

icance and history of scientific anomalies by such people as Peter Sturrock, Marcello Truzzi, or Ron Westrum.

This book is fun to browse—Corliss gives its primary intent as entertainment—but it is also a useful reference work by virtue of a nine-page index. Specific items are readily found not only via the index but by topic, each chapter being divided into between four and a dozen sections, and each chapter beginning with a table of contents in which the subject matter of each section is further described.

The short Preface summarizes Corliss's efforts: a current file of some 40,000 items culled from 14,000 volumes of periodicals from 1820 to date. These are being published in a projected 30 volumes of a *Catalog of Anomalies* of which 13 volumes have already appeared. The present sampler gives an enticing taste of what that larger work offers. Both should certainly be in the library of any serious anomalist, and there's little excuse for them not being in every institutional library. Let's all resolve to make that recommendation to our own librarians, perhaps at the same time as we remind them that they haven't yet subscribed to the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*.

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**Immortality**, edited by Paul Edwards. New York: Macmillan, 1992, 337 pp., \$14.00 (p). ISBN 0-02-331620-9.

This book forms a volume in a series of *Philosophical Topics* edited by Paul Edwards. Most of the book consists of selections from a wide variety of authors who from various perspectives have written on the topic of immortality. Nearly all the selections are extracts only, but a few chapters or papers are reprinted in full. All but one have been previously published, the exception being an essay especially written for this volume by John Beloff. (This is an even-handed appraisal of the evidence for the survival of human personality [or identity] after death.) The temporal range of the selections extends over more than two millennia, because the earliest is an extract from Plato's *Phaedo* and the most recent is an essay by the Oxford philosopher Derek Parfit that was published in 1987. In between, we can read what many familiar philosophers, such as Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant, have said about immortality; but we also find writings by many less well-known and equally interesting writers.

Paul Edwards contributes a long Introduction, two of the selections within the main body of the book, and a bibliographical essay. Thus he has written nearly one third of the book himself. I see nothing wrong with that, and Ed-

wards's contributions aid the reader in understanding the arguments advanced elsewhere in the book. The selections seem to me well chosen. I could think of additional selections, but would not withdraw any that Edwards chose. There have been other anthologies of writings on this subject, such as *Readings in the Philosophical Problems of Parapsychology* edited by Antony Flew (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1987), but I consider the present one the best of those I have examined.

Edwards appears to have a strong distaste for the idea of reincarnation, and his frank avowal of this is not entirely disarming, because he sometimes employs rhetorical devices instead of addressing issues. For example, he dismisses my former student and now colleague Dr. Satwant Pasricha as "a tried and true believer (p.13)," without being aware that Satwant Pasricha departed from a position of strong skepticism because the evidence in cases suggestive of reincarnation impressed her favorably; in contrast, Edwards accepts the self-appraisals of two of my detractors without stopping to consider whether they might be as qualified as they claim or even whether they may have made misleading statements about the opportunities they had to make observations that would have justified their judgments. It would abuse my position as a reviewer to answer Edwards's criticisms of my own research in detail, but I will make one further observation. On p. 305 Edwards states that he "spent the better part of two years studying Stevenson's evidence...." Of this I can only say that some of his time was misspent, because on p.11 he states that I have "never answered the more significant objections." In fact, I have spent immense amounts of time answering critics, but I have done so in professional journals, with which Edwards is apparently unacquainted. I do not consider popular books and magazines (like *Free Inquiry*) appropriate vehicles for serious discourse on scientific subjects.

Returning to the more substantial parts of this book I think Edwards has too readily accepted the promissory notes printed by the neuroscientists. In one of his own contributions he dwells at length on the irreversibility of the loss of memory in patients with Alzheimer's Disease. Here I would make two points. First, amnesia may seem to be total, as in a severely inebriated person, and yet memories may return during sobriety; absence of accessible memory does not necessarily entail its destruction, and neuroscientists may yet devise a remedy that restores the memories of patients with Alzheimer's Disease. Second, even if the loss of memory is total and irreversible in Alzheimer's Disease (or other diseases) this does not compel us to believe that the memories have been destroyed. They may exist, but be inaccessible under prevailing conditions. This conjecture is not evidence that the memories do persist. That, however, is a question to be resolved by appeal to evidence. Edwards acknowledges this when he states, agreeing with H. H. Price, "that the issue is one of weighing the evidence from brain physiology against that from parapsychology" (p. 305).

I will mention a few small omissions and mistakes that may be corrected in a second edition. On p. 6, Edwards (in referring to the *Bhagavad Gita*) confuses Arjun (in converse with the god Krishna) with Sanjaya, the charioteer and narrator of the conversation. Harold Rosen of Baltimore is erroneously identified

as a Canadian (p. 9). The case of cryptomnesia investigated by G. Lowes Dickinson is placed under the heading of "hypnotic regression," whereas it is an instance of purported mediumistic communication (p. 9). The name of the well-known and somewhat controversial British psychologist, Cyril Burt, is repeatedly misspelled as "Burtt." The references on p. 253 to surveys of death-bed visions in Tokyo and Iceland are wrong. Although many cases of hypnotic regression to "previous lives" are undoubtedly due to cryptomnesia, this does not warrant Edwards's statement that "there is every reason to believe that the famous case of *Bridey Murphy* ... was just such an instance of cryptomnesia." On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that it was not such an instance; and because Edwards cites Ducasse's book in which he exposed the alleged exposure of the case, he should have avoided such a summary judgment. (See C. J. Ducasse, *A Critical Examination of the Belief in Life after Death*, Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1961; also Ducasse's article on the case in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychological Research*, 54: 3-22, January 1960). Although most of these errors are trivial, they suggest reliance on secondary sources instead of a return to primary ones, which we have a right to expect in a book as excellent as this one otherwise is. The absence of an Index is also regrettable.

I wish, however, to conclude on a positive note by saying how pleased I am that one of our professors of philosophy at the University of Virginia has adopted *Immortality* as a text for an undergraduate course. He can have selected no better introduction to this most important of all subjects.

Geoffrey Madell (of the University of Edinburgh's Department of Philosophy) has written a sympathetic review of this book in the *Journal of the Society for Psychological Research* (59: 151-2, April 1993), and I commend this to readers who wish another opinion, but also a positive one, about it.

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**The Blue Sense: Psychic Detectives and Crime** by Arthur Lyons and Marcello Truzzi. New York: Warner Books, 1991. 314 pp. \$19.95 (c). ISBN 0-89296-426-X.

The publishers of *The Blue Sense* identify this as the first volume to examine — in exhaustive detail — the involvement of psychic phenomena in modern crime detection. This is a book that lives up to its claims. *Blue Sense* not only contains invaluable references to investigations, archival photographs, studies