

## **News and Notices**

*The Week* - All you need to know about everything that matters

I have been subscribing to this excellent new weekly digest for a year. If you have no time to read the papers thoroughly and still want to be well informed, *The Week* is the answer. It begins with three main stories, analysing what happened, what the editorials and commentators said, then asks what will happen next. Short reports of Europe and the World at a Glance are followed by a briefing giving the background to an important issue in the news. This sometimes concludes by giving three main arguments for and against a position on the issue. A section of best articles from Britain, America and the world is followed by a section on health, talking points, reviews of reviews, a selection of the best letters from the press, property, food and drink and finance. All racy written and spiced with anecdote in sections such as 'boring but important' and 'it must be true - I read it in the tabloids'.  
Address: 5-11 Westbourne Grove, London W2 4JQ. Tel: +44 171 229 0006.

### **Natural Systems Thinking Process (NSTP)**

The Institute of Global Education, a Non-Governmental Organization of the United Nations, released a study of its Project NatureConnect Natural Systems Thinking Process (NSTP). The study confirms the findings of earlier studies that NSTP establishes balanced sensory relationships that are accompanied by increased personal, social and environmental responsibility.

NSTP has been researched and developed by the Institute's Department of Integrated Ecology under the direction of Dr Michael J. Cohen, author of *Reconnecting With Nature: finding wellness through restoring your bond with the Earth*(Ecopress). Dr Jan Goldfield, a psychologist involved with the study says, 'By helping us feel our deeper roots, NSTP offers a remarkable sensory bridge between the wisdom of Indigenous People and Western thought'. Dr Richard Schneider, CEO of the Institute, says 'NSTP is a proven, easily learned school or home study program. It lets thoughtful psychological contacts with nature catalyse environmentally sound self-esteem and resiliency'.

The study surveyed adults in a variety of occupations, who, in the past three years, learned to use NSTP through a 30 day Internet course or the *Reconnecting with Nature* training book. They report NSTP helped them significantly improve their personal and professional life and their relationship with the environment. The participants say that NSTP daily enters their thinking and personal relationships and that its use is imperative if we are to reverse our present destructive ways. They indicate NSTP will quickly produce positive global change if a larger segment of the population uses and teaches it. We invite you to visit the study at <http://www.ecopsych.com/studyrlse.html> For further information on Project NatureConnect contact: PO Box 1605, Friday Harbor, Washington 98250 Tel: +1 (360) 378 6313.

### **Consciousness and Physical Reality**

This journal was announced by Marco Bischof in the April issue. We now have a digest in English of articles printed in the Russian edition. The purpose of the journal is to discuss scientific and ethical questions arising out of the emerging holistic world-view. The editors believe that the science of the future will harmonize material and spiritual aspects of existence. Most papers on philosophy, natural sciences and bio-energo-informatics are only

one page long and are extracted from longer articles in Russian. From 1998, the journal will be translated into English and will be available on subscription at \$96 including surface delivery. Details: Folium Publishing Company, 58 Dmitrovskoe shosse, PO Box 42, Moscow 127238, Russia. Tel/fax: +7 095 482 5590. E-

mail: [cpr@folium.msk.su](mailto:cpr@folium.msk.su) Web: <http://www.folium.ru/sfr>

Conclusions of the Congress 'Human Consciousness Development in Science' on 19th September in Centro D'Ompio, Italy

*Amrit Sorli writes:* Semantic analysis of the word 'Consciousness' shows that the word is abstract; we do not know exactly its meaning. Similarly, with the words God, Infinite, Tao and Eternity. For us Consciousness is a secret, which is why we think and talk so much about it. In scientific research of consciousness we have to turn from theory to practice, from thinking to meditating. What is meditation? Human beings have a capacity for observing. Outside she/he observes nature, other people, animals, her/his body, inside feelings, thoughts. The observation includes existence of the observer. The observer (watcher) is a consistent part of Eastern spiritual tradition and is evident in our daily life: in every moment of our life we can enter the observer and observe. The proposition is that observer has also the capacity for self-observation and self-cognition. This proposition is fundamental in the East and could be also in the West. Meditating observing inside, the observer discovers the 'infinite space of inner light' Consciousness. The discovery of the Consciousness is the biggest possible discovery of our life. It changes completely our understanding about ourselves and life in general. After this discovery we know that the Consciousness is an unstructured, pure universal energy in which the whole material universe floats. We also know that the whole material universe is made out of Consciousness, that matter is just structured inner light. 'Consciousness' is the Eternity in which the changes of material universe are happening, always 'here and now'. The more that we enter the Consciousness, the more we become clear that it can not be described with words and understood with the mind. Everyone has to search for her or himself and have her or his own experience.

#### Science and Belief

The journal *Science and Spirit* reported earlier in the year on a survey carried out in *Nature* showing that four out of ten US scientists believed in God, a proportion identical to a similar survey done in 1916. Six hundred out of the 1,000 mailed responded with figures suggesting that 40 per cent described themselves as believers, 45 per cent did not believe and 14.5 per cent were doubters or agnostic. This makes an interesting contrast to findings recorded in a 1981 Gallup Survey survey of scientists' belief in life after death where 68 per cent disbelieve, 16 per cent believe and 16 per cent were uncertain. Perhaps some of the believers in God do not believe in the possibility of an afterlife.

#### *Zygon* - Journal of Religion and Science

Some readers may not be aware of this long-standing journal on the science-religion interface. It is published four times a year and provides a forum for exploring ways to unite what in modern times has been disconnected: values from knowledge, goodness from truth, religion from science. The journal's hypothesis is that, when long-evolved religious wisdom is yoked with significant, recent scientific discoveries about the world and human nature, there results credible expression of basic meaning, values and moral convictions that provides

valid and effective guidance for enhancing human life. Details from Zygon at Rollins College - 2569, 1000 Holt Avenue, Winter Park, FL 32789-4496, USA.

#### Green College Centre for Environmental Policy and Understanding

The Warden of Green College, Sir Crispin Tickell, convened a half day conference in Oxford in June to consider the topic Local Medical Traditions in International Health Care. Policy Options, Priorities and the Environmental Interface. Member DrGerard Bodeker made the main presentation and has summarized his findings in a three page article that can be ordered from the office in the usual fashion. He contrasted old and new perspectives on traditional systems of health care, arguing that the new approach had to be cost-effective, holistic and locally available. Priorities for policy were identified as legislation, training, research, intellectual property rights and the guarantee of supply.

#### *Health: a new Journal*

This new interdisciplinary journal is devoted to the social study of health, illness and medicine. It aims to conceptualize the place of health, disease and medicine in social and cultural theory, discuss the influence of culture, ethnicity and social position on health, and investigate the relationship of health matters to specific social issues such as employment, consumption, leisure, poverty and the media. The opening editorial discusses how ideas about health are shaped by innovations in medical technology, commodity culture, media coverage and alternative medicine. The article of most interest to readers will perhaps be the one on health and subjectivity. The author correlates subjective health strongly with love of life, which he describes as 'the pre-articulated experience of health'. Details from Sage Publications, 6 Bonhill St, London EC2A 4PU.

#### *Holistic Science and Human Values 1997*

This publication consists of eleven articles (six by Members) and is issued by the Theosophy Science Centre in India. Readers will find much of interest in each of the articles, which are of a uniformly high standard. John Cobb considers the influence of religion on science, Allan Combs and Stanley Krippner reflect on epistemological issues arising out of the Harman/Laszlo dialogue; K.T.Selvan and Edi Bilimoria discuss the assumptions and limitations of science; Phil Gang and Ravi Ravindra outline issues in education and personal transformation, while Andrew Powell sketches his view of the soul of a newborn child, based on a lecture given to the Oxford group of the Network. There is an essay on Tibetan Buddhist medicine and a précis of the argument from Teddy Goldsmith's *The Way*. All terrific value for £3 (\$6) by surface mail and £4 (\$8) by airmail from the Theosophical Society, Adyar, Chennai (Madras) 600 020, India. Payments by IMO made out to the Theosophical Society.

#### *Rainbows through Clouds*

A beautiful collection of poems and quotations compiled for the Rainbow Trust, a charity that provides family centred care for children with life threatening or terminal illness. The Trust supports and sustains the whole family at times of crisis by providing practical and emotional support to families in their own homes and at two respite centres in Surrey and Northumberland. The book is £5.99 including inland postage and packing. Address: Rainbow Trust, Claire House, Bridge Street, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8BZ. Tel: 01372 363438.

#### CFPSS Study and Discussion Notes

The Churches' Fellowship for Psychical and Spiritual Studies has produced a helpful set of brief study notes on the following topics: paranormal experiences, psychical studies and the Bible, science and faith, the New Age, life after death, communication and mediumship, mysticism and prayer, and healing. Each study contains an introduction with recommendations for further reading, including CFPSS booklets and cassettes. Studies may be purchased singly for 60p or as a complete set for £3.50. Details: Julian Drewett, CFPSS, The Rural Workshop, South Road, North Somercotes, Louth, Lincs LN11 7PT. Tel/ fax: 01507 358845.

#### Beyond the Age of Metaphysics and the Restoration of Local Life

A beautifully illustrated new essay by Maurice Ash bringing together a number of articles written for *Resurgence* and is a subscribers' Christmas present with the latest issue. Building on the work of Wittgenstein, the author diagnoses the human condition as one suspended between cosmic futility and linguistically acquired self-importance. He is impatient with the metaphysical and sees our only real chance of renewal in a re-empowerment of the local: 'only thus could interconnectedness be restored as a prevailing characteristic of our lives'. Available for £2.50 plus p.&p. from *Resurgence*, Ford House, Hartland, Bideford, Devon EX39 6EE.

#### Dimension Theory - A theory of abstraction

*Dallas Simpson writes:* In dimension theory we have defined dimension as 'a realm of quality'. It is now possible to relate measurable, observable or recognizable distinction to a realm of quality by defining locality and non-locality in terms of expressed and unexpressed potentiality. This has enabled us to establish a conceptual framework for the unambiguous definition of all reality - physical, spiritual, abstract, logical...

I have been working on establishing the foundations of dimension theory for the past five years, the principles are applied in such techniques as object-oriented computer programming, yet the implications for our understanding of much wider universal phenomena such as non-locality, consciousness and 'the measurement problem' have not been recognized. I am anxious to establish contact with others having an interest in these areas so that the fruits of my research and study may be shared and rigorously evaluated. Dallas Simpson, 7St Austins Drive, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 3EY. 0115 9565041.

#### New Occasional Papers from the Alister Hardy Trust, Oxford

Among recently published papers are the following:

- *Kierkegaard's God and Hawking's Universe*, by Dr. Julia Watkin: argues that Kierkegaard's world-view is highly relevant to some of the difficulties encountered by Hawking in his search for a unified explanation of the universe.
- *Mediaeval and Modern Women Mystics: The Evidential Character of Religious Experience*, by Fr. Richard Woods, OP: shows significant parallels between the function of religious experience in the 14th century Rhineland and among women and even men today.
- *The Significance of Religious Experience*, by Sir Alister Hardy: Sir Alister's previously unpublished address on receipt of the Templeton Prize shortly before his death in May, 1985.

- *The Psychological Perspective of Religious Experience*, by Professor Michael Argyle: a wide-ranging survey of the field that investigates the validity of religious experiences, noting that they exhibit what he calls 'fruits of the spirit'.
- *Religious and Near-Death Experiences in Relation to Belief in a Future Life*, by Professor Paul Badham: examines historical parallels to modern NDEs and argues the case for a prospective study to determine the objectivity of near-death OBEs.

Each of these new papers cost £2.50 from the Trust at Westminster College, Oxford, OX2 9AT.

#### Value Logic

Stephen Phillips has developed this concept by building on the work of W.K.Clifford, FRS. His basic idea is that feeling underlies value (pattern of feelings) and meaning (linkage of such patterns). Thinking thus becomes jigsawing of meanings/values. He argues that logic is the fuzzy linkage that results. He postulates two basic patterns of B as better than nothing and W as worse than nothing representing the ups and downs of consciousness. His hypothesis makes mind the generator of matter. He applies this analysis to food production and consumption, where he argues that industrial greed creates addiction and destroys its addicts. As individuals we can be responsible in our choice of food and develop a food ethics with an eye on long-term sustainability. Details from Collation Research, Upper Freedown, St. Margarets at Cliffs, Dover, Kent CT15 6BB.