

## NETWORK NEWS

### SMN BOOK – CRISIS AS OPPORTUNITY

Many thanks to those members who have submitted proposed chapters for the book. The final editorial selection will be made in January, and the book will be published by Floris Books with a launch conference in early November. Any submissions not selected will be posted on the website.

### TOM WELCH DONATION

The Network has received a substantial donation from the estate of Lt Col Tom Welch, who died last year. Tom's career spanned a great range of activities, including that of tank commander and farmer. Tom was a man of strong will and determined action, a leader and initiator of many projects. Finding the Findhorn Community in Scotland, and living there for three years in the mid-1970's, as one of the Foundation's directors, opened Tom to another world that he had previously only allowed himself to glimpse.

For the rest of his life, Tom searched for knowledge of the spiritual world that he knew to lie within and beyond the physical world. He combined this quest with a love of the rest of the natural world, and a wish to play his part in making the earth habitable for future generations. Like all of us, Tom found the contrary leanings of his nature, the perfectionist commanding officer and the ardent spiritual pilgrim, sometimes irreconcilable. He was a good friend to many people and one of the kindest of men, always with a twinkle in his eye.

### PERSPECTIVES

**March 6th, 2010, Oxford Quakers Meeting House, 43 St. Giles Road, Oxford**

*Charla Devereux* writes: This is the first in what may be a series of "Tough Talks on Tough Topics", inaugurating a SMN Oxford Local Group. It will be a one-day event with three speakers. The idea behind the Perspectives events is to have expert speakers present differing perspectives on given questions. We feel that a serious debate from different angles on a given topic can often reveal unexpected insights.

This first event takes on the question: "Do We Know Our Own Minds?" – an inquiry into the nature of consciousness. Two of the speakers will be Serena Roney-Dougal and Paul Devereux. The third speaker, who will be a major figure on the more "reductionist" approach to consciousness, is still under negotiation at the time we go to press. Also scheduled will be properly adequate time for debate between speakers and the audience, the members of which are seen very much as participants in Perspectives. A reduced rate will be available for students. Although there have been many conferences on the nature of consciousness, there have been surprisingly few open debates in one place like this on the topic.

For further information contact the office on 01608 652000 or email [charla@scimednet.org](mailto:charla@scimednet.org)

### NEW MEMBERS, AUGUST - DECEMBER 2009

We welcome the following members who have joined us since August:

NAME	COUNTRY
Abrams, Erik	UK
Arts, Julie	Belgium
Baillie, Richard	UK
Bennett, Ruth	UK
Braidwood, Cameron	UK
Brett-Taylor, Carole	UK
Carter, David	UK
Catto, Neil	UK
Chamberlain, David	UK
Charlton, Valerie	UK
Christina, Lynn	UK
Collins, Mick	UK
Colls Hammond, Jennifer	UK
Corrall, David	UK
Crampton, Frances	UK
Cranbourne-Rosser, Melody	UK
Cusden-Ross, Matty	UK
Davey, Edmund	UK
Downing, John	Norway

## Attention Members!

### *Personal Numbers and Office Procedures*

Please help your administration office to run smoothly and so help you efficiently:

- when your details change (address, telephone number, conference booking slips, subscription forms, bankers order forms and orders for books, services etc.) please make sure we know
- use your membership number whenever you contact us, and write it onto all correspondence, conference booking slips, subscription forms, bankers order forms and orders for books, services etc.
- book early for conferences - it helps you get a place, and us get the tickets to you in good time
- ensure cheques are made out correctly to Scientific & Medical Network; for conferences and orders: always add (legibly!) details of what it's for and membership number on back, even when accompanied by a booking form
- remember we're a network, and it often takes time for all relevant people to be contacted so when making requests give us time to respond helpfully (and always remember to tell us who you are - we sometimes get forms back with no name at all!)
- help us save money; whenever possible pay in £ sterling and use bankers orders and gift aid for your subscriptions - it maximises funds available for more important things

Office hours are 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday and there is normally someone to answer the telephone between those hours, with an ansaphone otherwise.

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Network Manager: Charla Devereux

### Subscriptions

Because SMN's accounting year ends in December, it needs subscriptions to be paid in January, before it incurs the cost of providing members services for the year. Regardless when you paid your subscription in 2008, your 2009 subs were due in January, and from then until the subscription is paid it will show in the membership records as owing. This causes administrative confusion in the office as well as affecting the timely receipt of your copies of Network Review until your subscription is received. SO PLEASE HELP US TO HELP YOU BY PAYING YOUR SUBSCRIPTION AS CLOSE TO JANUARY AS POSSIBLE.

Fabrikant, Rivka	Israel
Faire, Marie	UK
Frost, Chris	UK
Gabriel, Agnes Margaret	France
Garcia-Cantu, Ross	Belgium
Gibbons, Julie	UK - Support
Goodship, Stuart	UK
Gordon, David	UK
Greyson, Bruce	USA
Gurr, Roger	UK
Hackwood, Keith	UK
Hammond, Christopher	UK
Hatzimihail, Katerina	Belgium
Hope, Janet	UK
Hopthrow, Lizzie	UK
Howard, Jennifer	UK
Jackson, Nannette	UK
Jaeger, Diane Mary	UK
Janes, Hilarie	UK
Johnson, Brenda	UK
Kilcullen, Evelyn	Ireland
Kilmartin, Lynda	UK
King, Paul	UK
Knudsen, Jakob	Denmark
Koetser, Harry	UK
Koetser, Marion	UK
Kossatz, Gunnar	Germany
K seyinoglu, Mustafa	Germany
Leek, Rita	UK
March, Thierry	UK
Millard, Colin Michael	UK
Morrison, Catherine	UK
Moss, Lorraine	UK
Naydler, Jeremy	UK
Newman, Jeffrey	UK
Pao, David	UK
Parkins, Eric	UK
Pool, John	Netherlands
Riachi, Rhonda	UK
Riley, Gillian	UK
Roddy, Dennis	Canada
Ross, Nicholas E. H.	UK
Sargent-Portier, Deanna	UK
Sayer, Mark	UK
Shaikm, Aaliyah	UK
Sharratt, Mark	UK
Shaw, John Howard	UK
Shearer, Pauline	UK
Sheehan, Michael	UK
Silverman, Andrew	UK
Slaughter, Jeremy	UK
Smythies, John	USA
Spaas, Godelieve	Netherlands
Taylor, Stephen	UK
Tornes, Tordis	Norway
Tregwin, Tina	UK
Unger, Sissel	Norway
Varney, Elizabeth	UK
Voss, Angela	UK
Wallace-Lawrence, David	UK
Wardle, Elise	UK
Wilson, Peter	UK
Wise, Ruth	UK

## MEMBERS' NEWS

### **BRYCE TAYLOR – [Bryce@oasishumanrelations.org.uk](mailto:Bryce@oasishumanrelations.org.uk)** **Evolutionary Consciousness and Contemporary Spirituality:**

A call to engage in a new initiative background taken together contemporary spirituality, spiritual emergence and evolutionary consciousness express a sense of space and openness, and also create a field of activity that can be contested and dialogued over as well as experimented with and researched. The interest in these three complementary aspects of the shift in consciousness that is taking place has brought Oasis and its work to a new stage in its thinking.



First, contemporary spirituality: here we have a useful term that is particularly easy on the ear and not threatening, which can create a vehicle for many different kinds of practices, views, beliefs and faiths to travel – if not on the same road then in a similar overall direction.

Secondly, spiritual emergence: is a valuable description of how meaning-making becomes increasingly important to people at varying stages in their lives as a result of any number of events, experience or circumstances. Spiritual emergence arises out of the search for, and is a way in which to move towards, evolutionary consciousness. Frequently the process of spiritual emergence is anything but easy or takes the form of a smooth transition.

Thirdly, evolutionary consciousness similarly leaves open to the imagination just what it might mean (though it is a bit more of a mouthful than contemporary spirituality). Essentially, if human consciousness is the most evolved aspect of creation on this planet (don't you just shudder when you realise that?), then we are 'it' and we had better get on with 'it' a good deal more seriously than we have.

These themes overlap in a way that Oasis could usefully contribute towards evolving. There is a role for assisting people to identify where meaning lies and to help them find it. I see this as a facilitative contribution.

Oasis would like to respond and to help create a small team of facilitators who would initiate people into useful dialogue and exploration about their experience (from a Whole Person Learning perspective); help them set up useful experiments to test out their views and to provide some useful structure to gain deeper experience of some of the foundation stones for inquiry – meditation, chanting – all in a 'light touch' way and as an illustration of the rich treasure house of what is available.

### **CHERYL HUNT - BASS**

The British Association for the Study of Spirituality (BASS) is in the process of establishing itself as a collaboration of existing centres and individual researchers whose area of interest is in some aspect of the study of spirituality. Its intention is promote interdisciplinary and inter-professional understanding in this field; it welcomes international perspectives and



membership. The development of BASS is currently being carried forward by a working Executive with a view to moving to the election of officers in 2010.

BASS will host an international conference, Spirituality in a Changing World, from 4-6 May 2010, at Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park, London, in association with the National Spirituality and Mental Health Forum. The conference is concerned with the relevance of spirituality for the socio-economic, political, and cultural challenges of contemporary society on the global stage. Keynote speakers include Linda Woodhead, Bob Neimeyer, Rebecca Nye, Samuel Feemster, Harold Koenig and Ursula King. Further details can be obtained from Jane McAteer at the University of Hull ( [j.mcateer@hull.ac.uk](mailto:j.mcateer@hull.ac.uk) ).

BASS is also working with Pier Professional (formerly Pavilion Journals) to develop a new journal focusing on the study of spirituality and its implications for professional practices. Contact Cheryl Hunt at the University of Exeter for details, and to discuss potential contributions ( [c.hunt@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:c.hunt@exeter.ac.uk) ).

### BEATA BISHOP

#### New Gerson Centre in Hungary

The first Gerson Health Centre in Europe has been opened in Hungary in a protected area of natural beauty 30 km outside Budapest. Here two-week residential courses are being held on the theory and practice of the nutrition-based Gerson Therapy. Accredited by the Gerson Institute of California, the Centre is of interest to cancer patients and others suffering from chronic degenerative diseases, or those wanting to learn about prevention and an optimal lifestyle. Full details from [info@gerson.hu](mailto:info@gerson.hu)

## LOCAL GROUP NEWS

### Swedish Group

**BO AHRENFELT +46 470 126 00**

Our next meeting will be held in Österlen 21-22 May 2009. Organizer is Gert Hyrkäs, [gerth.hyrkas@telia.com](mailto:gerth.hyrkas@telia.com)

#### *Bo Ahrenfelt writes:*

The Swedish National group held the autumn meeting in Mullsjö 4-5 September hosted by Jens Allwood. Jens had invited **Jan Bärmark** as speaker. Jan is Dr. philos, professor in Theory of Science, Department of Theory of science and research, Göteborg University, Sweden. Has published books and articles on Abraham Maslow, the psychology of self actualization, anthropology of knowledge and ethno-medicine.

He has done research on interdisciplinary sciences, nursing care research, Tibetan Buddhist medicine, Western traditions in psychotherapy and psychology of science. I expected an interesting day, and I certainly got it! On the Friday evening we had informal talks together with good food and wine, which is our tradition in the Swedish group. We also always do a brief but quite personal presentation of ourselves to get us in an open mood.

Jan started off on the Saturday by discussing how Buddhism can be interpreted from a Western point of view and within our traditional concepts. As a religion or as soteriology, as philosophy or as ontology. From my point of view I agree with Jan that Buddhism is indeed a philosophy, particularly of change and can be used even in management training and organisational development as well as on individual basis. Jan pointed out that it can also



be seen as a form of psychotherapy, as it is a way how we can manage affect and psychological pain in everyday life, or it can be used as a psychology and a way to better mental and bodily health. And as many of our members are aware of, mindfulness meditation is today used in very traditional psychiatry against depression and panic disorders for example. The benefits for our body-selves are today also beyond doubt.

Emotions are not bad and they are a part of every second of our lives. They give us important information about the situation we are in and about ourselves. The challenge and goal for training is not to be a slave under them and act from a reactive position without control. The metaphor he used was that just as water flows off from the lotus flower can negative affect be released from our minds, which is a very good thing as these emotions and affects have a system impact and can cause illnesses and disease.

After that Jan discussed meditation as a method that starts in intellectual training and analysis before it takes us beyond the intellect. Our concepts are usually static but reality is dynamic. From conceptualization and everyday boundaries of consciousness, we go beyond our concepts as well as our intellectual analysis where we can experience our true nature. Anyone meditating has experienced how meditation can free our dynamic creativity and we find new ways of handling life and work.

Motivation was another aspect of Buddhism he emphasized as it decides the field of perception that we choose to become aware of. Modern perception research has proven this point valid. The old saying is correct, we see what we want to see, even if it is an unconscious process most of the time. Then he continued to talk about the four Noble truths, the eight-fold path, our Buddha nature and the relativity of absolute truth.

As he himself is within the Tibetan tradition he gave us an interesting lecture of the four schools. The older way, Tsongkhapa, Gelopa and the oral tradition and how the education is organised to become a Geshe. It became quite clear to me that one of their basic pedagogic perspectives is badly needed within the Swedish school system, in our universities, organisations and companies. The training is structured as a diagnostic process. Listen, reflect and meditate. One should listen as an ill person gets medicine. To take it on board and to learn with the right motivation. Here I came to think about Antonovsky and his SOC, sense of coherence. Reflect on and question what you hear and test it. Don't take anything for granted. Bite the gold coin! As we all know, to understand the words does not mean that we have understood the meaning.

The last part, meditation, is an integrative process where we take on board and accept the things we have listened to, questioned and reflected upon. It is a developmental process not so far away from psychotherapy and personal development. The big difference from our Western view, as I see it, is that we emphasize a strong and separate ego, while in the Buddhist tradition they emphasized egolessness, a pathology in our psychiatry. As Western psychotherapists, psychologists and psychiatrists have a lot to learn from Buddhism regarding their concepts of emptiness and egolessness. Many times I think we stop when the Great journey into the true nature of mind and consciousness begins. This might even save the world one day! At the end of a very interesting day Jan talked about Tibetan medicine. To study medicine, he claimed, is a way to study Buddhism.

### Irish Group

**JACQUI NIELSEN - +353 (876) 488748**

On 12th September **Professor Ivor Browne**, F.R.C.P.I., F.R.C.Psych., M.Sc., D.P.M., a member of the Network, gave a talk to the Ireland Group on the subject of *Delayed Onset PTSD*.

The central thesis put forward by the speaker was that

- When something happens we do not fully experience it as it happens
- The integration of experience is a process, taking place over time, involving neurophysiological and somatic work

There is a common misunderstanding of unresolved traumatic experience as repressed memory. This leads to the description of subsequent surfacing of such experience to consciousness as reliving or remembering when it may more properly be understood as delayed experiencing for the first time.

When an event takes place we may not fully experience it as it happens. We do take an impression of the raw experience, otherwise it would no longer exist within us. But integration fails to progress beyond this point. This is why such experiences, if activated years later, are experienced as happening 'now'. The experience breaks through and causes flashbacks, nightmares, etc. This triggers painful emotional responses, which the individual once again tries to suspend, but now only partially successfully. This then gives rise to the full-blown syndrome of 'Post Traumatic Stress Disorder'.

Freud's original position was to accept patients' accounts of early sexual abuse as real and to ascribe all cases of neurosis to such experience in childhood — but in the spring of 1897 he changed his stance owing to the reaction his theory provoked. His new explanation, already promoted by Fournier and Brouardel, was to ascribe patients' accounts of childhood sexual abuse to fantasy. This was the genesis of psychoanalysis and it set back the awareness of the frequency and serious consequences of sexual abuse by a century.

In the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual the distinction between acute, chronic and delayed onset PTSD is now accepted. A long period, often of many years, may elapse following the trauma, before the emergence of the acute symptoms of PTSD. During this latent phase patients may show few symptoms, only a constricted life pattern, with recurrent episodes of depression. 'Activation' may occur due to another trauma of a similar kind e.g. a person who was sexually abused as a child may in adult life be raped.

But the 'Activation' need not be a further serious traumatic episode. It can be something as simple as the first night in the marriage bed, or watching a TV programme about sexual abuse. This for most people may be entirely normal. But because this touched the sensitive 'frozen experience', for this person, the effect may be catastrophic and unleash full-blown PTSD.

Once 'Activation' has taken place the individual is now in a dysfunctional state, unable to maintain the 'freeze' so as to be able to cope, but, on the other hand, unable to fully 'experience' and integrate the blocked trauma of many years earlier. When a person is subjected to the same traumatic experience again, and again. e.g. where there is incestuous abuse within the family, the child is faced with an impossible situation. Dissociation is then likely to supervene with a splitting of the personality. In this way the two dimensions of the personality continue to learn and develop quite separately - one visible and available to consciousness, the other hidden and only likely to appear when activated.

The phenomenon of revictimisation is that many patients suffering from Post Traumatic Stress seem to be stuck as if

there were a theme running through their life. They continue to be subjected to the same kind of traumatic experience, over and over again. (e.g. where there has been sexual abuse early in childhood, one finds the person being abused by others in adolescence and then perhaps subjected to rape or other kinds of sexual abuse again and again in adult life.)

This is an abridged version of my report on Ivor's talk. The full report has been posted on the SMN website in the Irish Group area.

#### Cambridge Group

**HAZEL GUEST – 01223 369148**

On 11th November **Dr Patricia Fara** of Clare College spoke on the topic *What is Science?*. She started with a historical summary and then progressed to current issues, refraining from actually answering the question in her title but instead raising a number of related questions. The discussion was, as usual, lively and focussed.

We meet next on Wednesday 13th January 2010 when **Dr Steve Minett** will introduce the topic Folk Psychology – from Monotheism to Evolutionary Psychology.

The origins of Folk Psychology can be traced to monotheistic theology, as refined and articulated by Descartes. It was later radically changed, first by Nineteenth Century Science and then by Twentieth Century Neuro-Philosophy. More recent commentators have identified its influence on early Cognitivism, and Evolutionary Psychologists and others are now suggesting that it may have beneficial causal effects.

7.40 for 8pm start in Hazel Guest's flat which is 44 Beaufort Place, Thompson's Lane, Cambridge CB5 8AG. Tel: 01223 369148.

#### London Group

**CLAUDIA NIELSEN – 0207 431 1177**

The talks below have been recorded and members can hear or download them from Summaries of Previous Events of the London Group page of the Network's website.

#### August - *Medicine and Modernity: from Botticelli to Botulus*

In his talk **Dr. Athar Yawar**, a member of the Board of the SMN, psychiatrist and former senior editor of *The Lancet*, expanded on his view that although scientific and medical knowledge has advanced exponentially over last 200 years, so has dissatisfaction with medicine. Many rigorously validated treatments have been developed over the years but we are sicker than ever. We have worldwide more mental illnesses, infectious diseases, malnutrition, chronic and degenerative illnesses etc. Modernity sees science as the only credible source of knowledge. Just like modern science, in which we distance ourselves from the object studied, modern medicine has moved away from the humanity of the patient. Modernity has left us with a medicine without soul and without a choice, for it excludes competing worldviews, and yet, although a body of knowledge can be coherent and consistent within its own terms it can never be comprehensive for there are an infinite number of ways to look at something. Modern medicine is unambiguous in its view that people are matter and illness happens when the structure of matter breaks down.

This is an epistemological belief held even in the absence of evidence for, as Athar pointed out, nobody has ever proven that the most common mental illnesses are caused by neurotransmitter imbalances. But we hold this belief as an article of faith. Athar, on the other hand, acknowledges that modern medicine has the ability to ease much suffering with things like anaesthesia, antibiotics, pain killers, etc

yet, the further away we go from problems of 'brute matter', e.g. a broken bone, the less effective we are in handling suffering. The broken heart for instance gets treated by anti-depressants which cut us off from our own emotions. Even more deplorable is the fact that nowadays it is difficult to do good science in medicine without the backing of the state or of multinational corporations who have their own agendas. The result is that we are treated with toxins rather than tonics and the trials which validate those drugs are themselves often questionable.

#### September – *The World is our Cloister: the modern religious life*

Following a childhood of devotion, **Jennifer Kavanagh** abandoned her Anglican faith at the age of 18. She was a literary agent for many years until she started to feel disillusioned at the same time as she started to feel the need to re-engage with her spirituality. A life of faith she feels, is not a rational choice but an inner felt need. Realising that everyone may have different experiences and ways of expressing their faith, hers is in a connecting principle – a life force – something deep within every part of Creation and when she is aware and open she sometimes gets a glimpse of this connection – which becomes a guiding force in her life. Jennifer is a Quaker and silence is the fundamental way for her to connect with this principle. By silence she means more than lack of spoken word, it is a stillness, a withdrawal from communication.

Jennifer was baptised Anglican, born of an agnostic Russian Jewish mother and an atheist father and she is interested in commonality of faith, rather than religion. Wanting to know how other people experience their faith Jennifer wrote a book with the same title as the talk, for which she interviewed a number of people. Her view is that beliefs, practices and creeds divide us whereas the quest for the divine, the attempt to live a faith a spiritual life can be universal. Although spiritual direction is important she is interested in people without labels - people who pick and mix, which although can be quite superficial, she recognises that it can also be a deep search for authenticity. She talked about prayer, which has a different meaning for her than what is generally understood. In her prayers she does not ask for results as she does not know what the right outcome should be. 'Thy will be done' – the only thing that can be said – will be done anyway, but she uses it as a way of aligning herself.

Prayer for her is therefore about this intention and also about mindfulness, which she endeavours as a way of life. She does not separate the sacred and the secular which paradoxically she says, is one of the hardest as well as the simplest thing to do. The moral aspect of faith, involves being true to one's values and principles, which for her includes a withdrawal from news and media, which she knows well having worked in the industry for many years. And then there is work. A spiritual life involves a life of service for others, and in her case it is work in the field of prison reform, conflict resolution and micro-credit in Africa. She is also working on her third book.

#### October – *Science and Imagination*

**Prof. Marilyn Monk**, UCL Emeritus Professor of Molecular Embryology at the Institute of Child Health and a member of the Board of Directors of the SMN, told us that scientists stand shy of accepting an engagement with imagination because



imagination can lead to belief! Imagination is the mental faculty of forming images of external objects not present to the senses and this can lead to belief - the acceptance of an imagined object as true - and for this reason the concept is drummed out of young scientists. But imagination is necessary to postulate a hypothesis and the one she presented is in two parts: that epigenetic programming determines life view, and that the reverse may be also true, that this programming can be reversed by changing life view. Epigenetic programming is the software of our genome, determining which genes are on and which are off.

DNA can be modified in various ways and Marilyn's scientific work has involved the modification of one of the components of DNA – the methylation of the DNA base cytosine. Methylation has the effect of turning a gene off. Studies with animal models have shown that this process is reversible. Rat pups with bad mothers have methylated their glucocorticoid receptor gene in the hippocampus and are in a constant state of stress. When however these pups are moved to a good mum, this can be reversed. Similarly, recent studies on suicide victims have shown that methylation of the glucocorticoid receptor gene in the hippocampus was present in people who had a childhood of abuse. Imagination may be the key to reverse this process of programming by early experience of the environment to a lifetime of stress and compromised well-being. Imagination triggers one's neurology and physiology in the same way as the real experience. Evidence of its power exists for example in the success of sports psychology and psychoneuroimmunology, both based on the power of suggestion, sometimes erroneously dismissed as placebo effect.

Brain imaging studies show that the same areas in the brain fire up whether the individual is having an experience in the external world or inwardly, as a product of imagination. Mirror neurones seem to show that we can even experience the world by affinity, through the experience of others. In the past, people have debated the influences of Nature (genes we inherit) versus Nurture (conditioning by the environment). But these are not competing influences and it is more relevant to consider the constant interplay of our genes with the environment. This interface is the epigenome. The epigenome determines our lived experience. It is a continuous dynamic interplay and we have the power to change our environment as well as the way we experience our environment. Could our imagination may be trained to re-programme our genes? Research on this part of the hypothesis would need to be undertaken by professionals in the areas of molecular biology and cognitive neuroscientists.

**November (1) - *The Master and his Emissary – The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World***

Psychiatrist **Dr. Iain McGilchrist's** fascinating new book identifies a most interesting phenomenon, how the different hemispheric skills influenced Western culture. In his talk, Iain started by describing the first half of the book in which he examines those different skills and how they influence our ways of being and behaving as individuals. Although the two hemispheres have specific skills, in healthy people they work together in balance and make their own unique contribution to the individual's world. To illustrate the differences, Iain explained that the right hemisphere apprehends the world whereas the left evaluates and plans sequences of actions. The right hemisphere is open, without preconceptions of what it is trying to do, and therefore is subject to a negative feedback loop, meaning that if something pushes it too far one way, it will compensate towards the other to try to correct that. The

left hemisphere on the other hand is focusing on something which it has already prioritized, and as a result, the more one uses it, the more one narrows the focus resulting in a positive feedback loop, i.e., the more we do it, the more we have to do it, a loop from which it is hard to escape!

Both hemispheres have their job to do, each dealing with an aspect of the world we need. The right hemisphere is primary, the Master of the title, which is betrayed by the left, its emissary. 'The Master needs to trust, to believe in his emissary, knowing all the while that that trust may be abused. The emissary knows, but knows wrongly that he is invulnerable. If the relationship holds, they are invincible; but if it is abused it is not just the Master that suffers, but both of them, since the emissary owes his existence to the Master' (p. 428). This struggle of hemispheric tendencies is explored in the context of Western civilization where the balance has at times, not been kept in equilibrium.

In the second half of the book Iain examines specific periods of Western civilization beginning with the ancient world of Athens and Rome, through to the present, showing how those hemispheric aptitudes determined the tendencies of the times. In the ancient world it can be said that the right and left hemisphere were working in balance. When we get to Socrates and Plato things start to go wrong with the more subtle, nuanced living sense of the world being replaced by a bureaucratic, militaristic, regimented attitude. Evidence of these swings can be seen in the arts and we were shown some striking examples. For example in contemporary paintings of the Renaissance we note right hemispheric tendencies whereas the Reformation is very clearly under left hemispheric control. The presentation sparked a very interesting discussion, with insightful questions and comments.

**November (2) - *Blackfoot Worldview and Its Quantum Implications***

**Prof. Leroy Little Bear** from the Blackfoot Confederacy was an invited speaker at our SMN conference on the Legacy of David Bohm. Leroy founded the Native American Studies Dept of the University of Lethbridge. He met David Bohm and had many conversations with him in which they explored the similarities of the Blackfoot worldview and Bohm's theory of implicate and explicate order. The Blackfoot are a Native American Indian tribe with very different worldview from that of the colonizers who came from Europe. Although much of the Western values have had to be adopted by the culture, the Blackfoot maintain their relationship with the world according in their own ancient tradition, with their customs and ceremonies.

The core of their worldview is that everything is in flux. Creation is in a state of flux, everything moves, changes,



transforms – a perspective familiar to quantum physicists. The process never stops. This flux consists of energy waves and in the particle/wave duality the Blackfoot are wave thinkers whereas western scientists are mostly particle thinkers. We as human beings, manifest a particular combination of waves in relationship with each other, which express our own individuality. These waves are Spirit and death is understood not as the disappearance of the waves, but the dissipation of that particular combination. The flux also relates to the notion of relationship in which everything and everyone is interconnected, man, animal, plant, rock, everything with their particular wave combination. Nothing is inanimate, everything has Spirit.

Successful living is to surf the flux as it changes and transforms, identifying regular patterns to use as reference, always knowing that things will change. Another important principle of the Blackfoot is renewal. Whereas we in the West are constantly looking to progress onto the next thing, to move on from where we are, the Blackfoot focus on the renewal of that pattern which has proved to be successful. Most of the ceremonies are renewal ceremonies in which they try to maintain those things that make for continuing existence. The ceremonies are therefore age-old, and so are the songs they sing and stories they tell. The aim is for stability in change. Another difference is regarding time, and space. Whereas we in the West think in dichotomies, such as day/night, good/bad etc, for the Blackfoot such clear boundaries do not exist and everything is part of everything else or merges into everything else. Blackfoot language has no nouns, nothing that can be pinned down, everything is moving, transforming. Whereas time is major reference for us, for the Blackfoot the significance is in place and space. It was a wonderful insight into a culture with a worldview which resonated with many people in the room!

**Manchester Group**  
**CHRISTINA HEATON - christinaheaton@msn.com**

The Manchester Group met in Rawtenstall on Sunday 13th September 2009. **Robert Ginsburg** spoke in the morning on *The Medicine of the Future*. The presentation gave an overview of Nikolai Levashov's approach to healing: a system that uses exclusively the power of the mind to heal. No drugs or surgery are necessary and distance between healer and client is immaterial. Three medically documented case histories were given and followed by a demonstration of healing on two volunteers. Questions, answers and discussion followed. Robert Ginsburg practiced law for twenty years in the USA before becoming a Levashov student. For more information see Robert Ginsburg's website [www.robertginsburg.com](http://www.robertginsburg.com).

In the afternoon Max Payne reported on the current plans and directions presented at the SMN AGM and by reference to the article by Oliver Robinson, John Clarke and David Lorimer, *A Manifesto for Change*, in the current Network Review. A thorough discussion followed.

**Scottish Group**  
**DAVID LORIMER – 01333 340490**

On November 4, the Scottish group gathered for a talk by **Prof Michael Northcott** of Edinburgh University based on his book 'A Moral Climate' in which he discusses environmental ethics with particular reference to global warming. He began with an analysis of beliefs around these questions, pointing out that the Scottish government policy of spending £1 billion on new roads was inconsistent with their stance on climate change, showing how economic growth currently trumps ecological concerns. He defined our overall context in terms of space as well as time, with special emphasis on intergenerational justice. He also mentioned other factors

such as shifting our focus towards well-being and the fact that 40 % of households are now single, which increases the overall rate of consumption. On long-term trends, he pointed out that previous fluctuations have been within an overall envelope of half a degree, and the current prospect was for a much greater variation than that. The situation is likely to call for a great deal of human ingenuity and resilience.

**Yorkshire Group**  
**Max Payne writes: Meeting 17 October 2009**

The meeting took place at 16 Burnt Stones Grove, Sheffield. and enjoyed two interesting and stimulating talks. **Mike King** gave a talk on *Secularism*. Although philosophers might yearn for a monistic unity, the cultural reality was that to do full justice to the whole range of human experience, it was necessary to recognise that science and religion are non-overlapping magisteria. Each is valid in its own sphere, and neither should intrude into the domain of the other. The thinkers of the Enlightenment wanted to improve, not to eradicate religion, but the project went off track and modern disbelief is the result. Secularism should mean a recognition the spiritual impulse while retaining all the critical insights of science.

After a buffet lunch **David Lawton** talked about *The Bodily survival of Bodily Death*. He suggested that most theories of survival presumed a 'filter' theory of the body. The brain filtered the soul's consciousness into matter, and after death the soul floated off into a non-bodily existence. The evidence from Near Death Experiences, and Out of Body Experiences all suggested the existence sensory awarenesses and there were many cases of probable reincarnation where someone had a body which bore scars or disabilities relating to a previous life. Granted survival after death, there was discussion about how this might be possible. Some theory of an 'etheric body' seemed the most plausible answer.

The next meeting was fixed for March 6th 2010.

## MEMBERS' ARTICLES AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST

All the articles listed below are available electronically on the members' side of the website or online if referenced.

### SCIENCE/PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

**Transcendental Vitalism, Physics and the Paranormal**  
**David Lawton (40 pp.)** A much more extensive treatment following David's article published last year.

**Empirie und Intuition - Die wissenschaftliche Methode**  
**Dr. Stephan Krall (5 pp., from Tattva Viveka, N° 41, November 2009, pp. 70-74)**

The content of the article is an overview on the development of scientific thinking and the description of the current approach in research, the "scientific empiricism". It highlights the critics on this method by thinkers as Paul Feyerabend and Thomas Kuhn. The paper describes the role that intuition has played in science and its perception by science as well as its role in spiritual thinking i. e. Buddhism.

**Transfigural Foundations for a New Physics of Natural Diversity - The Variable Inclusion of Gravitational Space in Electromagnetic Flow-Form**  
**Lere Shakunle and Alan Rayner (14 pp.)**

### Evolution, Involution, and Revolution

**Paul Hague (8 pp.)**

**Lives of Meaning: Organismal Intelligence and the Origin of Design in Nature**

**R.I. Vane-Wright (27 pp. from Intelligent Faith)**

**MEDICINE-HEALTH****Under Pressure: Homeopathy UK and its Detractors**  
**Lionel R. Milgrom (6 pp., published online in English and German)**

Though homeopathy has been in successful and continuous use for well over 200 years, in the United Kingdom it is under growing pressure, from scientific detractors and sections of the media. As such, homeopathy's free National Health Service provision is threatened because it is derided as 'unproven', 'unscientific', and even 'deadly'. While refuting these and other detractions, this paper considers possible reasons for the current plight of homeopathy UK.

**The Psychosocial Genomics of Therapeutic Hypnosis, Psychotherapy, and Rehabilitation**  
**Ernest Lawrence Rossi (18 pp.)**

Shen Foundation Vision Statement (4 pp.). Global Healing through Personal Health and Responsibility. Following their recent conference in Findhorn, this vision statement has been posted on [www.shenfoundation.net](http://www.shenfoundation.net) -

**The Dilemante Professor**

**Prof. Dr. Mayank Jyoti (3 pp.)** A report by an Indian member on the state of pharmacy.

**PSYCHOLOGY-CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES**

**Corroboration of the Dentures Anecdote Involving Veridical Perception in a Near-Death Experience**  
**Rudolf H. Smit (15 pp. from Journal of Near-Death Studies, Fall 2008)** Further investigation of the remarkable story first published in Dr. Pim van Lommel's landmark Lancet article.

**Four Ostensible Near-Death Experiences of Roman Times with Peculiar Features: Mistake Cases, Correction Cases, Xenoglossy, and a Prediction**  
**Michael Nahm, Ph.D. (13 pp., from Journal of Near-Death Studies, Summer 2009)**

**Geistige Klarheit von psychisch kranken Menschen kurz vor ihrem Tod - Ein unbeachtetes und unverstandenes Mysterium**  
**Dr. Michael Nahm und Prof. Dr. Erlendur Haraldsson (5 pp. from the regular SMN Tattwa Viveka column)**

**How the Mind and the Brain Co-Create Each Other Daily: Mind-Brain-Gene Research on the Foundations of Consciousness, Creativity, Imagination, and Psychotherapy**  
**Ernest Lawrence Rossi and Kathryn Lane Rossi (33 pp.)**

**The Future Orientation of Constructive Memory: An Evolutionary Perspective on Therapeutic Hypnosis and Brief Psychotherapy**  
**Ernest Rossi, Roxanna Erickson-Klein, and Kathryn Rossi (8 pp.)**

**Creativity and the Nature of the Numinosum: The Psychosocial Genomics of Jung's Transcendent Function in Art, Science, Spirit, and Psychotherapy**  
**Ernest Lawrence Rossi (5 pp. interview from Milton Erickson Foundation newsletter, Spring 2009)**

**Towards the Primacy of Consciousness Meeting – The Case for Mind as the Maker of the Universe**  
**Graham Dunstan Martin (17 pp.)**  
**Scientific Conference Examines Afterlife Evidence**  
**Lew Sutton (4 pp.)** Additional report on the Beyond the Brain Canterbury meeting.  
**Awake in the Dream – an Essay**

**Cy Grant (6 pp.)**

The dreamer is consciousness itself... To awaken within the Dream is our purpose now. When we are awake within the dream a more benign and wondrous dream arise. This is the new earth. Eckhart Tolle

**Four papers by John Rowan: Meaning and Meaninglessness (8 pp.)****Nondual Wisdom and Psychotherapy: Self-Deception in California? (13 pp.)****Transpersonal and Integral in Psychotherapy (13 pp.)****Is it Possible to Work at the Causal Level in Therapy? (14 pp.)****An Introduction to Deep Memory Process**  
**Simon Heathcote (3 pp.)****GENERAL**

**The Standing of Sustainable Development in Government**  
**Jonathon Porritt (56 pp.)** Trenchant observations from the retiring Director of the UK Sustainable Development Commission.

**Adjusting the Language of Authority to Engender Social Cohesion in Lebanon and Beyond - A Vital Role for Educators**  
**Alexandra Asseily (10 pp.)** Paper given recently at the American University of Beirut at the Education for Social Cohesion Conference.

**A Return to Being Human**  
**Hardin Tibbs (16 pp.)**

This research paper proposes the concept of the 'general ecosystem'—a novel pattern of economic and social organization based on a holistic reassessment of human needs and a reintegration of our sense of what it is to be human.

**Hans-Peter Dürr Laudatio**  
**Jakob von Uexküll, (3 pp.)** Hamburg, World Future Council AGM 2009, eulogy to celebrate the 80th birthday of the former Director of the Max Planck Institute.

**Thomas Berry – An Overview**  
**Ervin Laszlo (5 pp.)** Introduction to a recent book.

**Spiritual Reflections on Copenhagen**  
**Caroline Myss (5 pp.)**

**Special Presidential Briefing for President Barack Obama (7 pp.)**  
**Center for the Study of Extraterrestrial Intelligence - The Disclosure Project (2 pp.)**

Both by **Steven M. Greer**, MD giving background to the US Government UFO cover-up and calling for an intelligence amnesty.

**A Model of Value-Based Democracy as Condition of Ecological Sustainability**  
**Johannes Heinrichs (7 pp.)**. A paper presented in Berlin.



### From Stanley Spencer's Resurrection to John Coltrane's Ascension

**Andrew Burniston (7 pp.).** A personal reflection on the artist and musician. Andrew also lived in Cookham, the home and idyll of Sir Stanley Spencer.

### Intelligent Design: Aphorisms and Apothegms for a New Architecture

**Isaac Benjamin (1 p.)** Some wry observations here.

**Online papers by Anthony Judge:**  
[www.laetusinpraesens.org](http://www.laetusinpraesens.org)

**Overpopulation Debate as a Psychosocial Hazard development of safety guidelines from handling other hazardous materials** <http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/psychaz.php>

**Existential Embodiment of Externalities radical cognitive engagement with environmental categories and disciplines** <http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/exisembo.php>

**We are on the Brink of Failure Responding to Planetary Crises** <http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/brink.php>

**Lipoproblems: Developing a Strategy Omitting a Key Problem: the systemic challenge of climate change and resource issues**  
<http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/lipoprob.php>

**Us and Them: Relating to Challenging Others patterns in the shadow dance between "good" and "evil"**  
<http://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs00s/usthem.php>

## NEWS and NOTICES

### Viktor Schauburger DVD

A new DVD is available on the life and work of forester Viktor Schauburger, whose principle of comprehending and copying Nature has never been more relevant. This DVD covers his life and work, which was continued by his son Walter and now his grandson Joerg. There is some fascinating old footage, for instance of the log flumes designed by Schauburger. His agricultural approach and the use of copper tools is explained, as well as techniques of regulating water flow in rivers and other devices connected with water and energy. See [www.schauburger-velag.at](http://www.schauburger-velag.at)



### Regeneration – an Earth Saving Evolution

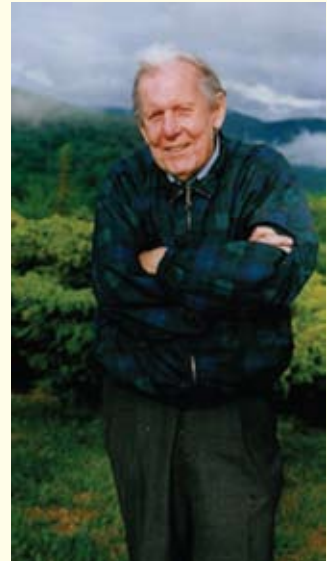
A very informative Australian DVD about how biological farming builds healthier soils. The philosophy builds on that of Sir Albert Howard in connecting healthy soil with healthy plants, animals and humans. There are interviews with scientists as well as farmers who have put these approaches into practice. The use of biological fertilisers can increase overall yield as well as maintaining bacterial activity in the soil and enhancing water retention levels. This is so obviously the future of agriculture, working with rather than against Nature. See [www.lifeworksfoundation.com](http://www.lifeworksfoundation.com)

### The Great Courses

A compendium of courses from universities around the world, covering a wide range of disciplines: science and mathematics, art and music, literature, history, and economics. Some courses have as many as 36 lectures in the series, for instance understanding the brain or great ideas in psychology. See [www.shopgreatcourses.co.uk](http://www.shopgreatcourses.co.uk)

### Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale

Mary-Evelyn Tucker writes: One of the great leaders in this movement for transformative change passed away this year on June 1st. Thomas Berry was our teacher, guide, and collaborator for some 40 years. The celebrations of his life and legacy have been numerous. The Memorial service the Forum organized at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York drew more than one thousand people. It was filled with music, joy, and a sense of the participation of the whole Earth community ([www.thomasberry.org](http://www.thomasberry.org)). His two last books of essays carry forward his reflections on the world's religions *The Sacred Universe* and on Christianity *The Christian Future and the Fate of Earth*.



The year concluded with two significant interreligious events. The first, held at Windsor Castle in England, was hosted by Prince Philip and UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, and was organized by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC). It featured environmental commitments of selected representatives from the world's religions ([www.windsor2009.org](http://www.windsor2009.org)). The second, sponsored by the Council for the Parliament of the World's Religions, was held in Melbourne, Australia, titled 'Making a World of Difference: Hearing Each Other, Healing the Earth.' The Forum organized panels on world religions and ecology, 'The Earth Charter, Thomas Berry's Thought', and the films *Renewal*, *Numen*, *The Arctic: The Consequences of Human Folly*, and *Journey of the Universe* ([www.parliamentofreligions.org](http://www.parliamentofreligions.org)). See [www.yale.edu/religionandecology](http://www.yale.edu/religionandecology)

### Charter for Compassion

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. We therefore call upon all men and women to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion. We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community. See [www.charterforcompassion.org](http://www.charterforcompassion.org)