October 2, 1961

Mr. Charles Clark
30 Davaar Road
Saltcoats, Ayrshire
Scotland

Dear Mr. Clark:

Thank you for your letter, and I certainly appreciate your continued interest in helping me find the answer to the question of the 'witch's cradle.'

Seabrook, on page 73 of his WITCHCRAFT, ITS POWER AND INFLUENCE TODAY, describes it as something "suspended by heavy chains from the ceiling....a life-sized contrivance of wood, with blakkened leather straps -- as perverse a devise as twisted human ingenuity ever invented." He goes on to associate his knowledge of the witch's cradle as being derived from books "dealing with the obscure sadistic-masochistic element in medieval sorcery."

In his autobiography, NO HIDING PLACE, he describes some experiments he made, and states "We made a cage similiar to the one the Manchu princess who turned Taoist saint had been imprisoned in for twenty years. We even built a witch's cradle. And never, when things got going, was there any dearth of young apprentice witches.

It would seem to me that in view of the context in which he refers to the cradle, it was some kind of device for holding the body in restraint while some one of the ESP faculties was being excerized - with either the cradle stimulating the faculty or protecting the body during the time of 'trance.'

I speculate that the cradle might involve either the feeling of relaxation that restraint can sometimes bring - possibly with the straps placed in such a way as to meet certain of the sensitive pressure points on the body's surface - and in this way stimulating a 'turning inward' of attention; or that the cradle in some way involved some method of 'blanking' the attention as well as restraining the body - such as Seabrook did through the use of a leather mask

cut off the wearer's hearing, sight, and ability to speak.

There might also be a factor involved - that I cannot quite understand - in the suspension of the body from the ceiling, perhaps even a certain swinging motion might be involved.

Any help you can give along this line will be mught appreciated.

I agree with you that many books of this sort are 'downright rubbish,' and Seabrook rather obviously didn't know much about what he was doing - but he was doing something that produced results.

No, I haven't heard of the "Olympian Guild" - and I checked in both my files of 'cranks and cults' and in our file of advertisers with no results.

I have been hoping to come to London for more than a year now - for esoteric reasons - but have not been able to take the necessary time away from business. When I do I certainly will endeavor to allow enough extra time so that I may visit you.

Sincerely,

Carl L. Weschcke
President