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Cover: Apollo 17, to be launched Dec. 6, will travel to Taurus-Littrow in the north-eastern quadrant of the moon. The site for the final Apollo landing has material of widely varying ages and probably different origins and composition. See p. 346. (Geological map of the site prepared by Edward W. Wolfe and Val L. Freeman of USGS, James Head of Bell Laboratories and astronaut Harrison (Jack) Schmitt.)

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Recalling early experiences

The recall of experiences as early in life as birth or before is a phenomenon that is well known to psychotherapists, who generally treat such recalls cautiously and symbolically. But Virginia Johnson's discoveries (SN: 10/21/72, p. 263) are reminiscent of one psychotherapeutic scheme in particular, to the extent that one wonders if she might know more than she lets on.

I hate to say it, but every detail of the phenomena she reports—early recall, association of auditory experiences with moments of "altered consciousness," triggering of recorded associations by present-time incidents—is in accord with the flamboyant predictions made by L. Ron Hubbard in his 1950 book *Dianetics*. The therapy system Hubbard developed has been in use for over 20 years, and the people who still flock to his movement would find nothing either new or startling about Johnson's announcements (except perhaps the word that there is a drug capable of opening up early memories). Hubbard himself has been called (and may well be) a charlatan, a quack, a con man, and a madman, but he seems to have been also a lucky guesser or even perhaps, at certain crucial moments, a man of penetrating insight and synthetical genius. Many of his activities might be considered downright fraudulent—but if other activities have belatedly recognized scientific merit, he ought to get the credit. He is still alive, and deserves to know it if he was right.

William T. Powers
Northbrook, Ill.

Virginia Johnson replies:

Mr. Powers is correct in stating that some (not "every detail") of the phenomena reported by me were discussed by scifiction writer Hubbard in his *Dianetics* (1950). However, what author Hubbard omitted to mention then or later was that he plagiarized scientific sources for his so-called "findings," and that there was not much new about his system even in 1950. As a fiction writer, the work of others may be the raw material of the trade; but for the author to claim as his own discoveries the painstaking research of the accredited behavioral scientists of the time hardly merits praise. The fact also that Hubbard distorted much of

the information to suit himself doesn't improve the image.

Hubbard is no victim of belated recognition; dianetics has in some areas been proven correct for the simple reason that its author was clever enough to take its principles from the best of the behavior research of the first half of this century, without acknowledgment or documentation. Ron Hubbard made the predictions all right; he just never bothered to annotate the paraphrasing. I would prefer to credit the original sources (which is more than Hubbard had the courtesy to do), which, as far as I have been able to do it, is reflected in the footnotes and bibliography of my paper.

Groundwork for BCS theory

Your story on the 1972 Nobel Prize in Physics (SN: 10/28/72, p. 276) inaccurately credits the discovery of the isotope effect in superconductivity to a "group working at Rutgers University under E. Maxwell." In point of fact the effect was discovered *independently*, and at about the same time, by Reynolds, Serin and Nesbitt at Rutgers, and by me at the National Bureau of Standards.

A few months earlier Herbert Fröhlich, then visiting at Purdue, had proposed a theory of superconductivity in which the lattice-electron interaction was a central feature and which implicitly contained the isotope effect, although it was not set forth explicitly. His work was not then known to us, as ours was not to him. Neither Fröhlich's theory, nor Bardeen's first theory which shortly followed the experimental work, proved adequate but both were important milestones on the path which led to the successful BCS theory.

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Science committees

Richard Gilluly's article "The 'unveiling' of science committees" (SN: 10/7/72, p. 234) was most interesting and enlightening. I have been trying to compile information about scientific research being done to reinforce the status quo and found his information pertinent.

Patricia A. Brennan
Boston, Mass.

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