the ABRAMS BOOKS I have checked above. I am enclosing \$_____ (check or money order—no currency or C.O.D.'s). Please include the list price plus 30¢ a copy to cover handling and mailing costs. (Prices and numbers are subject to change without notice.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Allow at least 3 weeks for delivery