

OBITUARY

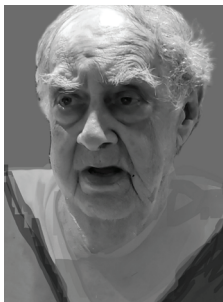
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**Peyton David Moncrief
Jr. (1941 - 2025)**

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David Moncrief was an independent scholar with a very wide range of interests. He passed away on February 9, 2025, at the age of 83. He had been raised in DeWitt, Arkansas, lived for a time in Little Rock, and spent the remainder of his life in Memphis, Tennessee.

Among David's strong interests were evolution and human behavior, particularly chronobiology (reactions and adaptations by living entities to timings and regularities in the environment), and also astrology. He favored the possibility that the human species had separated from the primate branch as a result of mutations that led to *neoteny*: the carrying into adulthood of traits that otherwise characterize only the early childhood years. He was also favorable to the concept, promoted by (among others) Arthur Squires (2014), that homosexuality might have played a beneficial role in group-selective evolution.

Moncrief's efforts were the main source of book reviews in the *Journal of Scientific Exploration* for something like three decades.

I had published the first-ever book review of Shapiro (1988) in the *Journal* in 1988. I believed, and continue to, that a book-review section may be the most widely appreciated part of a journal for a group like the Society for Scientific Exploration, whose members have a huge variety of diverse interests. I urged the then-Editor of the *Journal* to create a specific book-review section; and should have expected that I would then be called on to be the section's editor, even though I still had a full-time teaching job. I became Book-Review Editor in 1992, but just about all the intellectual detail work was done by David Moncrief. Soon after the Book-Review section had been inaugurated, I began to get frequent phone calls from David, suggesting books that should be reviewed and, more importantly, suggestions for people who would be appropriate reviewers for those books. Given the very wide range of topics pertinent to *Scientific Exploration*, that ability to suggest capable book reviewers bespeaks how well and widely read and knowledgeable David Moncrief was.

David's name as Associate Book Review Editor first appeared in the *Journal* in 1998. When I retired from my University position and became Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal* in 2000, I persuaded David to become the Book-Review Editor; something I have frequently described in full honesty as the best thing I ever did as Editor. David not only solicited substantial essay reviews of important books; he was scrupulous about obtaining more than one review if the subject of a book had aroused strongly opposing comments from interested and competent individuals. David also expanded the Book-Review section to include "Further Books of Note" and "Articles of Interest."

David remained Book Review Editor for several years after I had resigned in 2007, and he was brought back in 2022 by the current Editor-in-Chief James Houran. I do



hope that the *Journal* will find someone to edit a substantial Book Review section in the future; but no matter how well that work may go, David Moncrief will always have been quite irreplaceable.

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