Hansel's position is clear: "a great deal of time, effort, and money has been expended over a period of more than a hundred years, but an acceptable demonstration of the existence of extrasensory perception or psychokinesis has not been provided" (p. 272).

Reviewed by Bryan C. Auday, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Gordon College, Wenham, MA 01984.


Brenneman is a reporter and media consultant who has won several journalism awards. His book examines three controversial court cases involving faith healing.

The first case is about the death due to meningitis of the infant son of a young Christian Science couple. The parents did not seek medical help; instead, they relied on the prayer of a Christian Science practitioner. Consequently, they were prosecuted on the ground of negligence in a court battle lasting from 1984 to 1990. Finally, they were acquitted because the court decided that the death came quickly; even if the parents had decided to seek medical help, there would not have been enough time to save the child. The author described this case with much insight, because he had been active in the Christian Science church. He left the church when he failed to have his crippling rheumatoid arthritis healed. He gives a detailed history of the founder of Christian Science, Mary Eddy Baker. The main thrust of her teaching was that the same power which heals sin also heals sickness. Physical illness is not a reality, and the power of prayer will defeat falsehood.

The author makes the point that the reasons that Christian Science could evolve in the 19th century were mainly due to the pre-modern condition of medicine and the robustness of human health. God has given mankind a cultural mandate to "cultivate the earth" and God has also provided humanity the gift of intelligence. Human beings should diligently use the gift to discover and apply the scientific truths of the universe.

The second case examined in the book is about the quackery of a Filipino "psychic surgeon" who claimed that he could remove tumors without breaking the skin. The husband of a patient complained to the local law enforcement. The psychic surgeon, "Brother Joe," was put on trial. The case lasted from 1986 to 1990, and Brother Joe was finally sentenced to nine months in jail and fined $400 because of unlawful practice and serious injury. This fraud was related to the New Age movement; the healer claimed his hands emitted electromagnetic energy and attracted foreign matters in the body.

The third case involved a California psychotherapist who used drugs to cure psychological problems. She also tried mind control to achieve therapeutic goals. One of her patients died after a bizarre "hot tub" treatment, and the psychologist was taken to court. The case lasted from 1976 to 1978, and finally the judge revoked the psychologist's license and convicted her of gross negligence.

The author describes these cases in vivid detail. This book is recommended for those who are interested in the interplay of law and medicine. For the general reader of this journal, this book provides examples of problems with Christian Science, the New Age movement, and the drug culture. The author seems to have a cynical view of all belief in the supernatural. At one point, he states that it's not so much what you believe as that you believe. Evangelical Christians obviously cannot agree with that statement.

Reviewed by T. Timothy Chen, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD 20892.


The writer is the son of a preacher who introduced himself loudly as a Minister of the Gospel. Martin lived as a child near Montreal, close to what he calls Wildwood, at the junction of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers. The place is now part of the Trans-Canada Highway. Martin tells of the story how he, growing up as a staunch Christian boy fed on the Bible and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, became what he is now: a pagan Animist, propagating relearning the hunter-gatherer life-style.

The book is described on its dust cover as a meditation. Indeed, it has many beautifully written passages about his spiritual journey. Martin, an associate professor of history at Rutgers University, has "grown suspicious" of words. "The irony is that I am paid handsomely to use them. And use them I do, mostly in delivering windy lectures to hundreds of university students each year, trying to convey an understanding of the history of the North American continent both before and after the European arrival" (p. 1).

Genesis 1:2a is called an outrageous invitation, an a posteriori rationalization for humanity's new posture towards its surroundings (p. 39). It is well-nigh impossible, Martin says, to determine which came first, the population explosion or the food surplus. He then points out how hunter-gatherers insisted on limiting population growth through infanticide, birth spacing (prolonged lactation, abstinence, and plant-induced abortions), marriage exogamy, and geronticide (p. 42).

A Christian reading this book is likely to be hurt by the attacks on the Bible and our God. When on p. 78 the killings of a colonizer are rightly condemned, why bring