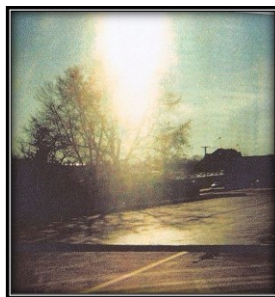


HOMELESS IN PARADISE

May 8, 2015

Column #28



Part 2: SUICIDE RAISES SPIRITUAL QUESTIONS

By Wanda Sue Parrott

(This short series explores the question “What really happens at death?” as it relates to suicide and dying in general. From philosophical, scientific and religious viewpoints, glimpses into the after-death experience will be shared by Monterey Peninsula residents who have both survived their own suicide attempts and witnessed them by others.)

Revisiting The Seaside Suicide Scene

MY APOLOGY! The illustration at the end of Part 1 (online version originally published on Cedar Street Times) (Homeless in Paradise website PDF version shows a reverse image of the house) did not show the wall of the house mentioned in the column. A file photo was substituted at press time since permission to reprint the photo by Nic Coury of the online Monterey County Weekly had not been received.

To refresh readers’ memories, the closing lines were:

“After reading the reports of The Seaside Suicide, Clarisa (Bernhardt) sent an unexpected comment along with photocopy she printed by using her own investigative techniques that re-raised the age-old question: Is there survival after physical death?

““Looking close, one can easily see the subject soul attempting to depart... ‘Clarisa wrote. ‘And one can see through the figure. . . ‘

“The location on the outside wall near the window, through which area the ascending upright ghostly figure seems to be streaming, is the approximate spot where Matthew Bachelder shot himself indoors a few minutes earlier. Clarisa had no idea where the body was located.”

This substitute photo entitled “Amy Kitchener” illustrates a 40+-year investigation into survival conducted by my former editor Jackie Dashiell, her husband, physicist Robert Russell Weiss, and me through a data-gathering technique known as automatic writing that resulted in publication of the book, *There’s a Spirit in the Kitchen* (Galde Press, 2001).

I took this photo of Amy in 2001 in a brief manifestation over my back wall in Springfield, Missouri. Photographers call such light images “ghosts,” but Amy described herself and other formerly living personalities as spirits:

*“We are the ascended race,
Wearing—sometimes—human face.”*

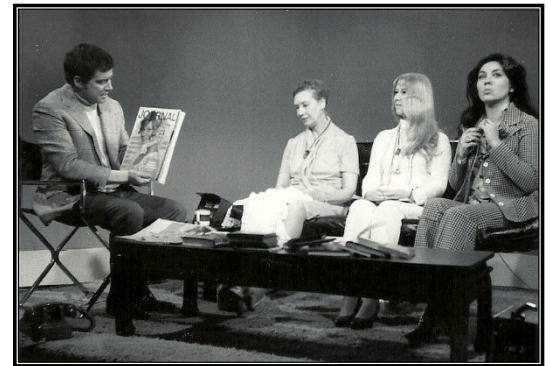
Unfortunately, I was so surprised at the appearance of Amy in what she described as her “angel apron” form that I cut off her head when I focused the camera and snapped the sole photo of the alleged Iowa farm woman who claimed to have been born in 1820 and died in 1889.

Amy was not suicidal, but photos of the human spirit as separate from the physical body are so rare, I used her image to illustrate the age-old question: what happens after death? Or, does a spiritual, intelligent part of man really exist?

Survival after Death: The Great Mystery

What happens after we die has intrigued humans throughout history, and religions have evolved around various beliefs based on questions about the “afterlife” In Native American culture it is known as the Great Spirit; here in Pacific Grove, which began as a Methodist campground, it is known as heaven.

This 1972 photo shows Regis Philbin, host of his afternoon Tempo TV Show in Los Angeles, interviewing women featured in an article on California’s Psychic Women in Ladies Home Journal by David St. Clair (L to R: British medium Brenda Crenshaw; journalist Wanda Sue Parrott; Official Witch of Los Angeles Louise Huebner).



Witch Huebner told how to use colored candles to cast spells. Brenda Crenshaw, a devoted member of the Agasha Temple of Wisdom, discussed the Spiritualist religion through which human mediums like herself could, and did, communicate with the deceased and other higher spiritual beings.

Whether through séances, or individual one-on-one readings, such direct communication is possible for people to accomplish by themselves, Brenda said, because the divine is within every person. “My hope is that one day you will realize this and have no need for mediums like me to communicate with deceased loved ones or God. You can do it yourself.”

I discussed how to practice automatic writing by sitting still with a pen or pencil poised over a blank page, asking a question, then letting my hand write words while my mind was receptive.

Can I predict the future or come up with perfect answers? No! This was proven when Regis asked: “Will I ever have a national show of my own?”

I closed my eyes, held the pen over my blank page, and wrote in huge capital letters before thousands of viewers: NO.

Wrong!

Regis went on to become a daytime-TV icon and I continued experimenting with automatic writing in private. This year marks my 55th year of such mental exercise.

It was through such experimentation with the so-called spirit of Amy Kitchener that I received this equation for God.

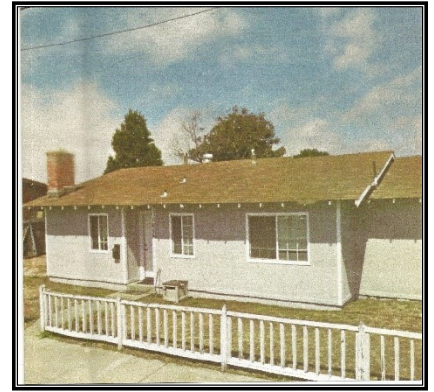
$$\mathbf{R=C+C}$$

(Recycling equals Conservation [life] plus Conversion [death])

Was Amy defining God in secular terms that are inoffensive to religion and applicable to all who die, whether by their own hands or through nature’s inexorable laws?

Next week we will look at a few cases of survival by those who tried suicide and lived to tell their remarkable stories.

For now, here is the house before Matthew Bachelder's shot was fired. For details about the aftermath and photo that didn't run in Part One, scroll way, way down on my Facebook timeline for recommendations on accessing Nic Coury's pictures and online coverage at <https://www.facebook.com/wanda.parrott.5>



To be continued next week...

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