

## **Network News and Notices**

### **Network Compuserve Forum**

MIKE BROWN reports: (being sent by e-mail)

*Note: Members with articles on disk can submit them to Mike Brown or Kevin Ashbridge for uploading into the library. They might also create discussion threads within the forum. A guide for members, written by Kevin Ashbridge, will be available shortly.*

### **Network Directory Confidentiality**

Members will have received the directory and supplement with the last mailing. You will notice that it is marked 'Confidential - For the Use of Members Only'. The Council has recently clarified the meaning of this phrase. The directory is for personal not institutional use. Members wishing to send information to more than fifty Member at a time should clear this with the office. The normal way of mailing the entire membership is to send a sample flier into the office. Subject to the discretion of the Council, this can be sent out with one of our main mailings for our standard charge. This procedure will ensure that Members do not receive unsolicited mail.

### **Network Council and Trustees News**

Council elections took place at our AGM at Gaunts House on 16th July. Dr. Kevin Ashbridge, Dr. Richard Dixey, Catherine Filmore and Max Payne all retired from the Council. We are most grateful to them all for their special contributions to the work of the Council. Max Payne has now become Chairman of the Trustees. Graham Seabrook, formerly a manager with IBM, has also become a Trustee. The following Members were elected onto the Council for a three year term: Professor Chris Clarke, Professor of Applied Mathematics in the University of Southampton, Anne Miller, a consultant mechanical engineer, Dr. Andrew Powell, consultant psychotherapist and honorary senior lecturer in the University of Oxford, and Dr. Yvonneke Roe, GP Principal in South London. In addition, Professor Brian Goodwin was elected a Vice-President of the Network, alongside our other Vice-President Professor Willis Harman.

### **Network Book Prize**

The Book Prize is awarded annually to the book published by a Member which contributes most to the articulation of a new perspective in the many areas of interest to the Network. The review committee consists of the Director, Max Payne and Rev. John Kerr. All books published within the last year are eligible, as well as books in languages other than English, which will be assessed by a native speaker. The award will be made in December and announced in the next issue. It is then notified to all publishers who send us review copies.

### **Networking Searches on Computer**

You will have noticed that the latest directory contains an extensive listing of Members' interests. This was done by a search for keywords both in completed questionnaires and in the text of the directory entry. If you would like us to make a search for you, just send in your keyword and we will send you back a list of Members with the same interest.

### **Science and Religion Dialogues**

Peter Fenwick and I had a meeting with Sir John Templeton at the beginning of May and discussed with him a proposal for a series of dialogues on science and religion, to be held in London over the winter. We are delighted to announce that the Templeton Foundation has funded these dialogues, which will be video-recorded, and that we will be able to distribute some of these videos to schools. We also intend to produce a book from the series, in order to make them as widely known as possible. Details are enclosed with UK mailings.

### **Local Groups**

*MIKE BROWN writes from Yorkshire:*

FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE YORKSHIRE BRANCH, SCIENTIFIC AND MEDICAL NETWORK, SHEFFIELD, 3 JUNE 95

The Network's aims and objectives were discussed. The meeting affirmed the fundamental aims of the SMN.

An outline was given of a very full programme of events planned for the SMN during the intermediate future. Tribute was paid to the efficient organisation of these events, and to the quality of the participants.

Nevertheless, some concerns were voiced.

- 1) A great deal of SMN activity was seen to be pivoted on an overworked Director and secretary
- 2) Prestigious meetings were consuming a very large proportion of the Network's resources. This was resulting in some tension concerning the efficient and effective networking at less glamorous levels.
- 3) There appeared to be a drift away from the founding concepts of the Network. To draw an analogy, it seemed that originally the network had been conceived as an organisation set up to facilitate the coming together of musicians who wished to play together in groups or in an orchestra, but it was becoming one where prestigious soloists or groups played to fee-paying audiences. It was felt that there should be consultation of the general membership to appraise their feelings towards this drift.
- 4) Events were heavily concentrated in the South East of England. Some regional members experienced a sense of isolation. Heavy transport costs were incurred in attending meetings in the South East. Transcripts of the meetings were not being made available. Hard copy was particularly important when visual aids or mathematical derivations were used in lectures.
- 5) Whilst the costs of membership of professional bodies may well be more than

double that of the SMN, there were benefits by way of regional support which compensated. For example in the same week as the SMN May Dialogue, Sir Fred Hoyle had given a subsidised lecture in Hull to the Yorkshire Branch of the Institute of Physics on new observations challenging standard cosmological theories. The cost of [sterling]17.50 included a 5-course dinner.

6) The Yorkshire branch of the SMN had initiated practical investigations into physical correlates of conscious activity. These had not been an ideal demonstration of the power of belonging to a networking group. There did not appear to be easy options for diversifying regional activities into other areas.

*Editorial note: I have responded to some of these concerns and would welcome further comment. The Network needs external activities in order to fulfil its education obligations as a charity, but the question of balance between internal and external activities is a continuing issue. Surpluses on such external activities also help fund the Network and its Membership.*

Mike described the SMN's new forum on the CompuServe electronic networking system. He was glad to report that there had been many very interesting discussions covering a wide range of topics on the forum. However, participants in these discussions were mainly non-members of the SMN, and as a result the future objectives of the forum are becoming somewhat obscure.

Dr. John Moss presented a paper entitled "The Faith of Science".

He pointed to the changes in attitudes towards the universe that had occurred since Graeco-Roman times. He said that because science was just a model of reality, doubts always remain about scientific prediction. He mentioned in particular the current enigmas associated quantum theory, Gödel's incompleteness theorem, and the changing perspectives on evolution. Thus there was a difficulty in identifying foundations for science that we can trust. It meant that science had in effect to be a faith. He mentioned that science was not alone in this respect. Jnana yoga suffered from similar limitations in its search for truth and logic, and likewise did not reach the ultimate truths.

He said that the successes of science tended to be well publicised, whilst the things which remain inexplicable to science tended to be ignored. Thus resulted in an unquestioning acceptance that ultimate reality is intelligible. It is intelligible according to the faith of science, yet in reality it may not be. The universe may be very different to our current picture of it. Saying that does not to diminish the very

real achievements of science. Such recent advances as those occurring in the field of non-linear dynamics demonstrate that scientific progress is continuing. John appealed for the scope of science to be widened. He said that there tends to be a great inertia towards change in science. Some mainstream academics get set in their ways of thinking, and it seems to require a considerable accumulation of evidence to cause a paradigm shift. Unnecessary barriers are erected which prevent or delay the expansion of science. Consciousness is essential to science. Without it observation and deduction would not be possible. Why should consciousness not be open to scientific investigation? Could paranormal phenomena of today become part of the science of tomorrow? Yogic phenomena are accepted in the East, but because they do not fit with the western scientific paradigm, they are not acknowledged in the West.

John wondered at the current rate of progress in science which he felt is all the more striking when one compares the period over which scientific method has evolved with the time-scale of cosmic evolution. He referred to the anthropic principle and questioned just how far the human mind could take us on the path of understanding the greater reality. He looked with enthusiasm towards the convergence of the current dualistic outlook of science towards a more monistic one, but could see formidable problems, like self-referral, which would call for an explanation on the way. In conclusion he quoted Saint Paul "We shall know as we are known".

There followed wide-ranging discussions on the issues raised, especially on the nature of mind and whether it was open to scientific investigation.

Next meeting 16 September, with Dr Carol Brierly, 152 Pennistone Rd. Shelley (on A629, six miles from Huddersfield)

*DAVID LORIMER writes from North London:*

Our first meeting was held in the Hampstead Rooms and was attended by over thirty people. We welcomed Member John-Richard Turner from Holland with his colleague Michael Mendizza, coordinator of the 'Touch the Future' Project. Inspired by the dialogue process of David Bohm and the insights of Krishnamurti and Joseph Chilton Pearce, among others, two of the project's recent dialogue questions were: 'Is it possible to nurture capacities in children which we have not developed in ourselves?' and 'Is information and technology helping our children discover and develop their highest potentials?' Our problems stem from

our cultural infrastructure and the ways in which our thinking is developed. There has been a shift away from nature to machines, which are themselves the creations of human thought. All this has profound implications for our sense of identity. Further details: 4350 Lime Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90807, USA. Fax: (310) 427-8189. A newsletter is published quarterly.

Our second meeting was held on 5th July at the home of Louise and Richard Graham, where Dr. Rupert Holms spoke on 'Solutions to AIDS'. He gave us a very clear outline history, steering deftly through the competing factions which have emerged in the past fifteen years. The speed of mutation on the part of the virus makes it hard to combat in conventional terms, all the more so in view of the differing test results obtained at various stages in the disease process. The relationship between the HIV virus and AIDS appears to be indirect, although not to the extent advocated by Duesberg et al. Rupert's own research has concentrated on isolating the functionally significant part of the virus which does not change and which appears to induce auto-reactive responses in the immune system. He and his colleagues have developed a treatment using human DNA sequences which effectively re-educate the immune system not to attack itself. Although in its early stages in the apparently successful treatment of one patient, the approach seems a promising one, based as it is on an understanding of variations in immune responses. Members wishing to know more can contact Rupert at his address in the Directory.

*CLIVE HICKS writes from West London: (for scanning)*

*DIANA CLIFT writes from Guildford: (this should arrive by e-mail between 2-5 August - if not omit)*

*DAVID LORIMER writes from Wessex:*

The group met in May to hear Dr. Julian Candy's paper on 'Metaphors in Medicine', which he presented in January to the Science and Spirituality Group on Metaphors. He presented a wide range of metaphors, most notably the mechanistic and battle themes, which elicited a quite different discussion from the January meeting. The interests of the group were more clinical and related to the ways in which health and disease were actually understood. We explored structures of thought and perception, ending up with a brief consideration of archetypes which will lead into another meeting on myth later in the year.

*DAVID LORIMER writes from Oxford:*

The Oxford Group met at the home of Dr. Alistair Crombie in Boars Hill, where he presented the outline of his magisterial 'Styles of Scientific Thinking', about which an article appeared in the last issue. The most interesting theme to emerge from our discussion was the unique role of argument in the Western tradition as it derived from Greek thought and logic. This establishes a process of seeking truth which discourages dogmatic ex cathedra pronouncements and insists on logical and empirical justification of these arguments. As is well known, the process was first fully developed in philosophy and theology, and it is paradoxical that the sharpened weapons of reason were then used to demolish the theological edifice which had been so painstakingly erected. Our next meeting is on 8th August, when Professor Derek Bryce-Smith will talk about 'Chemistry, Crime and Sin'.

*JOHN ROBERTS writes from Cambridge: (coming for scanning)*

**Science and Spirituality/Consciousness Research Group**

The groups held a joint meeting at the end of June on 'The Subjective and the Objective', which was attended by about 25 people. The groups' concerns are right at the interface between the first and third person perspectives. Talks were given by Dr. Peter Fenwick, Dr. David Peat, Dr. Jean Hardy, Rainer Trebuth and David Lorimer; a paper by Dr. Max Velmans had been pre-circulated. There was a general awareness of the various ways in which we construct reality and a good deal of discussion on the extent to which it is possible to regard reality as 'given'. In the West, much modern discussion follows on from Kant, while we also reviewed Buddhist and Native American perspectives. Rainer Trebuth presented a view of the subjective as primary in the creative process, while discussion of Max Velmans' paper focussed on whether his reflexive view of consciousness provided a reconciliation between subjective idealism and scientific objectivity. There was some enthusiasm for the notion of a 'participatory reality advanced by David Lorimer, who outlined the genesis of modern 'objectivity' by quoting from the book by Louis Dupré reviewed in the last issue. Any transformation of existing attitudes can only begin from where we are at present. At the end, Mike Brown led a discussion on his questionnaire sent out to Members of the Consciousness Research Group and various proposals for 'position sheets' were outlined. It was agreed that the next two meetings would be held on October 8th and December 2nd. The October meeting would discuss position sheets to be written and circulated before then, while the December meeting of the Science and Spirituality Group would consider creativity. A future meeting is planned on the idea of purpose. *Please let me know if you would like to receive mailings from either of these groups.*

#### **Complementary Medicine Group**

The last two meetings of the group have been concerned with the formulation of our conclusions from the series of meetings which have been held since last autumn on the relationship between the philosophy and practice of complementary medicine. This paper will be sent on the Research Council for Complementary Medicine as part of their submissions to the British Medical Association. We also intend to publish a part of the paper in the *Review* and on our Compuserve forum. The autumn meetings will alternate between the experiential and discussion of clinical research and applications. We will also be holding an evening on the biological effects of electromagnetic fields. *Please let me know if you would like to be in the list for this group.*

#### **Esoteric Knowledge Group**

This group has been active in its continuing consideration of the relationship between science and esoteric knowledge. Days are partly experiential and we are conducting a continuing meditation telepathy experiment. The last two meetings have been devoted to a detailed consideration of postulates of the esoteric world-view submitted by Geoffrey Farthing, a student of Theosophy for the last 60 years. We intend to have material ready for publication by the next issue and will also place it on the Compuserve Forum. Future meetings will address the definition of terms and the compilation of a basic bibliography in this field. Contributions from non-attenders welcome!