

American Vedantist Newsletter No. 2

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American Vedantist is a not-for-profit online journal dedicated to developing Vedanta in the West and to facilitating companionship among Vedantists. (Find out more about [American Vedantist](#) at the bottom of this page or visit our [website](#))




Audio Interviews Online

Reminiscences of Holy Mother, by Swami Gaurishwarananda



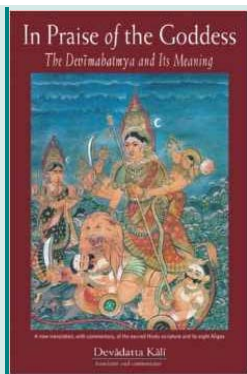
Swami Gaurishwarananda, a disciple of Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi, first came to her as young teenager. His family lived near Jayrambati, the village in West Bengal, India, where Holy Mother lived. He was also known as Rammoy Maharaj (Rammoy was his given name) and Rose Maharaj, because of his expertise in rose cultivation. Soon after meeting Holy Mother, he began staying with her every weekend. He served as head of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama in Lucknow from 1949 to 1966. After that he spent most of his remaining years in Jayrambati, where he served as President of the Matri Mandir and Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Sevashrama. These reminiscences were recorded by John Schlenck at Jayrambati in March, 1973.

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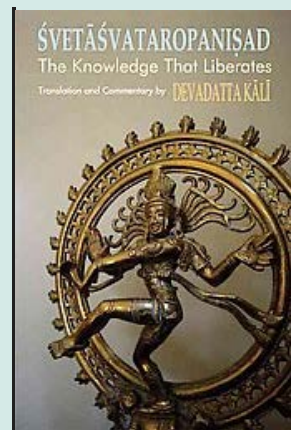
<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/uncategorized/reminiscences-of-the-holy-mother/>

Interview with Devadatta Kali (David Nelson)

Brother Shankara, resident minister of the Vedanta Center of Atlanta, interviews author Devadatta Kali (David Nelson) about his two latest books, *The Veiling Brilliance: Journey to the Goddess*,



and *Svetasvataropanisad: The Knowledge that Liberates*. Devadatta is also the author of *In Praise of the Goddess: The Devimahatmya and Its Meaning*. He has been a member of the Vedanta Society of Southern California since 1966.



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<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/interviews/interview-with-devadatta-kali/>

Purchase or find out more about *In Praise of the Goddess* at [Vedanta Press](#)

American Vedantist Issue #67

This issue of American Vedantist explores some of the paths that spiritual aspirants have trod in quest of fulfillment. Jon and Anna Monday show how **J.D. Salinger**'s connection to Vedanta was little known prior to a recent biography that highlights the relationship between his well-known life as a famous writer and his hidden life as a spiritual seeker. Fortunately for us, **James Merryman**, a much loved long-time devotee of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, left behind records of his mature thoughts on spiritual living which his friends offer as an homage and as an inspiration to other seekers. **Bill Davis** shares some thoughts on the underlying cause of all our desires and hopes. **William Page** gives an overview of devotional meditation as taught by the Ramakrishna Order, and **Mangesh Buwa** outlines how **Swami Vivekananda** refashioned Vedanta for the modern world.



J. D. Salinger & Vedanta

by Jon and Anna Monday

(See Issue #1, American Vedantist Newsletter)

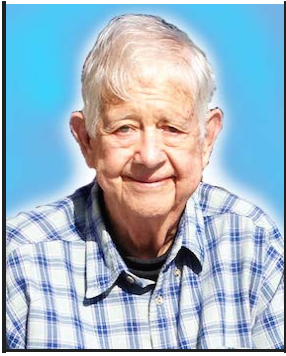
jon@mondymedia.org

<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/j-d-salinger-and-vedanta-2/>

Notes of a Devotee

by James Merriman (Devidas)

James Merryman was a long-time devotee of the Vedanta Society of Southern California. The following notes to himself were found in his papers after his death last August. An ardent devotee for some sixty years, he stands out in the memory of those who knew him as a truly great example of a spiritual aspirant. With



heartfelt gratitude to him as friend and exemplar for all sincere seekers, his friends share a few of his moments of private thought.

<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/notes-of-a-devotee/>

All Yearning Is Yearning for God

by Bill Davis

The fact that we start life with unrealistically high hopes is, in my mind, a kind of proof for the existence of God—for the existence of a god whose nature is bliss that we intuitively understand can be attained. We dismiss the hopes of childhood as childish, but from where does this hope of incredible joy come? We experience thirst, and to satisfy it there is water. We experience hunger, and there is food to satisfy it. We experience lust, and there is sexual gratification. Is the hunger for limitless joy alone without its suitable object?

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<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/all-yearning-is-yearning-for-god/>

In Praise of Meditation

by William Page

...we have to make the mind a fit place for God to dwell in. We wouldn't invite a king to visit us if we were living in a pigsty. We'd kick the pigs out, get rid of any evidence that they had ever lived there, remodel the whole place, repaint it, redecorate it, sweep and scrub the floors, open the curtains to let in the light, and set out some flowers to welcome our royal guest.

In the same way, we have to make preparations to receive God in the little cottage of our heart. We have to clean it up—get rid of all inappropriate, dirty, and evil thoughts; banish unwholesome emotions, habits, and tendencies; and fill it with purity and holiness.

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<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/in-praise-of-meditation/>

Swami Vivekananda's Practical Vedanta

by Mangesh Buwa

“Shankara left this Advaita philosophy in the hills and forests, while I have come to bring it out of those places and scatter it broadcast before the workaday world and society. The lion-roar of Advaita must resound in every hearth and home, in meadows and groves, over hills and plains” proclaims Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji's new approach of presenting



Vedanta for the modern age is unique in the history of humanity; never before had anyone tried so boldly to teach Advaita to everybody irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion, ashrama of life (student, house-holder, recluse, monk), and adhikara-bheda (level of competency to grasp spiritual truths).

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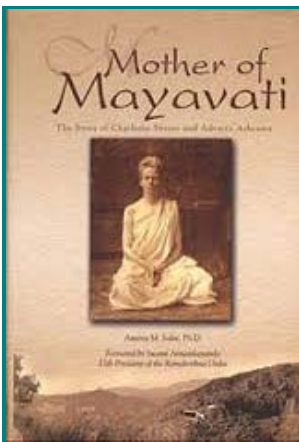
<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/swami-vivekanandas-practical-vedanta/>



In Memoriam: Pravrajika Baradaprana

Baradaprana's life was infused with love for God, which she conveyed through her music, her worship, her love for her family, monastic and lay, her friends, pets and garden. Even as her memory failed her in later years, her natural sweetness and thoughtfulness continued to touch everyone who encountered her. She remained gracious and affectionate to all that met her.

<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/news-reports/in-memoriam-pravrajika-baradaprana-1923-2014/>



Mother of Mayavati: The Story of Charlotte Sevier and Advaita Ashrama by Amrita M. Salm

Book Review by Pravrajika Vidyaprana

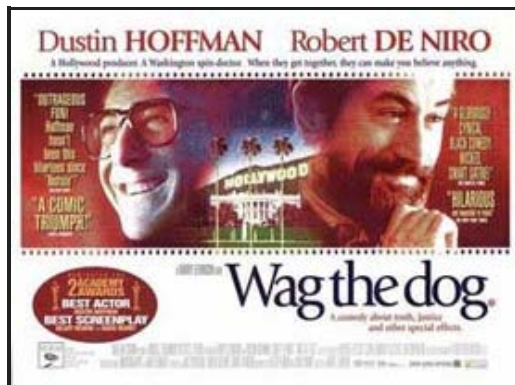
This is the first, long overdue biography of one of Swami Vivekananda's foremost female, Western disciples, Mrs. Charlotte E. Sevier. Until now she has remained in relative obscurity, but thanks to this work of love, her biography now belongs alongside those of Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), Tantine (Josephine MacLeod) and Mrs. Sara Bull. These women together advanced the mission and message of their master on the world stage decades beyond his premature passing at the age of thirty-nine.

<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/media-reviews/mother-of-mayavati-the-story-of-charlotte-sevier-and-advaita-ashrama-by-amrita-m-salm/>

Purchase the Book at [Vedanta Press](#)

[Wag the Dog, Maya and the Dog's Curly Tail](#)

Film Review and Essay by Steven F. Walker



In Jungian psychology it is believed that the reason a recurring dream keeps on coming back over and over again is that the dreamer has not yet succeeded in understanding the message that the dream contains. One might even extend this idea to claim that, in similar fashion, *japa* is the repetition of a mantra until that moment when its message is fully revealed to the spiritual aspirant, who fully realizes the spiritual truth—the message—that the mantra conveys, and then no longer needs to continue the repetition. But what to say about someone who sees a *film* over and over again? Is it that the film contains a hidden message? Or

rather, has the person intuited that the film contains a message of great personal importance, even though the creators of the film (director, scriptwriters etc.) may not have even intended it?

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<http://americanvedantist.org/2014/articles/wag-the-dog-maya-and-the-dogs-curly-tail/>

About American Vedantist

As a Vedanta magazine, we are committed to:

- Stimulating inner growth through shared devotion to the ideals and practice of Vedanta
- Encouraging critical discussion among Vedantists about how inner and outer growth can be achieved
- Exploring new ways in which Vedanta can be expressed in a Western cultural context
- Networking through all available means of communication with Vedantists in the United States and other countries, and
- Facilitating the establishment of grass roots Vedanta groups and social service projects.

Participate

We invite our readers to join with *American Vedantist* in these endeavors. Please send us articles, poems, songs, letters to the editor, ideas for action programs and other suggestions for achieving our goals. For more information see our [Contact & Submissions page](#).

You may also participate by commenting on our [articles](#) or sharing your thoughts in our [Reader's Forum](#) section. All comments are moderated.
