

Most IONS members have run into heated and irrational opposition to some of our ideas about the wonderful possibilities we have as humans, and to the research that is starting to support this wider, noetic view. The strength of such opposition, unfortunately, usually seems inversely proportional to the pseudo-skeptic's knowledge; that is, the stronger the criticism, the less the person actually knows about what he or she is opposing.

As an investigator of a number of human potential areas like parapsychology and altered states of consciousness, I have run into this discouraging kind of opposition more times than I would like to remember. I've never been easily discouraged, though. When IONS members have asked me how my university treated me for being a pioneer, I usually smiled and glossed over the question by saying "Good and bad." Even the trials of life have their good sides, though, and I would like to tell you about an enjoyable outcome of this situation.

If you want to read a good thriller, try the just published novel *Night Summons* by Anita Gentry (St Martin's Press). It's about a handsome parapsychologist at a major university who gets a lot of flak from narrow-minded psychologists in his university department. It's quite a good mystery and action novel, and it deals with many issues of interest to IONS members.

One of the chief characters is Athena Dawes, a detective-in-training who temporarily takes a job as a secretary in a psychology department in the hope of discovering why Suzie Linstrom, a friend of hers who had worked there, was beaten and almost killed. Dawes is amazed by the vehemence of the gossip and plotting against Professor Laszlo Honvagy, a psychologist who does parapsychological research. The more she learns about feelings and actions among

faculty, students, and the university administration, the less we can hold on to our idealized picture of a tolerant community mutually dedicated to the objective pursuit of knowledge! Honvagy is physically attacked by unknown assailants just before a critical debate, and this is just a prelude to the real action. I won't spoil the ending.

Of course the fact that *Night Summons'* author Anita Gentry worked as a secretary in my department at UC Davis for a while must be just a coincidence . . . *Night Summons* is presented as a work of fiction,

and my colleagues never actually hired any hit men to get rid of me—that I know of. And if I seem to recognize some of the characters in the novel I'm sure that's just projection on my part. All coincidence, except for (if you'll allow me one small projection) the handsome professor part . . .

Enjoy this story, and tell your friends about it. This is a very good first novel.

As to the serious aspect of all this, my blurb on the cover reads "I had trouble putting *Night Summons* down—the action was so intriguing and full of surprises. It's fiction, of course, but I have to say, sadly, Gentry's de-

scription of narrow-mindedness about parapsychology among professors, whom we expect to be well-informed and open-minded, is too often too true." For those who want a factual survey of the way unorthodox areas like parapsychology are treated, an article by anthropologist David J. Hess ("Disciplining Heterodoxy, Circumventing Discipline: Parapsychology, Anthropologically," *Knowledge and Society: The Anthropology of Science and Technology*, 9, 223-252) is most informative.

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Parapsychologist Charley Tart:
Model for a mystery star?