**2/1/2009 THESKEPTICARENA.COM**

**HEALING TOUCH (HT) IS THERAPEUTIC TOUCH (TT) WITH TOUCHING. DESPITE THE NAME, TT PRACTITIONERS WAVE THEIR HANDS ABOVE AND AROUND THE PATIENT'S BODY, BUT DO NOT ACTUALLY MAKE CONTACT. HT INVOLVES ACTUALLY TOUCHING THE PATIENT IN VARIOUS PLACES. BOTH ARE FORMS OF ENERGY HEALING, WHICH IN TURN IS A FORM OF PLACEBO TREATMENT.**

**IN THE CASE OF HEALING TOUCH THERAPY, THE HEALER GENTLY TOUCHES THE PATIENT, ALLEGEDLY INFLUENCING ENERGY THAT IS BELIEVED TO BE WITHIN AND AROUND EACH HUMAN BODY (SURGICAL WOUNDS ARE NOT DIRECTLY TOUCHED. A GENTLE WAVE, AS IN THERAPEUTIC TOUCH, OVER THE WOUND SUFFICES). ILLNESS ALLEGEDLY DISTURBS THIS ENERGY AND THE HEALER BELIEVES THAT HER TOUCH WILL HELP RESTORE BALANCE, HARMONY, EQUILIBRIUM, ETC., TO THE "HUMAN ENERGY SYSTEM" AND THEREBY PROMOTE SELF-HEALING BY THE PATIENT.**

**KATHY TURNER, A REGISTERED NURSE AND HT ADVOCATE, SAYS THAT HT IS BASED ON THE BELIEF THAT OUR BODIES ARE SURROUNDED BY A FIELD OF ENERGY AND OUR BODIES THEMSELVES ARE A DENSER FORM OF ENERGY...ONCE THE BODY'S ENERGY IS CLEARED AND BALANCED, OUR BODIES HAVE THE INNATE CAPACITY TO HEAL THEMSELVES.**

**THIS BELIEF IS BASED ON FAITH RATHER THAN SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE. ADVOCATES MAY THINK THAT THE MANY SATISFIED CUSTOMERS OF HT IS PROOF POSITIVE THAT HT WORKS, BUT THE TESTIMONIALS SHOW ONLY HOW POWERFUL THE PLACEBO EFFECT CAN BE AND ILLUSTRATE WHY RANDOMIZED, CONTROLLED TRIALS (RCTS) ARE NECESSARY TO AVOID SELF-DECEPTION REGARDING THE EFFICACY OF SOME TREATMENT OR THERAPY. TO HER CREDIT, TURNER STARTED AN RCT AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY IN 2007 TO PROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HT. THE DESIGN OF THE RCT, HOWEVER, INDICATES THAT THOSE RUNNING THE TRIAL DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW COMPLEX THE PLACEBO EFFECT CAN BE.**

**TURNER'S STANFORD UNIVERSITY STUDY PITS BREAST CANCER PATIENTS RECEIVING CHEMOTHERAPY WHO GET HT AGAINST THOSE WHO LISTEN TO RELAXATION TAPES AND THOSE WHO DO NOTHING. THE STUDY WILL MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS IN REDUCING "THE DEBILITATING EFFECTS OF CHEMOTHERAPY ON BREAST CANCER PATIENTS."\* UNFORTUNATELY, THE STUDY DESIGN IS FATALLY FLAWED. THE STUDY WAS DESIGNED BY TURNER, WHO IS DIRECTOR OF A GROUP CALLED HEALING PARTNERS, WHICH "HAS PAIRED MORE THAN 100 BREAST CANCER PATIENTS WITH HEALING TOUCH PROVIDERS SINCE THE FREE PROGRAM BEGAN ... [IN 2004] AT STANFORD."\* THE PROGRAM HAS MANY SATISFIED CUSTOMERS. THE STANFORD PROGRAM "WAS MODELED ON TWO SIMILAR PROGRAMS: BOSOM BUDDIES AT THE QUEEN’S MEDICAL CENTER IN HAWAII AND HEALING BUDDIES IN DENVER."**

**CERTAINLY, THE MAJORITY OF SCIENTISTS AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY KNOW THAT IT IS RIDICULOUS TO ASSUME THAT PEOPLE ARE ILL OR IN PAIN BECAUSE OF ENERGY IMBALANCES AND THAT ENERGIES ARE BEING MANIPULATED BY THERAPISTS, ALLOWING BODIES TO HEAL THEMSELVES. THEY KNOW BODIES HEAL THEMSELVES REGARDLESS OF WHETHER SOMEBODY TOUCHES THEM OR WAVES HER HANDS OVER THEM. THEY KNOW THESE ALLEGED ENERGIES ARE BASED ON ANCIENT SUPERSTITIONS FROM PLACES LIKE CHINA AND INDIA. THEY KNOW THESE IDEAS DEVELOPED LONG BEFORE ANYBODY HAD ANY IDEA OF HOW THE HUMAN BODY WORKS, LONG BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSIOLOGY, ANATOMY, OR SCIENTIFIC MEDICINE. SO, WHY WOULD A PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITY LIKE STANFORD PROMOTE AND SUPPORT SUCH QUACKERY? BECAUSE IT WORKS, AS IS EVIDENCED BY ITS MANY SATISFIED CUSTOMERS AND THERAPISTS, BECAUSE OTHER UNIVERSITIES ARE DOING IT, BECAUSE ALUMNI OR WEALTHY DONORS DEMAND IT, OR BECAUSE AGENCIES LIKE THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH WILL GIVE THEM MONEY FOR THEIR EFFORTS.**

**IT WOULD BE VERY UNLIKELY THAT PEOPLE PROMOTING HT WOULD DESIGN A STUDY THAT COULD PROVE IT WORKS BY THE PLACEBO EFFECT. THEY HAVE TOO MUCH INVESTED IN THE METAPHYSICAL NOTIONS THAT PROP UP ENERGY MEDICINE TO DEVELOP SUCH HONEST WORK. CAN ONE REALLY IMAGINE ANYONE SAYING TO ALL THE SATISFIED CUSTOMERS: "WELL, WE DID A SCIENTIFIC STUDY AND WE HAVE SHOWN THAT YOUR IMPROVEMENT AND SATISFACTION HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ENERGY MANIPULATION." I CAN'T.**

**ANYWAY, HERE IS HOW TURNER DESCRIBES HER STUDY:**

**AS ALL UNDERGO CHEMOTHERAPY, ONE GROUP OF BREAST CANCER PATIENTS RECEIVES HEALING TOUCH FOR 20 MINUTES, A SECOND GROUP LISTENS TO A RELAXATION TAPE, AND A THIRD GETS NOTHING. RESEARCHERS HAVEN'T YET ANALYZED THE INITIAL DATA."\***

**THEY DON'T NEED TO. I CAN TELL THEM RIGHT NOW THAT THEIR STUDY MAKES NO EFFORT TO RULE OUT THE PLACEBO EFFECT AS ACCOUNTING FOR THE SATISFIED CUSTOMERS. I DON'T DENY THAT DESIGNING SUCH A STUDY WOULD BE DIFFICULT. HOW DO YOU GIVE PEOPLE FAKE TOUCHING? I DON'T KNOW. IN ANY CASE, ALL THIS STUDY CAN SHOW IS THAT HEALING TOUCH GETS MORE SATISFIED CUSTOMERS THAN RELAXATION TAPES OR DOING NOTHING. WHAT IT CAN'T SHOW IS THAT THE EFFECTS OF HEALING TOUCH ARE NOT DUE TO PLACEBO EFFECTS. FOR ALL THESE NURSES KNOW, A FEW HUGS AND A FEW WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT WOULD WORK JUST AS WELL.**

**SINCE THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY ARE NOT IN, THERE IS NO PUBLISHED PAPER THAT DESCRIBES HOW OFTEN THE PATIENTS GOT THEIR TREATMENT, HOW LONG THE STUDY WENT ON, WHAT TOOLS WERE USED TO MEASURE EFFECTIVENESS, ETC. BUT NONE OF THAT REALLY MATTERS SINCE THE STUDY WASN'T DESIGNED WELL TO BEGIN WITH.**

**I WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH HEALING TOUCH IF IT DUMPED THE NONSENSE ABOUT ENERGIES. MOST OF US APPRECIATE AND ARE POSITIVELY AFFECTED BY HUMAN TOUCH IN CERTAIN SITUATIONS. GOING THROUGH LIFE'S CRISES WITHOUT SOMEONE TO GIVE YOU AN AFFECTIONATE AND SYMPATHETIC PAT OR SQUEEZE WOULD BE PAINFUL. I DON'T DOUBT THAT THE TREATMENTS GIVEN ARE WELL-RECEIVED AND BENEFICIAL IN MOST CASES, BUT IT IS JUST SUPERSTITION TO BELIEVE THAT MYSTICAL ENERGIES ARE BEING MANIPULATED AND THAT THESE MANIPULATIONS ARE WHAT ALLOWS THE BODY TO HEAL ITSELF. AS LONG AS HT IS PROVIDED AS A FORM OF RELAXATION THERAPY, AND ISN'T OFFERED IN PLACE OF CHEMOTHERAPY OR OTHER EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE, I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH IT. WHY WOULD I WANT TO DEPRIVE ANYONE OF A TREATMENT WHEN THEY ARE SO HAPPY WITH IT? THE FOLLOWING TESTIMONIAL FROM A CANCER PATIENT MOVES ME AS MUCH AS IT MOVES THE HT FOLKS:**

**FOLLOWING EACH SESSION, I FEEL…TOTALLY RELAXED WITH THIS INTENSE FEELING OF BEING ‘IN THE MOMENT.’ I CAN WALK INTO MY SESSION WITH A THOUSAND THINGS SWIRLING AROUND IN MY HEAD, AND ALL OF IT IS WIPED AWAY BY THE END OF THE SESSION. I FEEL THOROUGHLY UNBURDENED. IT’S ALSO A REAL TREAT TO HAVE SOMEONE TOTALLY FOCUSED ON ME, MY NEEDS, AND WHAT I AM FEELING AT THE TIME.**

**IN MY VIEW, THE SAME KIND OF POSITIVE EFFECT COULD BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT DELUDING PEOPLE INTO THINKING THE TREATMENT HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH MYSTERIOUS ENERGIES THAT TRAINED EXPERTS KNOW HOW TO MANIPULATE. WHY NOT JUST CALL IT A RELAXATION THERAPY?**

**\* \* \***

**HT WAS THE BRAINCHILD OF A NURSE IN COLORADO NAMED JANET MENTGEN. IN 1990, SHE CREATED A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM TO TEACH HT TO OTHERS. IN 1993, SHE OPENED THE COLORADO CENTER FOR HEALING TOUCH. IN 1996, SHE FOUNDED THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION HEALING TOUCH INTERNATIONAL, INC. THE FOLLOWING YEAR SHE ESTABLISHED THE HEALING TOUCH WORLDWIDE FOUNDATION, INC., ANOTHER NON-PROFIT. BY THE TIME OF HER DEATH IN 2005 SHE OWNED HEALING TOUCH PROGRAM™ AND HAD TRANSFERRED THE OWNERSHIP OF THE HEALING TOUCH PROGRAM™ TO HER CHILDREN. THE PROGRAM IS USED IN HOSPITALS, HOSPICES, CLINICS, SCHOOLS OF NURSING, AND LONG-TERM CARE CENTERS THROUGHOUT NORTH AMERICA, CENTRAL AMERICA, SOUTH AMERICA, EUROPE, AFRICA, AUSTRALIA, ASIA, AND NEW ZEALAND.**

**TO BE SO SUCCESSFUL, HT MUST HAVE MANY SATISFIED CUSTOMERS, BUT SO DO ACUPUNCTURE, HOMEOPATHY, AYURVEDIC MEDICINE, AND MANY OTHER ENERGY THERAPIES THAT WORK BY THE POWER OF SUGGESTION, RELAXATION, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PLACEBO EFFECT. IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, FRANZ ANTON MESMER STUMBLED UPON THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PLACEBO THERAPY. HE SOON HAD THE LADIES OF PARIS CONVINCED THAT HE COULD HEAL THEM OF ALL THEIR AILMENTS BY TAPPING INTO A FORCE OR ENERGY HE CALLED “ANIMAL MAGNETISM.” THERE’S AS MUCH EVIDENCE FOR ANIMAL MAGNETISM AS THERE IS FOR THE ENERGY ALLEGEDLY MANIPULATED BY HT THERAPISTS. MESMER JUST WAVED HIS HANDS IN THE AIR AND THE LADIES COULD FEEL THE HEALING ENERGY. KING LOUIS XVI COMMISSIONED THE FRENCH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES TO INVESTIGATE MESMER AND HIS CLAIMS OF MIRACULOUS CURES. IN ADDITION TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE INCLUDED ANTOINE LAVOISIER, PARIS MAYOR JEAN BAILLY, AND DR. JOSEPH GUILLOTIN, INVENTOR OF THE GUILLOTINE. THE COMMISSION REPORTED THAT THERE WAS NO SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE OF MAGNÉTISME ANIMAL AND THAT THE CURES ATTRIBUTED TO IT EITHER HAPPENED BECAUSE OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE DISEASE OR WERE DUE TO SELF-DELUSION.**

**WE NOW KNOW THAT MANY SUCH CURES ARE DUE TO A COMPLEX NETWORK OF EVENTS KNOWN COLLECTIVELY AS THE PLACEBO EFFECT. STUDIES HAVE FOUND THAT, IN ADDITION TO PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBJECTIVE EFFECTS, THERE ARE MEASURABLE PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS THAT CAN BE TRIGGERED BY SUCH THINGS AS THE BELIEF OF THE PATIENT IN THE POTENTIAL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TREATMENT, THE CLINICAL SETTING WITH ITS PROFESSIONAL—AND PRESUMABLY KNOWLEDGEABLE—HEALERS, THE STRONG DESIRE ON THE PART OF THE PATIENT FOR THE TREATMENT TO BE SUCCESSFUL, THE REMOVAL OF STRESS BY RELAXATION, AND THE DESIRE OF THE PATIENT TO PLEASE THE HEALER.**

**HEALING TOUCH MAY OPEN THE DOOR TO FEELING BETTER BUT IGNORANCE OF THE PLACEBO EFFECT IS AN OPEN DOOR TO QUACKERY.**

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**THE SCIENCE SEGMENT**

**JANUARY 2, 2009**

**DIAMONDS SHOW COMET STRUCK NORTH AMERICA**

**THE IMPACT CAUSED AN ICE AGE THAT KILLED SOME MAMMAL SPECIES AND MANY HUMANS 12,900 YEARS AGO, RESEARCHERS REPORT. THEY SAY THE DISCOVERY OF TINY HEAT-FORMED DIAMONDS IS PROOF OF THE CATASTROPHE.**

**A DISCOVERY OF MICROSCOPIC DIAMONDS A FEW FEET BENEATH THE SURFACE OF NORTH AMERICA REVEALS THAT A COMET CAUSED A CATACLYSM OF FIRE, FLOOD AND DEVASTATION NEARLY 13,000 YEARS AGO THAT EXTINGUISHED MAMMOTHS AND MASTODONS AND DEALT A BLOW TO EARLY CIVILIZATION, SCIENTISTS SAID FRIDAY.**

**THE NANODIAMONDS, SO SMALL THAT THEY ARE BARELY VISIBLE IN AN ELECTRON MICROSCOPE, ARE THOUGHT TO BE REMNANTS OF THAT COMET, WHICH WOULD HAVE HIT ABOUT 65 MILLION YEARS AFTER THE MUCH LARGER COLLISION THAT WIPED OUT THE DINOSAURS.**

**ACCORDING TO THE THEORY -- WHICH HAS ITS CRITICS -- AS THE COMET BROKE APART, IT RAINED FIRE OVER THE ENTIRE CONTINENT, IGNITING THE PLAINS AND THE FORESTS AND CREATING CHOKING CLOUDS OF SMOKE.**

**HEAT FROM THE EXPLOSIONS AND THE MASSIVE FIRES MELTED SUBSTANTIAL PORTIONS OF THE LAURENTIDE GLACIER IN CANADA, SENDING WAVES OF WATER DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI AND INTO THE GULF OF MEXICO. THAT TRIGGERED CHANGES IN ATLANTIC OCEAN CURRENTS, WHICH USHERED IN A 1,300-YEAR ICE AGE KNOWN AS THE YOUNGER DRYAS.**

**BATTERED BY FIRE AND ICE, AS MANY AS 35 SPECIES OF MAMMALS, INCLUDING AMERICAN CAMELS, THE SHORT-FACED BEAR, THE GIANT BEAVER, THE DIRE WOLF AND THE AMERICAN LION, EITHER IMMEDIATELY VANISHED OR WERE SO DEPLETED IN NUMBER THAT HUMANS HUNTED THEM TO EXTINCTION.**

**THE HUMANS, A PALEO-INDIAN GROUPING KNOWN AS THE CLOVIS CULTURE FOR THE DISTINCTIVE SPEAR POINTS THEY EMPLOYED, SUFFERED A MAJOR POPULATION DROP, DISAPPEARING IN MANY AREAS FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS.**

**THE RESEARCHERS -- INCLUDING JAMES P. KENNETT OF UC SANTA BARBARA AND DOUGLAS J. KENNETT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON -- HAD EARLIER DISCOVERED THE THIN LAYER OF BLACK SOIL CONTAINING IRIDIUM AND OTHER DEBRIS THAT THEY THOUGHT INDICATED A MASSIVE COMET OR METEOR IMPACT. BUT CRITICS SUGGESTED A VARIETY OF LESS DIRE EXPLANATIONS.**

**THE DISCOVERY OF THE NANODIAMONDS, HOWEVER, REPORTED FRIDAY IN THE JOURNAL SCIENCE, PROVIDES THE MOST POWERFUL SUPPORT FOR THE COMET THEORY BECAUSE THE GEMS CAN ONLY BE CREATED UNDER THE EXTREME TEMPERATURES AND PRESSURES OF A MASSIVE EXPLOSION, SUCH AS A COMET STRIKING THE EARTH'S SURFACE.**

**"THERE'S NO OTHER WAY WE CAN INTERPRET THE PRESENCE OF THESE DIAMONDS OTHER THAN AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL IMPACT," SAID JAMES KENNETT, A PALEOOCEANOGRAPHER.**

**SUCH AN IMPACT WOULD BE THE MOST LIKELY SOURCE OF NANODIAMONDS, CRITICS AGREED. BUT MANY ARGUED THAT THE ONE-PAGE PAPER IN SCIENCE DID NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE AUTHORS' CLAIM.**

**"NANODIAMONDS COULD BE A GOOD INDICATOR OF AN IMPACT EVENT . . . BUT AFTER READING THE PAPER, I WASN'T CONVINCED THEY FOUND DIAMONDS," SAID PHYSICIST TYRONE DAULTON OF WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS. "MAYBE THEY FOUND DIAMONDS AND MAYBE THEY DIDN'T."**

**SPECTROSCOPIST PETER BUSECK OF ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY SAID THAT HE "WOULDN'T QUESTION THAT THEY SAW NANODIAMONDS," BUT ADDED THAT FOR SUCH A POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT DISCOVERY, HE "WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IT WELL SUPPORTED."**

**ARCHAEOLOGIST DOUGLAS KENNETT, LEAD AUTHOR OF THE REPORT AND JAMES KENNETT'S SON, CONCEDED THAT THE RESTRICTIVE FORMAT OF THE RAPID PUBLICATION LIMITED THE AMOUNT OF DATA THE TEAM COULD INCORPORATE INTO THEIR PAPER.**

**BUT HE SAID THE PRESENCE OF NANODIAMONDS HAD BEEN CONFIRMED IN THREE SEPARATE LABORATORIES. "THERE ARE GOING TO BE A LOT OF FOLLOW-UP PAPERS THAT WILL CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT THESE ARE DIAMONDS," HE SAID.**

**THE FINDINGS MAY TIE TOGETHER A VARIETY OF HITHERTO MYSTERIOUS EVENTS IN NORTH AMERICA THAT ALL OCCURRED BEGINNING ABOUT 12,900 YEARS AGO, THE BEGINNING OF THE YOUNGER DRYAS -- ALSO KNOWN AS THE BIG FREEZE.**

**THE KENNETTS AND THEIR COLLEAGUES REPORTED LAST YEAR THAT THEY HAD FOUND THE BLACK LAYER, RADIOCARBON-DATED TO 12,900 YEARS AGO, AT 10 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES SCATTERED AROUND THE CONTINENT.**

**IN ADDITION TO CHARRED REMAINS FROM FORESTS AND OTHER FLORA, THE BLACK MAT CONTAINS IRIDIUM, CARBON SPHERULES AND FULLERENES CONTAINING HELIUM-3, ALL CHARACTERISTIC OF AN EXTRATERRESTRIAL IMPACT.**

**BUT CRITICS SAID THE EVIDENCE WAS INSUFFICIENT TO PROVE AN IMPACT, PARTICULARLY IN THE ABSENCE OF A DEMONSTRABLE CRATER.**

**JAMES KENNETT AND HIS COLLEAGUES WENT BACK TO THE MATS THEY HAD COLLECTED AND PERFORMED WHAT HE TERMED THE "EXTREMELY LABOR-INTENSIVE" PROCESS OF LOOKING FOR THE NANODIAMONDS. THAT INVOLVED USING ACIDS TO DISSOLVE EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE SAMPLES, THEN USING A VARIETY OF TECHNIQUES TO IDENTIFY THE DIAMOND RESIDUE.**

**THEY FOUND A FAMILY OF AT LEAST FIVE DIFFERENT FORMS OF DIAMONDS, INCLUDING SOME THAT ARE FORMED ONLY BY IMPACTS, THEY REPORTED IN THE SCIENCE PAPER. MOREOVER, THE NANODIAMONDS WERE FOUND ONLY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BLACK MAT -- NOT IN THE SOIL EITHER BELOW OR ABOVE IT.**

**SUCH DIAMONDS HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN FOUND IN THE THIN LAYER OF SOIL THAT MARKS THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE CRETACEOUS AND TERTIARY ERAS OF EARTH'S HISTORY 65 MILLION YEARS AGO, WHEN THE DINOSAURS DISAPPEARED IN THE AFTERMATH OF WHAT IS WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN A METEORITE IMPACT.**

**IN A SERIES OF PAPERS PRESENTED LAST MONTH AT A MEETING OF THE AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION IN SAN FRANCISCO, THE TEAM ALSO REPORTED THAT AT LEAST 15 OF THE 35 SPECIES THAT BECAME EXTINCT DURING THE YOUNGER DRYAS DISAPPEARED WITHIN 100 YEARS OF THE EVENT.**

**THEIR FOSSILS APPEAR "RIGHT UP TO THE BASE OF THE BLACK MAT AND NEVER GO ABOVE IT," JAMES KENNETT SAID.**

**THE OTHER SPECIES MAY HAVE BEEN HUNTED TO EXTINCTION BY HUMANS, AS HAS OFTEN BEEN SPECULATED, BUT ONLY AFTER THEIR NUMBERS WERE GREATLY REDUCED BY THE FIRES AND CLIMATE CHANGE.**

**THERE WAS ALSO A "MAJOR POPULATION CRASH" OF HUMANS, HE ADDED: IN THE GREAT PLAINS, ALL TRACES OF HUMANS DISAPPEARED FOR ABOUT 200 YEARS. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WAS EVEN MORE SEVERELY AFFECTED, WITH EVIDENCE OF HUMAN OCCUPATION DISAPPEARING FOR MOST OF THE YOUNGER DRYAS.**

**JAMES KENNETT IS CONVINCED THERE WAS A COMETARY IMPACT.**

**"I'VE COUNTED UP 15 MAJOR THINGS THAT OCCURRED AT 12,900 YEARS AGO," HE SAID. "I'D LIKE SOMEBODY TO EXPLAIN THAT TO ME IN SOME OTHER WAY."**

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**THE ARENA GOES ABROAD**

**'WITCH' BURNED ALIVE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

**1/7/2009**

**A YOUNG WOMAN ACCUSED OF WITCHCRAFT WAS DOUSED WITH GASOLINE AND BURNED TO DEATH ON A PYRE OF CAR TIRES IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA, REPORTS THE TELEGRAPH. THE GIRL, AGED BETWEEN 16 AND 21, WAS ACCUSED OF SPREADING AIDS TO ONE OF HER MURDERERS IN AN EXTRA-MARITAL AFFAIR. BLACK MAGIC HAS SEEN RESURGENCE AS THE PACIFIC ISLAND NATION GRAPPLES WITH A HIV EPIDEMIC.**

**“THE GIRL WAS STRIPPED NAKED AND COULD NOT SHOUT FOR ASSISTANCE OR RESIST, AS SHE WAS TIGHTLY STRAPPED AND HER MOUTH GAGGED,” SAYS A 21-YEAR-OLD WITNESS. ADDS THE REGION’S POLICE CHIEF, “I DON’T KNOW THE RIGHT WORDS TO DESCRIBE IT, BUT IT’S BARBARIC. CAN YOU FIND THE BEST WORDS TO DESCRIBE SUCH ACTS THAT ARE RAMPANT HERE?”**

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**FAMOUS QUOTES**

**GERRY SPENCE (1929) 80 YEARS OLD.**

**HE IS A TRIAL LAWYER IN THE UNITED STATES. HE HAS HAD MORE MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR VERDICTS WITHOUT AN INTERVENING LOSS THAN ANY OTHER LAWYER IN THE US.[CITATION NEEDED] IN 2008, HE ANNOUNCED HE WOULD RETIRE, AT AGE 79, AT THE END OF THE GEOFFREY FIEGER TRIAL IN DETROIT, MI. SPENCE DID NOT LOSE A CRIMINAL CASE IN THE OVER 50 YEARS HE PRACTICED LAW.**

**“I WOULD RATHER HAVE A MIND OPENED BY WONDER THAN ONE CLOSED BY BELIEF.”**