

Science/Philosophy of Science

***Genetic Engineering - Dream, or Nightmare?* by Mae-Wan Ho Gateway Books 1998, 365 pp., £10.99, p/b.**

A new edition of the book reviewed extensively in a previous issue and bringing the reader up to date on developments over the last eighteen months. Very well documented, this book will appeal to scientists and general public alike. It is possibly the most eloquent and authoritative warning bell from within science itself.

***Mapping the Mind* by Rita Carter (SMN) Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998, 224 p., 25 h/b, £18 p/b. Consultant Professor Christopher Frith**

Peter Fenwick writes: Rita Carter is a medical journalist and writer, but she is clearly not a scientist, and her lack of familiarity with the topic sometimes comes through in her book, *Mapping the Mind*. However, her consultant on the book, Chris Frith, is Professor of Neuropsychology at the Wellcome Department of Cognitive Neurology and together the pair make a good team, as Chris has clearly ensured that the neuroscience is correct, and Rita Carter has made a good, though not always entirely successful, attempt at making this accessible to the general public. However, the public should not be too general, as many of the concepts used in the book are difficult to understand, and without a thorough understanding of neuroscience the book in places is difficult to follow. But there is plenty in it to intrigue and interest anyone with a layman's interest in the subject. The book takes a journey through brain structure and maps onto this function from the latest neurological discoveries. There are multiple inserts of interesting topics related to the text but which stand alone and can be 'dipped into' in a more or less random fashion. The illustrations are excellent and clear, and the combination of cartoons and drawings which sit alongside the latest PET scan image data help to make the latter seem less formidable to the layman. The book covers all the major areas of brain function and is an excellent place to look for some of the latest ideas and most modern scanning research. Do you want to know where your orgasm is generated? Look in the right temporal lobe. Do you want to know where (and what) your theory of mind area is? Look in the left medial frontal cortex. Do you want to know if you have Fregoli's syndrome? You may do if you look at the face of a stranger and it looks familiar - because the amygdala is adding false emotional feeling to strange faces. On the other hand, perhaps you can't recognise your husband though he seems familiar? Then you have prosopagnosia - damage to the facial recognition centre. Or perhaps you have Capgras syndrome, due to underactivity of the emotion linking to the visual image. In this case you can see that people look like themselves but they don't feel right emotionally. The woman claiming to be your wife is clearly not her at all, but an imposter. Who should buy this book? Any scientist interested in the brain should have it on their shelves. Those interested, but with no training in neurocognition would learn enough from it to be able to blind a non-scientist with fascinating snippets of neuroscience, and at least to start a stimulating conversation should they find themselves seated next to a neuroscientist at dinner. I think that most members of the Network would enjoy glancing through the book and many would gain significantly from it.

***Towards a New Alchemy* by Nick Begich Earthscan Publications Ltd 1998, 180 pp., p/b.**

An account of the life and discoveries of Dr. Patrick Flanagan, whose work extends through nutrition (microclusters), electronic telepathy, electromedicine and communication with dolphins. Little of this work is well known but it points in some interesting directions, some of which were originally opened up by Tesla.

***Thinking Beyond Darwin* by Ernst-Michael Kranich Lindisfarne Books 1999, 173 pp., 12.99, p/b.**

Builds on Goethe's approach to zoology in an extensive consideration of the idea of the type as the key to vertebrate evolution: 'only when we move beyond mechanistic explanation and approach the evolutionary process as a highly differentiated, living whole do we become aware of the all-pervasive organisational principle that informs it'. As in parallel work in plant science, the need is for 'concepts that move beyond the finished product to what is becoming, that move beyond form to the process of formation'. A key book for those interested in Goethean science and new

***The Magic Furnace - The Search for the Origins of Atoms* by Marcus Chown Random House Publishing Group Ltd 1999, 232 pp., 16.99, h/b.**

The story of the discovery of our cosmic origins which is at once the story of the atoms and the stars so that we realise how truly we are 'stardust made flesh'. A racy written account that explores the theoretical debates as well as the scientific evidence.

***Ley Lines A Comprehensive Guide to Alignments* by Danny Sullivan Piatkus Books 1999, 230 pp., 16.99, h/b.**

A sensible guide to this controversial area. The author starts with the classic 1920s text of Alfred Watkins and covers the major developments and theories since that date, including the writings of John Michell and Paul Devereux. An additional feature is an illustrated directory at the end of the book. Does not purport to get to the bottom of the mysteries but certainly elucidates some of its aspects.

Medicine/Health

***The World Travellers' Manual of Homoeopathy* by Dr Colin B. Lessell CW Daniel & Co 1993, 435 pp., 12.99, p/b.**

An astonishing reference book and essential vade mecum for alternative travellers. Truly encyclopedic in scope, the book gives homoeopathic remedies for every conceivable ailment and travelling situation, from the journey itself to constipation and diarrhoea, the effects of sun and altitude, various bites and stings, eye and skin problems, 'assorted worms' and 'infamous bacteria'. Full of sound advice, it is a book of herculean proportions which will astound even our medical readers!

***The Expressiveness of the Body and the Divergence of Greek and Chinese Medicine* by Shigehisa Kuriyama Zone Books 1999, 340 pp., 20.50, h/b.**

A brilliant and original work contrasting the Chinese and Greek (subsequently Western) approaches to the body. Begins with an analysis of two very different diagrams and traces their differences back to the earliest times and preoccupation with acupuncture points and muscles respectively. The analysis moves from different ways of touching to different ways of seeing and thinking (including representations in art) and finally to the different ways of 'being' a body represented by the key concepts of blood and breath. Quite fascinating, especially to those with an interest in the history of ideas and/or medicine.

***Essiac Essentials - Rene Caisse's Herbal Cancer Remedy* by Sheila Snow and Mali Klein Gill & Macmillan 1999, 122 pp., p/b.**

A concise guide to Rene Caisse's herbal cancer remedy. Gives the background to the discovery of this herbal treatment formula originally given by a Native American medicine man) plus detailed information on how to grow the relevant herbs and make up the recipes.

Also case histories and a series of frequently asked questions. Will fascinate any reader interested in alternative cancer treatments.

***The Greatest Benefit To Mankind - A Medical History of Humanity* by Roy Porter Fontana Press 1997, 842 pp., 14.99, p/b.**

Widely and justly acclaimed as a masterpiece, this book is a medical history of humanity from antiquity to the present. Few people would have been capable of writing this encyclopedic volume that is nevertheless highly readable. As Sir David Weatherall put it: 'All those who have the daunting task of trying to redefine the goals of medical practice for the future should read this book then read it again. It is a magnificent achievement'.

***Energy Medicine* by Donna Eden with David Feinstein Piatkus Books 1998, 380 pp., 14.99, p/b.**

An immensely detailed and practical guide to energy medicine based on the author's many years of research and practice (foreword by Member Caroline Myss). Full of self-help techniques and exercises with diagrams, the book can either be read through or consulted more specifically. It begins from the assumption that subtle energy, meridians and chakras exist in some sense but the tone is matter of fact and informative. Will appeal to readers working in complementary medicine as well as those looking for a useful self- help manual.

***The Fiction of Bioethics* by Tod Chambers Taylor & Francis 1999, 207 pp., 13.99, p/b.**

A seminal book that will change how experts regard case histories in bioethics. The author argues that they are a form of constructed narrative underpinned by the philosophical position of the author. Cases are ultimately quasi-rhetorical reconstructions that influence the way in which they are read and interpreted.

***What is the Alternative?* by Amanda Jackson-Russell Garnet Publishing Ltd 1999, 68 pp., 3.50, p/b.** Rather misleadingly subtitled 'puncturing the myths of complementary medicine' (no doubt at the suggestion of the publisher), this short book is in fact a sympathetic scientific guide to ten main forms of complementary medicine. Each section contains a history, description, assessment of what it involves and how it works, plus what to expect in a session. A useful pocket guide.

Philosophy/Religion

***Key Philosophers in Conversation - The Cogito Interviews* by Edited by Andrew Pyle Routledge 1999, 256 pp., 12.99, p/b.**

20 philosophers in conversation with the editor on a wide spectrum of topics including philosophy of mind, ethics and political philosophy. Some names are familiar such as Mary Warnock, WVO Quine, Bernard Williams and Dan Dennett, while others are less well known or, like Richard Dawkins, better known as scientists. The tone is direct and accessible, giving a good snapshot of views at the end of the century.

***Free Will* by Ilham Dilman Routledge 1999, 273 pp., fl4.99, p/b.**

Serves as a most illuminating historical and philosophical introduction to the free will issue. It examines the contributions of sixteen thinkers from Homer to Simone Weil, analysing a major text from each writer. The beauty of the book lies in its combination of historical sweep and analytical rigour. It distinguishes between four sources of the 'freedom and determinism' problem: the roles of 'chance and necessity', the foreknowledge and grace of God, the apparent incompatibility between human free will and a general law of causality,

and psychological determinism. Essential reading for anyone interested in the history of the free will issue.

***Reincarnation Gf Karma* by Albert Bodde C W Daniel & Co 1997, 116 pp., 7.99, p/b.**

A thought-provoking and reflective treatment of the major issues arising from an attempt to understand reincarnation and karma. Will not convince the sceptic, but will provide ample food for thought for those who broadly accept the ideas and would like to think more systematically about their implications.

***Beyond The Obvious* by Dr Christine Page (SMN) C W Daniel & Co 1998, 161 pp., 10.95, p/b.**

Subtitled 'bringing intuition into our awakening consciousness', this sensitive and well written book builds on the author's previous work in spirituality and healthcare as well as insights from her own life experience. It uses a seven phase scheme, beginning with awakening, then continuing through expansion, thought liberation, harnessing the will, taking a stand, letting go of the result and leading finally to what she calls the 'true connection' where the ego is merged with the soul. It contains a wealth of helpful exercises and suggestions, all of which are tried and tested. The reader will find the author's approach both down to earth and comprehensive in a psychological and spiritual sense. A valuable companion on the journey.

***The Golden Thread* by Natalie N. Banks Lucis Publishing Company 1963, 52 pp., 1.3, p/b.**

A small introductory book on the continuity of esoteric teaching, showing how it constantly reappears in new forms suited to the age. A valuable and perceptive overview.

***Gnosis and Faith in Early Christianity* by Riemer Roukema SCM Press 1999, 212 pp., 14.95, p/b.**

A remarkable and informative survey of gnostic themes, writings and teachers, both well known and obscure. It moves from an overview to its background in Judaism, Platonic philosophy and mystery religions. It then examines some specific teachers and texts before concluding with an analysis of the relationship between Christian faith and gnosis. Depth of scholarship is deftly combined with great readability, making this a book for beginners and scholars alike

***Land of the Fallen Star Gods* by John Gordon (SMN) Orpheus Publishing House 1997, 281 pp., p/b.**

A serious and scholarly study of the esotericism of ancient Egypt. The author points out, with a considerable sense of frustration, that the self-imposed blinkers of professional Egyptologists, reinforced by peer pressure, mean that they fail to understand the spiritual content of Egyptian ideas and are wedded to a chronology that leaves much unaccounted for. The first part of the book deals with a series of scientific issues concerning Egyptian culture, the second with their belief systems and the third with the cosmological and astronomical derivations of ancient Egyptian thought. It is a meticulous work that will repay careful study on the part of readers interested in the origins of Western thinking in Egypt.

***Russell on Religion* by Bertrand Russell Routledge 1999, 261 pp., 12.99, p/b.**

A volume that all Russell readers will wish to acquire and which gives an excellent introduction to his thinking at the interfaces of religion with philosophy, science, morality and history. Some of the essays are familiar, but much material comes from his less

accessible collected papers, for instance reviews of the now classic books by Eddington and Jeans. Very stimulating.

***The Snake & the Fox* by Mary Haight Routledge 1999, 495 pp., 14.99, p/b.**

An original book for learning logic with sections on truth and validity, the logic of sets and the logic of statements. The material is introduced by a cast of characters with representative diagrams and is made accessible without compromising on rigour.

***An Introduction to the Complete Dead Sea Scrolls* by Geza Vermes SCM Press 1977, 256 pp., 14.95, p/b.**

The standard guide to the Dead Sea Scrolls, now published in its final edition as all the scrolls have now appeared. Acclaimed as 'a comprehensive and reliable guide to their significance, it contains all the key references as well as extensive chapters on the community, its history and religious ideas. Essential reading for Scrolls enthusiasts

***The Second Krishnamurti Reader* by Edited by Mary Lutyens Penguin/Viking Books 1970, 320 pp., 8.99, p/b.**

Contains two of K's well known works, *The Only Revolution* and *The Urgency of Change*. The first speaks eloquently about meditation and silence, describing encounters with students and their questions, while the second is in the classic K question and answer mode, ranging across the whole spectrum of human concerns. The kernel is about 'seeing', loving and the nonduality of the meditative mind.

***The Neoplatonists* by John Gregory Routledge 1991, 189 pp., 13.99, p/b.**

A superb introduction to the Neoplatonists. Begins with the life of Plotinus, then summarises his main ideas. Each section contains a succinct summary of his ideas, followed by referenced extracts from the *Enneads*. The second part introduces the work of Porphyry, Iamblichus and Proclus and is followed by a brief essay on the legacy of the school.

***Faith and Science* by Adam Ford Epworth Press 1999, 129 pp., 7.95, p/b.**

An engaging book arising out of classes taken by the author who is both an astronomer and chaplain. Themes covered range widely over such issues as miracles, extinction of species, alien intelligence, cloning, free will and genetic engineering. The tone is stimulating and refreshing, with excellent questions for discussion. Highly recommended for education.

***Simple Taoism: A Guide to Living in Balance* by C. Alexander Simpkins, Annellen Simpkins Newleaf 1999, 173 pp., p/b.**

A companion volume to the book on Zen and written in the same accessible style. It follows the same structure of history followed by themes (including tai chi) and practical exercises. Highly recommended as an introduction.

***Simple Zen: A Guide to Living Moment by Moment* by C. Alexander Simpkins, Annellen Simpkins Newleaf 1999, 158 pp., p/b.**

A pocket guide to the history of Zen, its main themes and ways in which it can be applied in daily life such as poetry, brush painting and martial arts. An excellent and accessible starting point.

***Reason to Believe* by Maurice Wiles SCM Press 1999, 131 pp., 7.95, p/b.**

An important book by one of the subtlest of modern theologians. Here he sets out his responses to the most basic questions about Christian belief: God, the Christian story, the Trinity, salvation, other faiths, morality, evil and death. A special feature of the book is a

series of 'interludes' that explain the background to such issues as language, the development of doctrine and modern study of the gospels.

Beyond the Body Death and Social Identity: by Elizabeth Hallam, Jenny Hockey, Glennys Howarth Routledge 1999, 232 pp., 15.99, p/b.

A volume that explores the links between body, identity and death in a wide ranging discussion. Chapters examine representations of the dying body, 'bodies without selves' as in PVS and the medicalisation of the body. Later chapters break new sociological ground by looking at married life after the death of a partner, the incidence of ghosts and apparitions, and alleged communication with the departed. All this is objectively reported without taking a strong view pro or anti, as an analysis of ways in which the self may persist without a (physical) body.

New Religious Movements by Eds. Bryan Wilson and Jamie Cresswell Routledge 1999, 284 pp., 14.99, p/b.

Analysis of new religious movements (NRM.S) has become a serious study of academic sociology, as this fascinating volume demonstrates. Member Prof. Eileen Barker contributes the first chapter on the incidence and significance of NRM.S. The rest of the book considers multifarious aspects of these movements in a series of informative chapters, all of which analyse different aspects such as the law, mental health, the media, the reaction of the churches, responses to NRMs in East Germany after unification, and the various strategies employed by anti-cult movements. Among the most interesting themes to emerge are the comparisons between Gnostic sects and NRMs, similarities and differences in relation to churches (think of the sect-like patterns of certain fundamentalist groups), the extent to which NRMs are a manifestation of the 'Easternisation' of the West, and the role and position of women in NRM.

The Voice of Kahlil Gibran by Edited by Robin Waterfield Penguin/Viking Books 1995, 202 pp., f8.99, p/b.

A wonderful anthology of Gibran's writings with sensitive and well informed introduction by the editor. Lovers of Gibran will want to buy this book without delay as it contains a wealth of gems, including short stories, aphorisms and extracts from some of his best known works. Consider this: 'When life does not find a singer to sing her heart, she produces a philosopher to speak her mind'. Or: 'the truth that needs proof is only half true.'

Psychology/Parapsychology

Beyond the Conscious Mind: Unlocking the Secrets of the Self by Thomas R. Blakeslee Plenum Press, New York and London, 1996, no price, h/b

Guy Claxton writes: A book after my own heart in content, but not in style, *Beyond the Conscious Mind* attempts to bring the cognitive and neuro- sciences to bear on the mysteries of the 'self, and elucidate them for a non- specialist audience. One should not ask too much of an author who describes himself on the flyleaf as 'a true renaissance man' - not only has he founded three companies, he also 'does sculpture' - and indeed this is not a bad entry-level resume of recent work on neuro-modelling, unconscious cognitive processing, subliminal perception, implicit beliefs, neurological distortions of consciousness, and child development. It's all a bit breathless, and light on any sense of the deep historical, anthropological and spiritual contexts of his enquiry. He is over- enthusiastic (as several recent authors have been) about the idea that 'the mind' is comprised of a mass of semi-independent 'modules'. He even proposes a module for 'genius' - which is a module-busting

notion if ever there was one. And his own theory of self (as an extension of Gazzaniga's 'interpreter module') neglects the fact that the modern Western self is a highly complex hybrid of many, originally separate mental sub-systems. But for all that, Blakeslee gives the reader a feel for an enormously exciting area of enquiry, and for why it so desperately matters. A good launch-pad, but not a place to linger.

***The Complete Booh of Aliens and Abductions* by Jenny Randies Piatkus Books 1999, 192 pp., £17.99, h/b.**

A critical survey of the whole phenomenon giving a history of the field, a geographical survey of incidents and a range of competing theories to account for them. Categories surveyed posit that it is either an internal or external event and that causes may be mundane or 'exotic'. A thoughtful investigation.

***The Spirit of Intimacy* by Sobonfu E. Some Newleaf 1997, 141 pp., £7.99, p/b.**

A beautiful book by an African teacher that conveys the message of a different understanding of spirituality within a community that is rooted in its past and physical environment. Written in a direct and simple style, the book will appeal to anyone concerned with relationship in the broadest sense.

***You Really Are Responsible* by Tycho Photiou (SMN) Ocean Books 1998, 121 pp., £5.95, p/b.**

Subtitled 'a guide to self-empowerment and improved relationships', this book accompanies the author's earlier one and is likewise full of helpful advice. It contains a wealth of inspiring quotations from a great variety of sources.

***You Are What You Think* by Tycho Photiou (SMN) Ocean Books 1998, 154 pp., £5.95, p/b.**

A self-help guide to the uses of self-suggestion, based on the premise that we create our (reactions to) reality. Full of practical advice and exercises.

***The Infinite Mind* by Betty Shine Harper CoUins Publishers Ltd 1999, 212 pp., £16.99, h/b.**

A medium's account of 'mind energy' that draws on many years of experience illustrated by case histories. Her view is that the mind is the control tower of the body that energises the brain and enables it to send messages to the whole body via the electrically activated nervous system. An intuitive's view that may give the scientist some hints from inside.

***Key Ideas in Psychology* by Ian Stuart-Hamilton Jessica Kingsley Publishers 1999, 336 pp., £11.95, p/b.**

A thorough introduction to conventional psychology but disappointing in not even mentioning the transpersonal or any of its leading theorists, given that the book is brand new.

***The Human Quest for Meaning* by Paul T P Wong and Prem S Frey Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 1998, 462 pp., £43.05, h/b.**

An authoritative handbook on the quest for personal meaning and dedicated to Viktor Frankl. Drawing on psychological research and clinical applications, the book surveys theoretical approaches, research in personal meaning and its role in counselling and psychotherapy. The book reflects the growing interest in meaning as related to personal satisfaction in life and sets out the agenda for professionals in mental health.

***The Dawn of a New Science* by Gopi Krishna Institute for Consciousness Research 1999, 190 pp., p/b.**

A new edition of a book published over twenty years ago but no less relevant for that. Gopi Krishna was the foremost modern exponent of kundalini yoga and saw the human race in the process of evolution towards a higher state of consciousness. Themes considered in this book include mysticism and evolution, the rise and fall of civilisations, genius and psychic phenomena, and the relationship between bio-energy and higher consciousness. The book is full of erudite references that show the author's sound grasp of the larger picture and challenge of our times.

***Pisces Shaping Your Future* by Jane Ridder-Patrick (SMN) Brilliant Books Ltd 1999, 63 pp., £1.00 p/b.**

Part of a series of twelve astrological sign books written for Tesco and available at your local store... (if not, write in!). Jane has managed to produce a serious, concise and highly readable series of books that give the context and general features associated with the sign. I learned a good deal from my own sign book - it's amazing what can be packed in to 60 small pages.

***Mindforce* by Guy Lyon Playfair (SMN) Brilliant Books Ltd 1999, 93 pp., £4.00, p/b.**

Guy Lyon Playfair has written a highly readable introduction to the paranormal that can be recommended to the novice in the field. Drawing on a wide range of evidence, he shows that science needs to develop a new understanding if it is to embrace rather than summarily dismiss such phenomena. The last chapter puts the Network in the focus of the necessary change of world view.

***Listening to Your Soul* by Dick Wilson (SMN) CW Daniel & Co 1999, 102 pp., p/b.**

Sums up what the author has learned in many years of close involvement in esoteric study, healing, homoeopathy and Bach flower remedies. Makes a connection between soul and material life by arguing that a disharmony here may well be responsible for the manifestation of an illness that may serve as a turning or awakening point.

***The Variety of Dream Experience* by Eds. Montague Uman and Claire Limmer State University of New York Press 1999, 280 pp., p/b.**

Second edition of this highly acclaimed interdisciplinary volume, subtitled 'expanding our ways of working with dreams'. Begins with a section on group dream work, moving on to links with other disciplines such as anthropology, education, mythology and creative writing. The final part considers applications in psychology and psychiatry. Will intrigue readers with an interest in dreams, but will be especially useful to those using dreams in a professional capacity.

Future Studies/Economics/Ecology

***Philosophy and Computing - an Introduction* by Luciano Floridi Routledge 1999, 242 pp., £14.99, p/b.**

A textbook introduction to the philosophy of information that will interest anyone inclined to think systematically about the digital revolution and its implications. Email is characterised as 'silent dialogue'. We know that changes in this sphere are coming about so rapidly, so this book is a timely reminder to step back and reflect on where we are heading.

***The Changing Nature of Work* by Edited by Frank Ackerman, Neva Goodwin, Laurie Dougherty and Kevin Gallagher Island Press 1998, 420 pp., p/b.**

All you could ever want to know in terms of academic analysis of the topic, with papers on

every conceivable aspect of work, employment, industrial relations, the household and human values.

***The Breakdown of Climate* by Peter Bunyard (SMN) Floris Books 1999, 254 pp., 1,9.99, p/b.**

Subtitled 'Human Choices or Global Disaster', this is a sobering and well informed book that asks if current climatic events are part of a natural cycle or, as the author persuasively argues, a sign that we have reached the limits of Earth's ability to perpetuate these cycles. The value of the book is that it gives a complete overview of climate as a whole, so that the reader can clearly understand how human activities have impacted on planetary systems, including the balancing roles performed by oceanic currents and tropical forests. The last two chapters examine the politics and impact of climate change. Essential reading in this field.

***The Biosphere and Noosphere Reader* by Edited by Paul R. Samson and David Pitt Routledge 1999, 206 pp., £17.99, p/b.**

With a perceptive foreword by Mikhail Gorbachev, this reader outlines the origins and scope of the concepts of biosphere and noosphere (a term coined by Teilhard de Chardin) and their relationship. Starting with an overview, the book moves on to examine the development of the noosphere concept, with readings from Bergson, Julian Huxley, Peter Medawar, Toynbee and Vernadsky. The next section concentrates on Gaia and global change while the last one looks ahead to the future of how we formulate and apply global thinking.

***The Courage to Be Rich* by Suze Orman Riverhead Books 1999, 372 pp., \$24.95, h/b.**

Not just another book about manifesting affirmations. More of a complete financial vade mecum aimed mainly at the US market. Encourages the reader to work with their emotional issues surrounding money as well as getting their financial house in order. The author's priorities are people first, then money, then things. Contains a number of useful exercises and some instructive stories; also covers newer ground such as prenuptial financial agreements.

***The Internet: a Philosophical Inquiry* by Gordon Graham Taylor & Francis 1999, 179 pp., £8.99, p/b.**

A sober and considered analysis of the impact of the Internet within an overall context of technological innovation. Discusses implications for democracy, individualism, new models of community, policing issues, and the status of virtual reality. One of his conclusions is that it will strengthen the trend towards individualism and moral fragmentation. Well worth pondering.

Education

***The Firebird* retold by C J Moore (SMN) Floris Books 1999, 25 pp., £11.99, h/b.**

Review by Charlotte Lorimer (4): as you know, wolves are usually nasty! Here is a long story where the wolf is the hero and helps the king's son find the firebird. What an adventure! And such lovely pictures.

***The Chicken who Wanted to Fly* by Evelien van Dort Floris Books, 10 pp., £7.99, h/b.**

Review by Charlotte Lorimer, (4): a tale about a hen who could only fly onto a low branch where she was bothered by rats. Beautiful pictures.

***The Way To The Stable* by Max BoUiger Floris Books 1999, 24 pp., {,8.99, h/b.**

Review by Charlotte Lorimer (4): A lovely Christmas story where a shepherd limps to the stable where baby Jesus was born. He has gone but the shepherd kneels down and is suddenly able to walk again and forgets his crutches! A touching tale for children like me.

***The Star-Child* by Oscar Wilde Floris Books 1996, 35 pp., 11.99, h/b.**

Review by Charlotte Lorimer, (4): an extraordinary tale about a child found by woodcutters. He grows up beautiful but beconies ugly by being nasty to people. At the end he becomes beautiful again by being nice to them. Lovely pictures.

General

***Words and Rules - The Ingredients of Language* by Steven Pinker Foundation for Traditional Studies 1999, 348 pp., £14.99, h/b.**

Following his recent best-sellers, Pinker now turns his attention to 'the ingredients of language' in his intriguing new book. He takes as his starting point the existence or regular and irregular verbs and argues that language comprises a 'mental dictionary of memorised words and a mental grammar of creative rules'. Well written and amusingly illustrated - there is an excellent chapter on German with quotations from Mark Twain and a lovely one on children's creative errors - this book will fascinate anyone interested in the nature of language and communication.

***W.B. Yeats and the Learning of the Imagination* by Kathleen Raine Golgonooza Press 1999, 119 pp., £13.95, p/b.**

A fascinating and eloquent book that will appeal to anyone seeking a deeper understanding of Yeats. The author rightly argues that much modern commentary on the poet completely misses the point because it is based on a materialism that the poet himself rejected. The only difference between the 30s and now is that the Universities '(have) replaced new criticism, Marxism, behaviourism, existentialism, and the rest with minimalism, post-modernism, feminism, deconstructionism, political correctness and whatever other "original" theories ingenious ignorance is able to generate'. A chapter of particular interest to Network members is the one on 'Yeats and the Afterlife'. Compelling reading.

***The Elixir and the Stone - The Tradition of Magic and Alchemy* by Michael Baigent (SMN) and Richard Leigh Penguin/Viking Books 1997, 455 pp., £16.99, h/b.**

An erudite study of the history and influence of Hermeticism in Western culture. The most interesting section for me considered the Florentine Renaissance and the subsequent fragmentation of the world-view with the rise of modern science. The modern occult revival is an attempt to reinstate this all-encompassing and interconnected picture. The authors argue that the history of Western civilisation is ultimately the history of our aspirations to Fausthood (though I think a man is speaking here!) which means unfettered knowledge and power. We are already only too aware of the consequences of knowledge without wisdom and power without love. Knowledge and power then lead to a survey of modern forms of manipulation which I felt sat uneasily with the earlier part of the book and might best have been published as a separate study.

***Earth Mysteries* by Paul Devereux Piatkus Books 1999, 137 pp., £5.99, p/b.**

A volume in the series of Piatkus guides written by a real specialist capable of distilling 25 years of thinking, research and first hand experience into a highly readable introduction to the field. An excellent place to start out in this field.

***Kingdom of the Edge* by Jay Ramsay Element Books 1999, 157 pp., £8.99, p/b.**

Subtitled 'Poems for the Spirit', this is an inspired collection in five sections. It is hard to single out any series as finer than the others, but I myself especially enjoyed the Oriental style pieces - Jay is a translator of the Tao Te Ching. I will feature an example on the back inside cover of the next issue. Jay will be speaking at the Mystics and Scientists conference in April.

***Wisdom Stranded* by April Ryedale Fountainhead Press Stroud 1998, 136 pp., 7.70, p/b.**

An epic poem by the 'Network bard', of which this is the first volume, and from which some quotations appear on the back cover of this issue. The author has set out to recapitulate in verse the accelerated story of the evolution of human consciousness through the lives of seven generations of the same family. Here, as she puts it 'the light of consciousness and the dark of ignorance operate simultaneously' and the perspective is that of the 'nearly invisible feminine aspects of divinity' that are coming through so strongly in our times.

***Images of Savages* by Gustav Jahoda Routledge 1999, 297 pp., £6.99, p/b.**

Subtitled 'ancient roots of modern prejudice in Western culture, this is an arresting and brilliant analysis by a psychologist with a background in anthropology. He documents the roots and development of prejudices in the Middle Ages and shows their continuity with more recent 'scientific' views. His seminal realisation occurred while in a university department in Ghana. Here he lost his faith in the conventional natural science model of psychology. He deals with a number of themes that are all too recognisable: the use of the word 'savage' and its connotations (think of the 19th and early 20th century texts by Tyior and Frazer), animality and 'bestial' sexuality, cannibalism, comparisons between the 'Negro' and the ape; then there is a complete section on the image of the savage as childlike, with the rescuing mentality of colonial administrators and missionaries. The continuity of images has a good deal to do with the psychology of 'the other', a perennial issue in social psychology and only too apparent in the modern political landscape. An eye-opening book that deserves a wide readership.

***Sociology: The Basics* by Martin Albrow Routledge 1999, 203 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

An excellent volume in this useful series and ideal as an introduction to the field. Contains five chapters covering the nature of society, the science of sociology, social theory and institutions, then some considerations about the future.

***An Introduction to Visual Culture* by Nicholas Mirzoeff Taylor & Francis 1999, 274 pp., £12.99, p/b.**

Although this book is designed for students of media, it has much insight to offer the general reader. It make one aware of the extent to which we live in a visual culture and extends the reader's understanding into its history via histories of line, perspective and photography. It then goes on to consider the evolution of virtual reality and the nature of the gaze related to sex. Finally there is an interesting reflection on the phenomenon of Diana's death in relation to the visual culture in which she lived and moved.

***The Visual Culture Reader* by Nicholas Mirzoeff (Ed) Taylor & Francis 1999, 530 pp., £15.99, p/b.**

A companion volume that covers the same themes as the introduction. It has an extensive section on the genealogy of visual culture, then writings on everyday life, virtual realities, race, identity and gender. For the reader who needs more detail.

***Heart & Home* by Beverly Pagram Gaia Books Ltd 1998, 160 pp., £14.99, p/b.**

A beautiful and sensitive book subtitled 'creating spirit and style in every room'. Exquisitely illustrated, this book is an exercise in synaesthesia by incorporating not only ideas about the outer environment of seasons, but also the features of smell, colour and sounds. There is a wonderful quotation by D.G. Rossetti applied to William Morris' house and which sums up the approach of the book: 'More of a poem than a house'. Shows how one's house can at best be a work of art (not much sign of children in the pictures, though!).

***Manage Yourself, Manage Your Life* by Ian McDermott and Ian Shircore Piatkus Books 1999, 200 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

A handbook based on NLP and designed to help the reader make the most of their personal and professional lives. The fruit of much experience and teaching, the book certainly contains a wealth of helpful suggestions and approaches that will help the reader review where they are and where they would like to be heading.

***Children and Angels* by Glenyce S. Eckersley Rider 1999, 176 pp., £6.99, p/b.**

A book of true stories about angelic intervention and encounter in children's lives. Full of breathtaking stories indicating that there is more to life than meets the eye.

***Crop Circles* by Lucy Pringle Thorsons 1999, 144 pp., £16.99, h/b.**

The result of ten years of investigation, this book covers all aspects of the phenomenon including the hoax hypothesis, human and animal effects, mechanical failures and sightings of luminosities. It is a balanced and fair assessment, beautifully and extensively illustrated from the author's own collection of photos. A good overview.

***Ecstatic Body Postures* by Belinda Gore Bear & Company Publishing 1995, 288 pp., p/b.**

A book documenting the fascinating findings of anthropologist Dr. Felicitas Goodman about ecstatic or shamanic body postures in different cultures. She found that artists had frequently portrayed these postures in sculpture and that adopting the posture in conjunction with rhythmic rattling at 200/minute for 15 minutes led to recognisably similar experiences on the part of experiencers. These are described under various headings such as healing, divination and initiation with illustrations and instructions. It is striking that the postures must be precisely followed if the experience is to occur - the slightest deviation seems to have an effect.

***Aurora, The Northern Lights in Mythology, History and Science* by Harald Falek-Ytter Floris Books 1999, 143 pp., £12.99, p/b.**

A beautiful and fascinating book about the mythology, history and science of the Northern Lights or aurora borealis, with stunning photos. Provides all the basic information in a highly accessible form.

***Stopping - How to Be Still When You Have to Keep Going* by David Kundtz Newleaf 1998, 272 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

A book about 'how to be still when you have to keep going'. Sounds familiar? Defined as 'doing nothing as much as possible for a definite period (one second to one month) for the purpose of becoming more fully awake and remembering who you are'. The author is a former priest who defines himself as a failed meditator. Written with humour and insight, this is truly a book for our times. For everyday use a 'stillpoint' is invaluable and can be taken many times a day, taking advantage of the many unfilled moments such as waiting at a red light. The 'stopovers' are more extended, while 'grinding halts' are longer periods of

fundamental reassessment. Truly, as Gandhi said, 'there is more to life than increasing its speed' and this book shows you a path of stillness within activity.

***Social Dreams & Technological Nightmares* by Nicholas Albery & Stephanie Wienrich (eds)
The Institute for Social Inventions 1999, 304 pp., £14.85.**

The annual compilation of 200 best ideas from around the world and arranged in the usual format of headings covering every conceivable aspect of human activity. The main award goes to Doug Wilson for his web-based social matching system. Other ideas include Y2K peace corps of digital experts, an Institute for Retired Scientists and a judge who allows jurors to interrupt to ask questions. Available as part of a ~15 subscription to the Institute for Social Inventions, 20 Heber Rd, London NW2 6AA

***In Search of Security* by Pratima Bowes (SMN) The Book Guild Ltd 1999, 183 pp., £14.95, h/b.**

A multidisciplinary study of our need for security, an aspect of which is that for intellectual certainty. In relation to science, for instance, its absolute claim to knowledge is based on our need for certainty rather than 'the requirements of logic and rationality'. The author considers religion, science, politics and economics and the nature of reality before bringing the themes together in a reflection on life's meaning. A rich variety of views.

***A History of the Circle* by Ernest Zebrowski Free Association Books Ltd 1999, 215 pp., £12.95, h/b.**

Chris Clarke writes: The circle has played a crucial role in civilisation - in science, religious symbolism, art, architecture, engineering - the list could be endless. So 'The History of the Circle' was a project waiting to be tackled. Zebrowski covers quite a wide area in this shortish book, with an emphasis on mathematics, astronomy and mechanics. The result is interesting) but limited and lacking in depth, and the target audience is rather uncertain (a lot of it requires a reasonable standard of numeracy). The 'Celestial Orbs' section, for instance, is dismissive of Eudoxus, ignoring his remarkably imaginative scheme of counter-rotating spheres for getting planetary motion qualitatively right, and has no mention of the philosophical underpinning for the idea of circular motion in Greek thought. The theme of the different sorts of reality to be accorded to mathematics or to scientific theory threads through the book, but there seems to be little new that is said on it. A reasonable start on this huge theme, but leaving much more for the future.

***Play It as It Lies* by Mike Linder Westminster John Knox Press 1996, 146 pp., p/b.**

As a golfer, you can imagine that I was intrigued by the title of this book and wondered if it was designed to reduce my handicap, at any rate on a spiritual level. As a reader of Michael Murphy I was familiar with the parallels between golf and life. The author is a Catholic priest and his book is an honest and humorous appraisal of his own relationship to the game and the potential lessons to be drawn from it. What if one drives into the rough in life? Don't be too ambitious in aiming for the green or you may compound your problems! For me the most important insight is the need for balance between effort and relaxation, between technique and trust in natural ability. The author has only completed half the round of chapters and promises a back nine. Meanwhile I would advise golfers to take note of his advice.

***Speeches That Changed the World* by Owen CoUins Westminster John Knox Press 1998, 440 pp., h/b.**

An inspiring collection of speeches mainly from the 18th century onwards. If anything, the

United states are overrepresented but then Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln all made memorable speeches. I much enjoyed Cranmer's last words and was a little surprised to see Margaret Thatcher's 1979 foreign policy statement included. A notable omission, in my view, was Mikhail Gorbachev's speech to the UN in 1988. In any event, a good book for the family or school library.

Death and Dying

***Last Aid Manual* by Nicholas Albery & Stephanie Wienrich (eds) Natural Death Centre 1999, 108 pp., £5.95, p/b.**

A sensitive and practical book of advice from the Natural Death Centre. Contains extracts and summaries from books covering the whole spectrum of issues surrounding death, dying and disposal. Highly recommended.

***The Wheel of Life* by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross Bantam Books 1998, 287 pp., £7.99, p/b.**

The extraordinary odyssey of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's life and work. Written with directness and passion, the reader is taken through her early life in Switzerland, her encounter with the Maidenek concentration camp after the war (where she first encountered the butterfly motif), her medical training and the story of her pioneering involvement in death and dying work. One appreciates the sacrifices she made in pursuing this path and learns of some of the amazing experiences she had along the way. Perhaps the most astonishing was an apparition of a former (dead) patient, Mrs Schwartz, who materialised in a lift, opened the door to her office, told her why she had come back and even wrote a note on a piece of paper! The portrait that emerges is of a woman of exceptional courage and singleness of purpose who goes to the heart of life and encourages us to live it to the full. A gripping read.

***Reincarnation and Karma* by Albert Bodde CW Daniel & Co 1997, 116 pp., £7.99, p/b.**

A thought-provoking and reflective treatment of the major issues arising from an attempt to understand reincarnation and karma. Will not convince the sceptic, but will provide ample food for thought for those who broadly accept the ideas and would like to think more systematically about their implications.