Lunar Astronaut Still Deluded and Spaced-Out, The State of Homequackery, Yet More on Homeopathy, What's Sauce for the Goose..., Help Wanted, Another Superstitious Horror, "The One": Episode 4, More Sniffex, The USPTO Again, and In Closing...

I first refer you to tinyurl.com/594kgk , where you'll read Phil Plait's overly-kind but honest reference to the latest nonsense to come from former astronaut Edgar Mitchell, one of the only twelve persons ever to actually walk on the Moon – that we know of, that is. Mitchell is now insisting that he's privy to firm evidence that UFO-nauts exist, and that the truth has been – you guessed it! – suppressed by those People in Charge.

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LUNAR ASTRONAUT STILL DELUDED AND SPACED-OUT

Ed Mitchell produces evidence

I first refer you to tinyurl.com/594kgk , where you'll read Phil Plait's overly-kind but honest referen

Agreed, Mitchell is an all-time American hero, but as I reminded Phil, he's also been one of the major pu

Mitchell, to this day, still believes in Geller despite the exposés that have led most former believers to re

See Ed Mitchell at tinyurl.com/5gdesu expounding on his latest fantasy. Of course, this attractive f

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THE STATE OF HOMEOQUACKERY

As we all know, every scientific test of homeopathy has failed to support its very silly premise: that a sub

After the latest report on the 40% fall in prescriptions for homeopathy, I searched the UK Daily Mail's we

July 25, 2008: “40 per cent fall in homeopathic prescriptions” tinyurl.com/63e8pk

June 17, 2008: “Professor offers £10,000 to first person to prove homeopathy works” tinyurl.com/5ent8

January 30, 2008: “Homeopathy treatments flounder as NHS trusts cancel contracts” tinyurl.com/5tm5gt

December 7, 2007: “Homeopathy is putting people's lives at risk, warns top scientist” tinyurl.com/5bwtz2e

November 26, 2007: “The case for and against homeopathy” tinyurl.com/6sdyatk

May 1, 2007: “Homeopathy is worse than witchcraft” tinyurl.com/5tf3ak

July 23, 2006: “TV's Nadia: Homeopathy helped me deal with my miscarriage” tinyurl.com/5d2yko

July 14, 2006: “Don't rely on homeopathy to beat malaria, doctors warn” tinyurl.com/5adeff

May 23, 2006: “Homeopathy is pointless, says expert” tinyurl.com/67ssnzk

May 4, 2006: “Asthmatic children treated with homeopathy” tinyurl.com/5ted w8

August 26, 2005: “Homeopathy 'nothing more than a placebo'” tinyurl.com/6ingsxy

June 20, 2005: “In focus: Queen kept healthy by homeopathy” tinyurl.com/5hegs

April 12, 2005: “Homeopathy - Undiluted Tosh!” tinyurl.com/6dh2Tz

September 5, 2003: “Your guide to homeopathy” tinyurl.com/6cqr8

June 17, 2003: “Homeopathy 'no help for asthmatic children” tinyurl.com/5bxrwa

June 13, 2003: “Homeopathy not an alternative” tinyurl.com/5pltrs

June 13, 2003: “'Proof' that homeopathy works” tinyurl.com/5th22w

June 13, 2003: “'Homeopathy works'” tinyurl.com/4jgtsk

November 19, 2002: “'Proof' that homeopathy doesn't work” tinyurl.com/63d3ct

January 9, 2002: “Homeopathy: Cure?” [illegible]

December 11, 2000: “Homeopathy” [illegible]

We’d do well to examine these articles, to have popular and to argue the matter. This series provides a

This is the 21st century; it’s time to abandon wishful thinking and embrace a 8 quality, despite the pain & qu

I may soon become heavily involved in a large-scale test of homeopathy, one which has been in negotia

John also has an excellent addition to this contribution. We can still enjoy some relief while bemoaning t

YET MORE ON HOMEOPATHY...

At tinyurl.com/6rft5o you'll find an interesting article by Simon Singh about the 20t

I'll give you a few personal comments from one who was there, all the way through. First, the Benveniste

When the Nature team – [in the first] John Maddox – Nature magazine, Walter Stewart of the U.S. Nationa

I sincerely believe that – at first – Jacques Benveniste was genuinely unaware that such poor technique

We believe that experimental data have been uncritically assessed and their imperfections inadequately

But that was only a more polite way of saying:

We suspect that some experimental data have been improperly arrived at, and their imperfections not re

WHAT'S SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE...

UK reader Russell Jones writes:

In recent months, the UK government introduced laws affecting clairvoyants, palm-readers, fortune-teller

It occurs to me that there is no more evidence for religious powers than for clairvoyant ones. The Church

Perhaps the Randi Foundation would have the resources to prosecute such a law suit. Otherwise, I'll ke

Russell, we handled this two months ago, back at randi.org/jhom/content/view/197/1/#i5 , but it could stand another *All the miracles*

HELP WANTED

We've received this inquiry:

My name is Johnathan Woodward. I am a university student/amateur documentary maker from Minneap

Readers can contact Mr. Woodward at jlwoodward@hotmail.com

ANOTHER SUPERSTITIOUS HORROR

Reader Francisco Garcia writes:

I found this article – tinyurl.com/6j7tbs – and thought that you, and the readers of SWIFT, might be

My first reaction (literally, my first reaction. You'd expect some level of shock to be someone's first reacti

Agreed, Francisco. Stupidity, superstition, and ignorance lead to different degrees of misbehavior, but it'

"THE ONE": EPISODE 4

At tinyurl.com/5lsfqr we have a YouTube contribution by William Brougham, one o

William found significance in the fact that Shé had looked directly at him, that – in his words – she

…was recognizing me from the audience… I did find that amazing.

Apparently he didn't realize that he'd been moving about and deciding to see what he did to give him away. W

He handled well her guess that he was a "gifted healer," something he hadn't claimed to have he'd said ab

Our tireless and fearless Robert Matic of Melbourne, Australia, reports again, this time on episode 4:

The penultimate episode of Australian series "The One" had been advertised all of 72% of the "pilot" wi

Test 1 – Medical Diagnoses

The judges were asked whether psychics might possibly be able to diagnose medical conditions with the

Random people from the streets were stopped and given a medical reading.

For the most part, the conditions predicted by the psychics were general and vague, with "pains on the l

The test continued in the studio with five audience members with five different medical conditions being

Meanwhile, none of the four remaining psychics noticed that one of the audience members was an amp

The favorable editing of "The One" is becoming more evident with each passing week. Each of the four p

Test 2 – Matching a piece of luggage with a passenger

A group of twenty people disembarked an aircraft. The psychics were to match each of four pieces of lug

One of the psychics said that she had become overly confident, and her failure was merely her spirit gui

Surprisingly, host Andrew Daddo went in to bat for the skeptics, challenging Stacey to come up with a w

Test 3 – Read a celebrity from behind a screen

In an attempt to give the psychics a helping hand in the final test of the week, the producers unwittingly p

When the screen was white, the psychics back-tracked and changed course and when the screen turne

A paraphrased example from the show:

You have two kids (Big green light, loud siren)

You're on TV (No light, no siren)

No, hang on, I'm wrong. You're a sports hero (Big green light, loud siren)

You play cricket (Trying to develop previous hit, but no light, no siren)

Or tennis (Still trying, but no light, no siren)

You have a daughter (Going back to develop the previous hit on "kids," big green light, loud siren)

She likes dancing (Developing hit on “daughter”, big green light, loud siren)

Replace “Big green light, loud siren” with “subtle visual or audible clue” and you have psychic readings c

Elimination: The Reiki practitioner – even though he was “2008 Australian Psychic of the Year” – was vo

And, the upcoming finding-a-body test will provide – I’m sure – an endless series of unprovable hints, po

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MORE SNIFFEX

Mark B. Lindberg, one of the Sniffex team (see our lead item from last week at tinyurl.com/5qawn) has now pleaded guilty in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to criminal con

See tinyurl.com/639puy for a rather good summary *still* of this farce. Note that we’ve come

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THE USPTO AGAIN

At tinyurl.com/6bch5n you’ll find an article about the US Patent & Trademark Offic

The US Patent and Trademark Office is a convenient whipping boy for problems with the patent system.

May I ask, *who else?* The USPTO is the *only* whippi

Perhaps shaken by the negative publicity generated from that case [on software patents] and others, the

Well, I haven't noticed any general improvement. The Office still appears to have poorly-informed exami

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IN CLOSING….

Please note that The Skeptic Society – under Dr. Michael Shermer – will handle the topic "Origins" at the
crackle.com/search/Mr.%20Deity

There is arguably no hotter topic in culture than science and religion, and so much of the debate turns o

We have assembled some of the world's greatest minds to discuss some of the world's greatest questio

Go to www.skeptic.com to get further information, or to register online. Not to be miss

The "huge joke" I referred to last week was happily spotted by several readers, as noted from the cons

(To "twig" to a fact or to an event means – in carny and confidence-man jargon – to become aware of it,

As for my much-challenged [sic] use of the label last week on the word "elites" – in the sentence "e

The riches enjoy the position of unaccountability…?

No, I think "the rich" would be proper, just as "the elite" – rather than "the elites" – would be correct…

Finally, as if it hasn't been a silly enough week, reader SWIFT Steve Steppe gives us this: from the UK T

Go to tinyurl.com/65gpf7 for the whole story...